



Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes June 16, 2015

Location: Bend Visitor Center

Present: Doug La Placa, Valerie Warren, Kevney Dugan, Nate Wyeth, Tawna Fenske, Matt Williams, Alan Dietrich, James Jaggard for Dave Nissen, Gregg Harper for Ben Perle, La Dona Canevaro, Michelle Mercer, Hank Therien, Lisa Sidor.

Guests: Carolyn Eagan, Wendy Puller, Noelle Fredland, Erick Trachsel, Joey Hamilton, Stephen Hamway, Amanda Warner

Call to Order

Doug LaPlaca called the meeting to order at 8:03am. Introduction of guests followed.

The minutes from the April Board Meeting were approved with no changes. Matt Williams moved to approve the minutes. La Dona Canevaro seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Doug La Placa presented a summary of the financial reports. The revenue continues to be ahead of budget, mostly due to TRT collections. YTD Revenue through May is just over 20% ahead of budget.

Personnel expenses were slightly over budget due to timing variances. Sales and Marketing expenses were over budget due to deliberate spending of budget overages. Overhead expenses are tracking slightly over budget.

Net income is ahead of budget but should come down to between \$75,000 and \$100,000 by year end. This additional income will be used to start programs in Northern California. The cash position is high but will be spent down to fund the first grant cycle of the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund.

Tourism Industry Briefing

Doug discussed some current highlights from the tourism industry:

- April room tax collections were up 28% (normalized).
- Occupancy data through March is at a record high for the City of Bend.

- Website performance - the site saw a 27% increase over the prior year.
- Blog visits exceeded 100,000 for the first time.
- The most visited webpage on the site is the Events Calendar.

- New confirmed and potential hotel projects include the Springhill Suites, My Place Suites, McMenamins, a hotel next to the Fairfield Inn, and a hotel project that will add approximately 110 rooms.

- Commission in May.
- Alan Dietrich moved to approve the grant awards; Gregg Harper seconded. The vote to approve the awards was unanimous. A summary of the recipients is presented in the Board Packet.
- PorterCo will be assisting with media planning and media buys in Northern California.
- Bend Parks and Recreation has several projects nearing completion including the whitewater park and removal of the Colorado Dam, the ice area and events shelter, Gopher Gulch, and a Rush soccer complex at Pine Nursery Park.
- There is a record lineup of summer concerts at the Les Schwab Amphitheater.
- The Riverhouse has a new ownership group and a large renovation project will begin this fall.

Additional details are available in the Board Packet.

Marketing Update

Nate Wyeth stated that the summer 2015 advertising campaign is in full swing. Over 7,000 commercials will air in the I-5 corridor. The radio campaign has been increased and will expand to the Eugene area.

The new Visitor Guide will be sent to the printer by the end of this week. The Mountain Biking Mini-Guide will also be distributed throughout the summer.

The website continues to perform well. Since June 1st, there has been over 40% growth.

Recent blog posts have been very popular.

The top most visited website pages recently have been: the Events Calendar; the Home page; Bend Ale Trail; What to Do; Hiking; Hotels & Motels.

The Bend Ale Trail continues to grow. The new Bend Ale Trail Atlas and app just launched as well as the new Drinkable Diversions program.

Social media - the Facebook audience continues to show high levels of engagement. Other social media outlets are also performing well.

Several new TV and radio spots are under production, as well as a new version of the Roundabout Art Route map and brochure.

Public Relations Updates

Tawna Fenske discussed highlights from recent media coverage and passed around some examples.

Tawna also stated that she has been receiving numerous requests for FAM trips from journalists.

Tawna presented some recent popular Facebook posts.

Group Sales Updates

Kevney Dugan discussed several group sales updates.

Future groups include USATF XC Nationals, USA Triathlon, USA Hop Growers, and Western Enlisted Association.

New active pursuits include USA Cycling Collegiate Road Nationals, USA BMX, Snowshoe Nationals, and Golden Glove Nationals.

The Oregon Senior Games starts this week. Approximately 600 athletes have registered. Pickleball, golf, and bowling showed a lot of growth.

Facility enhancements continue to aid with attracting groups to the area.

Board Roundtable

Matt Williams asked if anything went out from the City of Bend to discuss the June 1st rate increase. Carolyn Eagan stated that an announcement did go out.

James Jaggard stated that their website is also showing growth.

Alan Dietrich suggested calling for photos from people completing the Bend Ale Trail and Drinkable Diversions.

Public Comment

Carolyn Eagan reminded everyone that it is also construction season.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00a.m.

Notes By: Valerie Warren
June 16, 2015