**2/11/2023 ABIA SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

**(ABIA Laptop Purchase)**

A special Board meeting was requested by Treasurer Bonnie Langdale and Vice-President Michael Morgan to discuss and vote on the purchase of a dedicated ABIA laptop for use by Secretary Jo Eure and other members of the Board as necessary. President Will Foxwell arranged a virtual meeting for that purpose.

PRESENT: All Board members were present, including President Will Foxwell, Vice-President Michael Morgan, Secretary Jo Eure, Treasurer Bonnie Langdale and Member at Large Sandie Markland.

A Quorum was met.

The meeting was called to ORDER by President Will Foxwell at 9:01 am.

NEW BUSINESS: Will stated the meeting was called to discuss the purchase of a dedicated ABIA laptop.

Bonnie stated that when Jo was elected to the Board, she had purchased a laptop for ABIA business, including maintaining and updating the database for issuing yearly parking tags to members. She also used it for other ABIA business, such as typing and storing Minutes of meetings. The laptop had crashed, and Bonnie lent Jo her old laptop to use, but it did not work. She concluded by saying that Jo had spent her own money to buy a laptop for ABIA use that she otherwise did not need and had added and maintained the membership database to that laptop.

Sandie stated that Jo did not create the database, it was given to her as an Access file when she took office. Updates to the database were required and always will be based on Dare County property records, but the database already existed. Bonnie acknowledged that Jo did not create the database, that it already existed and consisted of all members. Sandie clarified that it contained not just members but all Avalon property owners, of which there are just under 1100.

Bonnie continued, adding that Will had previously mentioned using the new ABIA website next year for members to obtain their tags online, but she believed we needed a laptop for more reasons, such as storing documents and other important information and data. Right now, we have too much paper which should be scanned and stored online.

Will asked if there was a Motion to purchase the laptop. Bonnie made a Motion to purchase an ABIA laptop. Michael Morgan seconded it. Will asked for discussion.

DISCUSSION:

Will Foxwell started by stating his opinion that ABIA does not need a dedicated laptop. After considering how such a purchase would affect the organization’s spending funds, he does not think a laptop is a necessity. He stated that he has a laptop, and we could work as a team to process the applications when they come in and keep the database updated. He added that he had been able to process (approximately 258) passes so far and keep a record of them in an Excel format. He asked how often we need a computer once we got through the membership ‘hump’. We have someone running the new ABIA website so there isn’t a need for a laptop to manage that. Bonnie asked if that meant that only the company that built the new website would be working with it, and Will explained that we could all do that, but it could be done with a cell phone, iPad, tablet, or desktop, or we could go to the library and use those computers.

Michael Morgan stated his agreement that a laptop should be purchased. If something happens to any of us, if we’re replaced at a future election, or if one of us needs to turn over duties to another for any reason, the dedicated laptop could be passed on, loaded with ABIA information and documentation. He added that he thinks the Board should be more aggressive and move forward and do things a little differently to make it easier on us. He pointed out that Will has small children and now he’s taken on another duty in processing the passes, while we have other Board members and volunteers that aren’t Board members that want to help. His wife Carol has volunteered to process the passes to make it easier on Jo, who works full time, as do Will and Bonnie, while he and his wife are retired. He added that it is a small cost since laptops are no longer very expensive, and a good one will last a long time. He’s had his own laptop for about nine years.

Sandie Markland asked about additional expenses with a laptop, such as security, a program to run the database, etc. Jo stated with Microsoft Office and virus protection for three years added, the laptop recommended would cost just under $1,200. Sandie asked if Jo had gotten that in writing because Microsoft didn’t do that anymore. Jo stated that it was a Dell computer and was researched and recommended – not sold - by the IT company that she’d worked with in attempting to repair her first laptop. They recommended it as a less expensive option that has everything we need.

