



## **Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes November 14, 2017**

**Location:** Bend Visitor Center

**Present:** Kevney Dugan, Valerie Warren, Nate Wyeth, Hank Therien, Tawna Fenske, Lisa Sidor, Dave Nissen, Jodie Barram, Matt Williams, Alan Dietrich, Michelle Mercer, Erick Trachsel  
**Absent:** Ben Perle, Brent McLean, John McLeod, Scott Greenstone

**Guests:** Wes Price, Heather, McKeekin, Ashley Mitchell, Carolyn Eagan, Joe Ditzler, Eric Rock

### **Call to Order**

Kevney Dugan called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Introduction of guests followed.

### **Meeting Minutes Approval**

Jodie Barram moved to approve the minutes from the September Board Meeting. Alan Dietrich seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Annual Financial Review**

Wes Price and Heather McKeekin of Price, Fronk & Co. attended the meeting. Wes Price presented the results of the annual review. He stated that a review is different from an audit and that they are looking for material accuracy when conducting a review. It is common practice among trade organizations such as Visit Bend to seek a review rather than a full audit. Wes stated that Price, Fronk & Co. is issuing a clean report. The statements of financial position showed minor improvements as did the statements of activities and statements of cash flow - which is the intention, as Visit Bend operates as a non-profit organization with the target of ending each fiscal year with a break-even budget.

Dave Nissen moved to approve the results of the annual financial review. Matt Williams seconded. The review was approved unanimously.

### **Reserve Fund**

Kevney discussed the creation of a reserve fund, in addition to the current \$65,000 held in a separate account as wind-down funds. The topic of a reserve fund has been in discussion at recent BEDAB meetings, and notes are included in the Board Packet. There are questions around how much additional funding is appropriate/necessary, where the funds should be housed, and what would be the criteria for using the funds.

Wes Price added that he believes it is good that BEDAB is discussing the reserve fund as there can be open conversation around potential solutions. He stated that it is responsible to have a rainy day fund that is not a shutdown fund. He thinks the fund should be housed at Visit Bend so that it can be deployed quickly and effectively when needed.

Further discussion on the reserve fund will take place and the intention is to include it as part of the Fiscal Year 2019 Business Plan.

### **Financial Report**

As Scott Greenstone was absent, Kevney pointed out some highlights from the financial information included in the Board Packet.

Revenue is currently over budget by 5% for the current month and by 12% year to date.

Personnel and overhead expenses are on budget.

Marketing expenses are under budget due to timing variances.

The current cash position is high but will decrease as the winter marketing campaigns launch.

Matt Williams moved to approve the financial report. Michelle Mercer seconded. The financial report was approved unanimously.

### **Tourism Industry Briefing**

Kevney stated that as of October, the run of historic growth in TRT has ended. Fires seemed to affect the September numbers and the market may also be softening a bit.

Kevney discussed some preliminary results of the Summer 2017 RRC Associates Visitor Intercept Survey.

- Average age is up
- There is an increase in affluence
- There is growth in the number of repeat visitors
- Word of mouth continues to be important
- The average length of stay is up slightly

Visit Bend also continues to receive and analyze data from AirDNA. Currently only Airbnb is covered in this data, but HomeAway is expected to be added in the near future.

### **Marketing Update**

Nate Wyeth stated that, when September occupancy numbers started to dip, he was able to use a small amount of extra funds to implement additional marketing. This is an example of when funds from a reserve fund might be used.

The winter campaign is underway. Approximately \$900,000 will be spent this year, which is slightly less than last year. More focus will be placed on online/digital media to follow consumer trends.

The Bend Ale Trail Month campaign is 2/3 to completion. Related website traffic is up 4% year-over-year. Total Bend Ale trail completions to date are approximately 31,500. There were 78 Bend Ale Trail redemptions in the Visitor Center this past Sunday alone.

Participating 10<sup>th</sup> Month events showed increases in attendance, as well as out of town attendance.

Visit Bend has started an Instagram influencer program, with prominent influencers coming from one of the main target markets once per month. A Seattle-based influencer came in September, and a cultural and culinary-focused influencer was here in October.

Nate will show highlights from the fall campaign video shoots after the Board Meeting. The Share Bend campaign is 3/4 done filming.

The new Visit Bend website project continues.

### **Public Relations and Social Media Update**

Tawna Fenske showed some recent media highlights. Upcoming media coverage will appear in *The Seattle Times*, the *Denver Post*, and *Tastemade*.

Tawna also showed some recent Facebook posts that performed well.

### **Group Sales Updates**

Hank Therien said that the Bend Ale Run - which happened this past weekend - showed higher registration numbers than in previous years. 80% of the participants were from out of the area.

The Halloween Cross Crusades showed strong participation – the highest of any of the Cross Crusades stops.

The USA Climbing Bouldering Nationals are in negotiations and will hopefully be official soon.

Cotopaxi's Questival is scheduled to happen in late March 2018, as part of Women's March.

### **Board Roundtable**

Dave Nissen said that Wanderlust Tours' business was up in October.

Michelle Mercer stated that Mt. Bachelor will open this Saturday. New websites are in the works for both Mt. Bachelor and for Sun Country Tours.

Jodie Barram stated that the Tower Theatre has a year-end campaign to fund their education fund.

Jodie will be leaving the Tower Theatre as of this Thursday. She will also be leaving the Visit Bend Board of Directors and the BCTF Commission.

Erick Trachsel said the Riverhouse is working on the 2019 Gala. They are also expecting group sales to be up next year.

Alan Dietrich said that their business is going well. The distilling business is getting more competitive as new companies enter the market.

### **Public Comment**

Ashley Mitchell stated that a remodel of the Fairfield Inn will begin and should be completed by April.

Carolyn Eagan said that the City of Bend is focusing on urban renewal and the airport master plan.

Eric Rock said that the Doubletree Hotel is budgeting for a slight increase in sales next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Warren  
November 14, 2017