



VISIT BEND

Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes January 22, 2019

Location: Bend Visitor Center

Present: Kevney Dugan, Valerie Warren, Nate Wyeth, Tawna Fenske, Kelli Carrow, Michelle Mercer, Paige Robinson, Erick Trachsel, Matt Williams, Brent McLean, Reese Thedford for John McLeod, Alan Dietrich, Noelle Fredland, Jason Lusk, Lisa Sidor, Scott Greenstone

Absent: None

Guests: Olivia Evers, Bobby Evers, Raul Ainardi, Carolyn Eagan, Wendy Puller, Julia Theisen, Dave Nissen

Call to Order

Chair Noelle Fredland called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. Introductions followed.

Meeting Minutes Approval

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

Financial Report

Scott Greenstone reported on highlights from the recent financial statements, focusing on the Profit & Loss Analysis through the first half of the fiscal year. Revenue is slightly ahead of budget, by about 2%; personnel expenses are very slightly over budget; marketing is close to budget; overhead expenses are slightly under budget. Most of the categories will true up by the end of the fiscal year.

The Balance Sheet is in good shape. Right now, Visit Bend is in the point of the year when the cash position tends to be the highest

The "Rainy Day" cash reserve account has been receiving 5% each month. The balance will exceed \$100,000 as of this month.

BCTF - The fund is on track to have approximately \$190,000 - \$200,000 to grant this cycle.

Brent McLean moved to approve the financial report. Alan Dietrich seconded. The financial report was unanimously approved.

Tourism Industry Briefing

Kevney Dugan presented the most recent TRT collections. Currently, TRT is 3.1% up year-over-year. The projected increase was 2%.

According to STR reports, November was up and December was down a bit. Calendar year 2018 was up very slightly.

AirDNA showed strong months as well.

More information is available in the Board Packet.

A recent survey collected information around perceptions of tourism in the community - specifically on the value of tourism. This research will be finalized in the near future. The sample size was around 230.

The Visit Bend Staff is doing a team retreat on Friday to discuss mission and values, and share information between areas of the business.

Marketing Update

Nate Wyeth stated that Visit Bend is in the middle of the biggest media buy of the year. Some of the partners are Google, Facebook, Comcast, Hulu, Pandora.

The primary markets continue to be Portland, Seattle, and Northern California.

Nate presented highlights from a recent digital campaign that will be available in Seattle and Northern California.

Focus will be shifting to spring break and Bend Women's March.

Bend Ale Trail Month was successful. TRT collections were up over November 2017. The website saw over 100,000 visits during the month of November. This was the first year that Bend Ale Trail Month was promoted in the Bay Area. Nate also reported on data collected from surveys completed by those redeeming their passports in the Visitor Center.

The Instagram Influencer campaign continues to show strong results.

Nate showed the most recent new 30-second winter commercial in the Share Bend campaign.

The website analytics include 917,091 users over the past year. Organic search is the number one way people find the website. Because of this, SEO remains a focus. The top visited pages during the January include Winter Fun, Bend Ale Trail, Six Traditions Blog Post, Resilience Fest, Event Calendar.

Facebook continues to show a decline of post engagements. The Instagram following and engagement is growing.

Kelli Carrow presented updates on third-party platforms such as Google and TripAdvisor. Google posts are a good way to show updates of what is happening in Bend. There have already been over 800,000 views through Google's new DMO program. TripAdvisor has made some recent changes to its destination marketing program. Nate showed the new Bend page on TripAdvisor. The new algorithm is in beta.

More information is available in the Board Packet.

Public Relations and Social Media Update

Tawna presented highlights from recent media coverage. More information is available in the Board Packet. Recent FAM trips have resulted in good media coverage.

Bend Cultural Tourism Fund Update

Valerie Warren announced that the grant applications went live as of January 11, 2019. The application will be open until April 12th. The next BCTF Commission meeting is on March 5th at 1:00 p.m. - location TBD and posted on the BCTF area of the Visit Bend website. The grant review meeting is scheduled for May 1st.

One Commission seat, the Creative Community Representative is currently open. Michelle Mercer completed her term in December 2018 and Valerie is taking over as the non-voting representative of the Visit Bend Board/Staff.

Kevney thanked Noelle and Michelle for their service on the Commission.

Group Sales Updates

Kevney is now handling the Group Sales area. The USA Climbing Bouldering Nationals are coming up in February. ESPN will be live streaming the event on ESPN 2 and 3.

The Bend Marathon will be on April 20th.

Two new gravel bike races will be happening this year.

Travel Oregon will be hosting its Outdoor Recreation Summit at the Riverhouse in May.

More information is available in the Board Packet.

Kevney will also be taking over advertising sales.

Board Roundtable

Alan Dietrich said that sprints have become a competitive environment and the recent Black Butte Whiskey release was a success.

Brent McLean said that 2018 was a great year. Brasada will see some changes including a new pool, food carts, a fire pit, and a grassy area for events. The fitness center will be remodeled. There will also be a new golf simulator for winter golfing. The resort had its best year last year - especially with groups. The real estate market is changing.

Paige Robinson stated that she is seeing companies with around 35-50 homes are selling to aggregators. Bluebird is carving out a niche. She said that the quality of inventory in the market seems to be on a decline. Bookings for summer are 5-15% higher than last summer.

Eric Trachsel hosted a Gala for Bend Habitat for Humanity last night. The spa will open on March 1st.

Reese Thedford reported that Mt. Bachelor had a strong holiday break. MLK Jr. weekend was very strong as well. Winter PrideFest is next weekend. They will be opening up more event and banquet services for summer.

Michelle Mercer is anticipating the summer season.

Matt Williams said that the STR reports showed that 2018 was flat or slightly down. There is a lot of new inventory in the area.

Noelle Fredland stated that they announced their first concert of the season, The Avett Brothers. BrewFest will also happen in August. They are investing in some ADA improvements. The retail businesses are reporting a mixed January. Boxwood Kitchen recently opened. Free Spirit has also opened next to Athleta. There is another new business coming in May.

Public Comment

Dave Nissen is continuing art and nature. They are doing a special Bend Camerata event for A Cappella festival on Sunday, February 10th.

They recently filmed with Pete Alport for their snow camping tours.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Warren
January 22, 2019