



Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes June 21, 2016

Location: Bend Visitor Center

Present: Doug La Placa, Kevney Dugan, Valerie Warren, Hank Therien, Nate Wyeth, Tawna Fenske, Brent McLean, Michelle Mercer, Jodie Barram, Erick Trachsel, Alan Dietrich, Ben Perle, Matt Williams, Scott Greenstone, Lisa Sidor, Linda Orcelletto.

Guests: Wes Price, Bette Fraser, Raul Ainardi, Noelle Fredland, Cassondra Schindler, Stephen Hamway, Pete Alport, Dave Fox, Rod Porsche, René Mitchell.

Call to Order

Doug La Placa called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Introduction of guests followed.

Fiscal Year 2015 Financial Review

Wes Price stated that Visit Bend has reached a point of financial stability that didn't exist a decade ago. Wes discussed the differences between a financial review, which Price, Fronk & Co. performs each year, and an audit. A financial review is an outside view of the work Scott Greenstone of Greenstone Financial Reporting does for Visit Bend. Many other trade organizations such as EDCO and the Bend Chamber of Commerce use the same procedure.

The most recent review report shows a clean report, indicating that the financials are in good order. Wes went through the review report included in the Board Packet, pointing out some highlights. The cash position is good; revenue continues to increase; the fact that Visit Bend has virtually no debt is positive.

Wes also commented that he would like to move up the dates of the financial review process to the October timeframe.

Wes stated that there should be a recognition of the economic driver that Visit Bend has been.

Financial Report

Scott Greenstone presented highlights from the current financials as the end of the fiscal year approaches. Total revenue is over budget by close to \$500,000. The Fiscal Year 2016 budget was built on a combination of actuals and estimates. The actual revenue from the City of Bend/TRT collections ended up being much higher than anticipated. Scott stated that there has been deliberate efforts to deploy this additional revenue and not to build up cash too high.

Sales and Marketing expenses are over budget almost to the same extent as revenue. Scott expects that Visit Bend will end the year within one percentage point of where net income was budgeted to be - which should be close to zero.

Scott noted that the biggest challenge for creating a budget for Visit Bend is to account for the fluctuations in revenue that happen throughout the year as funding levels change.

Doug stated that the City of Bend is still holding about \$600,000 in tourism funds that may be allocated to Visit Bend. Doug also said that there are no surprises in the current fiscal year financials, and that everything looks good.

Ben Perle asked if there has been any indication as to what the City of Bend will do with the additional funds they are holding. Doug stated that their intention is to make a decision at the July 21st meeting following the end of the fiscal year.

Doug covered recent numbers from the Room Tax Collections report, which is included in the Board Packet.

Visit Bend Leadership Transition Briefing

Doug went through the items that have been accomplished on transition objectives document which had been circulated to the Board. This document is also included in the Board Packet.

Marketing Update

Nate Wyeth said that the summer marketing campaign, which focuses on Oregon only, started on Memorial Day weekend. On the digital side, there is a slightly expanded market. Radio is targeting the I-5 corridor.

The next Visitor Guide is on track to be out within the next 4 weeks. The new, redesigned Bend Ale Trail Atlas should be out within the next couple of weeks.

Approximately 90% of the advertising budget for the upcoming fiscal year will be spent on non-summer months.

Website traffic continues to increase. Specific details are available in the Board Packet.

The Bend Ale Trail completions continue to increase as do app downloads.

Social media is outpacing several other destinations and engagement is high.

Kevney stated that Porter Co's initial year performance was impressive and Visit Bend looks forward to increasing work with them.

Public Relations and Social Media Update

Tawna Fenske discussed recent PR highlights including a large Oregon piece in United's in-flight magazine and *Where to Retire*. Mountain biking and culinary appears to be trends.

Tawna has been turning down requests for media visits during the summer - except those looking to write about the off season.

Tawna showed some high-performing Facebook posts.

Group Sales Updates

Hank Therien shared some key updates of upcoming groups/events, listed in the Board Packet.

Hank stated that Visit Bend is bidding to host the NAIA Cascade Conference Championships as well as several other groups.

The third Oregon Senior Games just wrapped up. Registration numbers were up as well as out of area participants.

The consultants performing analysis for a potential regional sports facility are in town this week working with Kevney.

Board Roundtable

Matt Williams, Michelle Mercer, Brent McLean and Erick Trachsel stated that business is good and that they are busy.

Alan Dietrich is waiting on permits from the City of Bend, and business is good.

of the Tower Theatre. They have \$15,000 left to go in their fundraising campaign.

Doug stated that the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund awarded their annual grants last week, totaling around \$180,000.

Ben Perle said that the Oxford Hotel continues to be successful.

Doug finished the meeting by saying thank you to the Board and several other guests and acknowledged the photos and videography of Pete Alport.

Doug thanked Scott Greenstone for his work and contributions to the organization.

Public Comment

Cassandra Schindler thanked Doug, the Visit Bend team, and the Board of Directors for their work.

Dave Fox said that Visit Bend has helped expand the reach of Art in the High Desert.

Lisa Sidor said that Visit Bend has evolved into an art town.

Linda Orcelletto stated that visitors are grateful for the information they receive from the Visitor Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Warren
June 21, 2016