Sandie stated that she didn’t see the benefit of having a laptop. In the past, we all had laptops but hers now sits in a closet because she works on a desktop. Bonnie agreed that she also uses a desktop and had given her old laptop to Jo for use with ABIA business, but it didn’t work. Sandie finished by stating that her concern is the continuing expenses of a laptop that are not necessary, in her view.

Mike stated that sometimes we need electronics behind the scenes to do our job.

Will asked Jo if she could elaborate on the costs and if there was an idea of a budget that could be added to the Motion, as far as what it would take to get the laptop, outfit the laptop, have something to carry it to meetings, etc. Jo stated that the cost is just under $1,200 and includes a mouse, Microsoft Office 2021, and three years of virus protection, and she already has a backpack for use in transporting it. Bonnie stated her opinion that it wasn’t a bad price for a one-time purchase. Jo agreed that it is a one-time purchase; it’s not a printer needs to have toner.

Jo stated her thoughts - that she’d already bought one laptop for ABIA use that had crashed and was unrepairable. She admitted that it was a cheaper laptop but had cost close to $500 and she would not buy another one, as she does not need one for personal use. She added that she would not stay at her office after work to process ABIA business, she could not do it on her cell phone, and she was not going to the library to do it. She also said that she did not have time to do it on paper as the previous secretary Doris had, as she works full time.

Sandie pointed out that she had printed out a spreadsheet for Doris, who just noted the passes on the spreadsheet. Sandie did all the corrections and updates in the fall.

Will asked if we still had the database and Jo stated she did and would get it to Will. She added that if Will would be taking on the duties of processing the passes as he had recently begun, we don’t need a laptop - but if she would be doing them, we do need a laptop.

Will suggested working as a team to process the passes. Jo could go pick up the applications at the post office, verify the ownership using Dare GIS which could be accessed by cell phone, issue the tags, take Bonnie the checks for deposit and take Will the applications, and he would update the database. Jo agreed. Mike offered to help.

Will stated there was a Motion on the floor and asked Bonnie how she wanted to proceed. Bonnie asked Jo if she wanted to try the system Will suggested and table the Motion for a future date. Jo agreed.

Will suggested we move to table the Motion and bring it back up at the general meeting and seek member input. Jo agreed.

Will asked for a motion to table the Motion. Sandie moved to table. Mike seconded.

Will expressed his happiness that we could come together and have a productive meeting. He advised he’d be out of town Monday and Tuesday and asked Mike if he could return the trash cans in his absence. Mike agreed.

Will stated he’d received some applications that either didn’t have a check or an application or a stamped return envelope and he’s followed up with those applicants. He proposed that we handle future deficiencies by attempting to contact the applicants a couple of times – if unsuccessful, we would shred the application and check, and eventually the member would be back in touch when they don’t receive their pass.

Jo stated that in the past if she received a check but no stamped return envelope or some other deficiency, she deposited the check since the member had indicated their desire to obtain a pass by sending it in. Then she reached out to the member, who resolved the issue. She’d had no problem using that method.

Will asked about when an applicant appeared not to be the landowner. Jo said she’d had a few instances when she thought there was questionable ownership but after investigating, it had always turned out the ownership was proper. She’d never had a situation where it had not.

Sandie stated she’d had owners tell their tenants to apply, particularly one owner on Sportsman, but she always made the owner apply. The owner could then do what they wanted with the pass. She also had people that applied when they only had a contract on a property and had not closed, but that was also not allowed. Will said he sometimes relies on land transfer records as they’re usually faster than the County GIS.

Will stated that we would proceed by using the system discussed until the upcoming general membership meeting and seek membership input. Jo stated that by that time maybe we could pay the $600 additional fee for the new website as Will had previously discussed and have the members apply for passes online. Will said that using the online system would streamline things, but there were some things to be discussed at a future meeting, such as a processing service fee and how to distribute that fee through shipping and handling costs.

Sandie moved to adjourn. Bonnie seconded.

Will adjourned the meeting at 9:35 am.

Jo Eure,

ABIA Secretary