



Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes March 20, 2018

Location: Bend Visitor Center

Present: Kevney Dugan, Valerie Warren, Nate Wyeth, Tawna Fenske, Hank Therien, Kelli Carrow, Dave Nissen, Matt Williams, Alan Dietrich, Michelle Mercer, John McLeod, Erick Trachsel, Paige Robinson, Noelle Fredland, Lisa Sidor, Jason Lusk

Via Conference Call: Brent McLean

Guests: Wendy Puller, Olivia Evers, Suzanne Roig, Ann Cook

Call to Order

Chair Dave Nissen called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. Introduction of guests followed.

Meeting Minutes Approval

Matt Williams moved to approve the minutes from the most recent board meeting. Alan Dietrich seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

New Board Members

Dave Nissen welcomed Paige Robinson of Bluebird Day Vacation Rentals and Noelle Fredland of the Old Mill District. Both Paige and Noelle introduced themselves briefly.

John McLeod moved to approve the two new board members. Michelle Mercer seconded. The new board members were unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Kevney Dugan gave an overview of the financial statements as Scott Greenstone was ill and unable to attend the meeting.

Revenue is tracking close to budget as are personnel expenses. Marketing expenses are over budget due to timing differences.

Kevney also stated that additional funds the City of Bend said would be available and were included in the original business plan and budget, are not available, so expense variations will be seen for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Kevney also covered highlights of room tax collections, STR data, and AirDNA data. More information is included in the board packet. Kevney noted that the payment the City of Bend received from Airbnb for January was much higher than past payments.

The STR data for February showed a higher occupancy than for January. AirDNA data showed that Airbnb occupancy was up for February.

Tourism Industry Briefing

Kevney covered HB 4120-A that recently passed during the legislative short session. This bill strengthens the transient lodging tax statute to require transient lodging intermediaries to collect and remit transient lodging taxes to state and local jurisdictions.

Business Plan Timeline

The timeline for the business plan is to present to the City of Bend on May 7th. Currently, the expected TRT growth will be 2%. The Visit Bend staff will be working on the budget during the early part of April. The budget should be available to the board on April 24th.

Marketing Update

Nate Wyeth introduced Kelli Carrow, Visit Bend's new Marketing Manager. She was previously working at Sunriver Resort.

Nate discussed the winter marketing campaign and information presented in the Marketing Updates document, which is included in the board packet.

Promotions have included Bend Women's March, a month-long celebration of women through a series of cultural and outdoors events - which is in its first year.

Trip Advisor has been a successful partnership.

The influencer program continues, and for the month of March will include Nicole Brown, who runs Women Who Hike.

Website traffic shows almost 1.4 million visits during the past year. Visits from the Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco markets continue to grow.

The Bend Ale Trail has new atlas that includes Monkless.

Facebook's new algorithm has affected engagement across the platform.

Nate showed a mockup and live demo of the new website that will launch in the next few weeks.

Nate played the new spring commercial from the new season-specific campaign - Share Bend.

Public Relations and Social Media Update

Tawna Fenske discussed highlights from recent media coverage. More information is included in the board packet.

Tawna also covered some recent high-performing Facebook and Instagram posts.

Group Sales Updates

The Visit Bend Sales Update document is included in the board packet.

Board Roundtable

Alan Dietrich stated that business is good and he is looking forward to the new website.

John McLeod said the second half of winter has been much better for Mt. Bachelor and that March has been one of the best months ever. They have some fun events coming up.

Paige Robinson said that they had a very strong February and March - due to the snow. They are seeing solid bookings for summer. They have a new marketing director.

Erick Trachsel stated that March has been strong. They are starting on the on-site spa that is scheduled to open in September.

Noelle Fredland said there will be three new summer concerts announced soon.

Michelle Mercer said that the BCTF grant deadline has been extended to April 30th. OBRA has hired a new Executive Director from Bend.

Matt Williams said that January and February were down. Supply was up due to new properties and will increase again in the future. He is also interested in learning more about Airbnb's share of the market.

Dave Nissen stated that they have partnered with the High Desert Museum to create tours that showcase places included in the Spirit of the West exhibit. They will also be participating in the \$1 for Trails program. The summer kick-off event will be an eco-challenge program and will take place in May.

Public Comment

Lisa Sidor said that because of the launch of the new website, events are not being entered on the current website past May.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Warren
March 20, 2018