



Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes September 19, 2017

Location: Bend Visitor Center

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

Guests: Mike Patron, John Maddigan, Lora Haddock, Pat Burrus, Olivia Inman, Kathleen McLaughin

Call to Order

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

Meeting Minutes Approval

Michelle Mercer was listed twice in the “Present” section of the May 9th Meeting Minutes. This has been corrected. Jodie Barram moved to approve the minutes from the May Board Meeting. Dave Nissen seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Financial Report

Scott Greenstone stated that the fiscal year end ended at approximately a net income of zero, which is according to plan.

For the current fiscal year, there are really no surprises so far. He anticipates a favorable revenue variance. To-date revenue is approximately 5% over budget.

Overall, expenses are running close to budget. There are some timing differences for sales and marketing expenses that led to spending being under budget for the first two months. Web development and production are significantly under budget year-to-date due to large amounts of anticipated cost being paid during the prior fiscal year.

Matt Williams moved to approve the August Financial Report. Jodie Barram seconded. The Financial Report was unanimously approved.

Tourism Industry Briefing

Kevney Dugan stated that TRT continues to grow.

Visit Bend has started to receive Airbnb specific reports from AirDNA.

August was a very good month but did reflect a flat occupancy growth. ADR and RevPAR both showed significant increases. Toward the end of the month and in early September, the smoke from forest fires appears to have negatively impacted occupancy.

Kevney reported that after attending COVA’s State of the Industry breakfast, he feels confident that Visit Bend is on the right track with marketing.

Visit Bend Business Update

Kevney said that the annual financial review is underway and Wes Price from Price, Fronk & Co. should be presenting at the November Board Meeting.

The EDCO partnership continues to be successful and the collaboration at Outdoor Retailer went well.

A series of four coasters were created to promote the Visit Like a Local campaign. The coasters represent four different hot topics and will be distributed to breweries and businesses around town.

Final numbers from the free Ride Bend shuttle have not been reported, but the initial year seems to have been well received.

The Bend Pledge is under development and will be promoted as part of the Visit Like a Local campaign. It should launch in the next couple of weeks.

The BCTF Commission has a meeting on September 25th.

Marketing Update

Nate Wyeth distributed the new Bend Visitor Guide that has been completely redesigned. The design is much more clean and minimalist than previous versions. It is the most environmentally-friendly produced Visit Bend has ever done. The new guide does not have listings but directs people to the website for current information. There will also be a separate hotel listing and map brochure produced. The guide contains a tear out map and Bend Ale Trail passport.

Kevney said that print materials are still valuable but the intent of the new guide is more of an interest piece than a strict business listing catalog. The guide only has full-page ads and the number of ads was reduced.

Nate said that the summer season advertising campaign - which only consisted of a small number of ads in the Portland market - is wrapping up.

The 10th Month campaign is underway. The overall spend will be around \$30,000.

The shoulder season and winter marketing campaign will focus on digital rather than traditional advertising. The three main campaign focuses are Bend Ale Trail, Friends, and Family.

Another new program is the Instagram influencer program where Visit Bend will bring in a different influencer from a major target market each month. The first influencer will be coming at the end of the month from Seattle. This particular influencer is very environmentally focused.

The production of the new summer creative is almost complete.

Website traffic continues to show the strength of the Portland market.

The website redesign is also underway. The new design will be completely different from the current website and will reflect new trends.

The second run of the current version of the Bend Ale Trail Atlas will happen later this year.

As Facebook engagement continues to decline overall, promoted posts will be used.

TripAdvisor traffic continues to be strong.

Public Relations and Social Media Update

Tawna Fenske showed some recent media highlights including *Eugene* magazine, *Northwest Travel* magazine, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Alaska Airlines* magazine and *Business Insider*.

Visit Bend does not host any FIT trips during the summer, but this fall several journalists will be coming.

Tawna discussed new strategies for Facebook, including video, giveaways, and posts with an educational component.

Group Sales Updates

Kevney stated that the Group Sales updates are included in the Board Packet.

Board Roundtable

Dave Nissen said that the eclipse was a professional and personal highlight. FIT travel is down - mostly due to smoke. Corporate trips begin in September. This demonstrates how important both types of travel are to the industry.

Jodie Barram stated that the Tower Theatre's main season has kicked off.

Matt Williams asked what Visit Bend's role is in the Mt. Bachelor lodging program. Kevney said that Visit Bend is working with Mt. Bachelor on some collaborative marketing programs.

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

Public Comment

Mike Patron stated that the International Association of Golf Tour Operators are here getting ready for their conference next June.

Pat Burrus said that this week is a big week for overflow business for the Shilo Inn as there are some large conferences at the Riverhouse.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Warren
September 19, 2017