



## **Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes March 21, 2017**

**Location:** Bend Visitor Center

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

**Guests:** Ashley Mitchell, Dave Fox, Wendy Kelley, Olivia Inman, Carolyn Eagan, Brett Graham, Carla Moore, Stephanie McNeil, Brandon Sirstins, T.J. Paskewich, Kathleen McLaughlin.

### **Call to Order**

Kevney Dugan called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m. Introduction of guests followed.

### **Meeting Minutes Approval**

Dave Nissen made a motion to approve the January Board Meeting Minutes with one minor edit to correct a typo. Jodie Barram seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously with the one change discussed.

### **Financial Report**

Scott Greenstone stated that 8 months into the current fiscal year, Visit Bend is tracking very close to budget. TRT is about 5% over budget. The expense side is running close to budget. Scott expects to see the current surplus decline as the end of the fiscal year approaches.

Jodie Barram made a motion to approve the financial report. Dave Nissen seconded. The financial report was unanimously approved by the Board.

### **Business Items**

Alan Dietrich's term is coming to a close and he has agreed to continue on the Visit Bend Board for another term.

Matt Williams made a motion to accept the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund Commission's recommendation to appoint Jason Graham to the Performing & Literary Arts Community position on the Commission. Alan Dietrich seconded. The Board voted unanimously to appoint Jason Graham to the position.

Valerie Warren announced an upcoming Travel Oregon - as well as other organizations - grant meeting at the Riverhouse on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

Kevney announced that the next RCTP stakeholder meeting will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Business Plan is in progress and will be presented to BEDAB soon.

### **Tourism Industry Briefing**

TRT collections grew 7.7% for the City of Bend for January 2017. ADR also grew. Weather was a factor for January travel.

The first of March is also showing growth in occupancy and ADR.

Kevney said that there is a public hearing in Salem tomorrow morning, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, for HB 2274.

### **Marketing Update**

Nate Wyeth stated that the winter marketing campaign will be ending soon.

Banner ads were the most successful type of digital advertising.

Nate also stated that managing aspects of digital advertising in house allows for flexibility and quick response.

Work has started on new summer TV commercials.

Portland continues to be the number one source of traffic to the Visit Bend website.

Kevney stated that a website redesign is in progress.

The next version of the Bend Ale Trail Atlas and app will be coming soon and will incorporate Visit Like a Local messaging.

Social media remains strong and the Instagram audience is growing quickly.

More information is available in Marketing Updates in the Board Packet.

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

Tawna Fenske discussed and passed around examples of recent media highlights.

Tawna stated that there are two upcoming FAM trips - one in April and one in May - that involve several journalists and publications. The May trip will focus on sustainable tourism.

Kevney said that now that Bend is a more developed destination, Visit Bend is more able to direct the focus and types of media coverage.

Tawna showed some recent Facebook highlights. Tawna and Kevney also discussed responding to comments criticizing Visit Bend and the tourism industry.

More information is available in the Public Relations Updates in the Board Packet.

### **Group Sales Updates**

Hank Therien said that this weekend an FFA (Future Farmers of America) group will be coming to the region as well as Snowshoe Nationals taking place at Mt. Bachelor. About 200 athletes are registered.

Hank will be attending NASC seeking additional shoulder and winter season groups and events.

Hank is continuing to work on Duathlon Nationals.

Despite the snow, the Cross Country Nationals in February were a success.

Bend was recently awarded the 2018 Fly Fishing Nationals. East Lake, Lava Lake, the Crooked and Deschutes Rivers are planned sites.

The Group Sales Update is included in the Board Packet.

### **Board Roundtable**

Jodie Barram said that the Tower Theatre has had a great season so far with high attendance. Summit High School is hosting an Ultimate Frisbee tournament on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dave Nissen said the snow has been great and they are anticipating a long season.

John McLeod said that they are expecting a visitation record this year. There were three months of 100+ inches of snow. They are losing some snow pack but have plenty to continue the season through May.

The Hella Big Air event will be held this Saturday.

Brent McLean said that Brasada Ranch has had a great year. They have a new Sales Director.

Alan Dietrich said that the Downtown Bend Bendistillery tasting room has opened.

### **Public Comment**

Wendy Kelley of Wall Street Suites stated they have had a good year and have received some awards.

Carolyn Eagan of the City of Bend said that they moving into street repair season and are working on finding funds for road maintenance. They are working on their biannual budget. She expects TRT to come up in funding discussions and media coverage. They are also reviewing Downtown Parking.

Brandon Sirstins of Brasada is happy to be in Bend. He recently worked in the Tahoe area and in Steamboat Springs.

Ashley Mitchell of the Marriott, Carla Moore of the DoubleTree, and Stephanie McNeil of the Oxford report that things are going well.

Dave Fox is looking forward to a successful Art in the High Desert event. They have had more artists apply this year than ever before.

Linda Orcelletto reported that Sundays in the Bend Visitor Center remain busy. There are quite a few Bend Ale Trail completers. They have been receiving positive feedback.

T.J. Paskewich, Director of Sales at the Springhill Suites is hoping to get their doors open soon and welcomes anyone who would like a tour.

Brett Graham of The Bend Tour Company said that he recently had a meeting with several other Bend area tour operators and outfitters.

Brett also said that they are expanding their space in the Box Factory. They expect to host a grand opening on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Warren  
March 21, 2017