



VISIT CARMEL (CHID)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Hofsas House – Conference Room
San Carlos Street
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921
Thursday, July 6, 2017
2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Amy Johnson, Carmel Country Inn; Berit Keeble, Tradewinds; Rich Pepe, Pepe International; Christine Sandin, Sunset Center; Mary Crowe, La Playa; Pamela Sheppard, Horizon Inn; Mark Watson, Inns-by-the-Sea

Board Members Absent: Amrish Patel

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel; Jeff Burghardt and Nicole Doré from Burghardt + Doré; Kristen Hunter from Hunter PR; Alliah Sheta from MCCVB; Chip Rerig, City Administrator, City of Carmel; Carrie Theis, Carmel City Council and Vice Mayor; Carolyn Hardy, Carmel City Council; Bobby Richards, Carmel City Council; Jan Reimers, Carmel City Council; Jenny MacMurdo, Carmel Chamber of Commerce; Sandra Book, Carmel Visitor Center; Ken Spilfogel of Flaherty's Restaurant; Tony Saleme, Anton & Michel; Martha Torres, Carmel Plaza; Valarie Schad, Carmel International Film Festival; Mark Oman, Carmel Dog Tales; Amanda Levett, The Vagabond House; Azucena Dominguez, CCI

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Amy Johnson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM

Public Comment: None.

Approval of Minutes: **Mark motioned approval of minutes, Christine seconded. M/S: Motion passed unanimously.**

Special Presentation: Karen from Hunter PR was called into conference and gave a presentation on social media influencer promotions and offered guidelines and recommendations for the board to consider. The proposed guidelines were influenced by CVB policy and best practices. Both Rich and Mark asked about how we can measure results. Responses varied, but essentially the answer is that there is currently no widely accepted methodology for measuring social media initiatives. Many comments about personal hosting and booking experiences with influencers were shared. Valarie from the Film

Festival encouraged this practice based on the success the Carmel International Film Festival has had with it. There was discussion about whether or not to exceed the earlier budget of \$10,000 to include more influencers. **Rich made a motion to spend an additional \$5,000 on the influencer promotion. Pam seconded. M/S: Motion passed unanimously.** A contest is also in the works for Instagram. Mark suggested we do a Facebook contest as well as long as we have Woo Box.

Visit Carmel Executive Director Report: Amy Herzog highlighted a few points from her written report and informed the Board of an article that will be coming out in *Carmel Magazine* that features the marketing initiatives of Visit Carmel. She also showed an image of the collateral piece on Big Sur from the MCCVB that has been distributed to the Carmel lodging properties. She discussed updating Carmel content on the Visit California site. She is now on the Board of CCTC and is a member of the PR committee. She updated us on the IPW and explained the types of operators and leads presented. She also suggested a workshop be set up for the local properties to take advantage of the leads and simplify the process to respond. Pam reiterated the complexities of administering all of the opportunities coming from IPW to the individual properties, such as consistent room types and the reality of the inventory in Carmel. Amy feels most operators want a 3 to 5-star property. FIT travel was pushed therefore consistency of room type should not be a big issue. Carrie asked Amy about the number of appointments taken, and Amy answered that she had 40 appointments while there at the conference and the booth had 170 total.

Stakeholder Reimbursement Program: As a follow-up to the previous discussion about how properties affiliated with Visit Carmel can be compensated for their participation in Visit Carmel related guest hosting, a policy was drafted and presented for consideration. \$150 room rate, plus tax was clarified. **Mark motioned that, with the suggested language change, this become policy effective August 1, 2017. Berit seconded. M/S: Motion passed unanimously.**

MCCVB Update: Alliah also presented the collateral piece re: Big Sur and commented on the status of access to Big Sur. MCCVB worked with Matador 360 on content video and you'll start to see that on their social media programs. Annual luncheon is on August 24 at Embassy Suites in Seaside. Please join. They are working with their new ad agency on firming up media plans for the coming year and will have a presentation at next meeting. They will also be releasing a menu of co-op opportunities and a content calendar. Mark asked about the Conference Center – they are hearing about an October opening. Kristen added that the MCCVB hosted a car week planning meeting recently. The next MCCVB Car Week meeting is July 19. It appears a new event has been added to Laguna Seca the weekend before Car Week. Amy Johnson mentioned MST transportation services have been lacking during recent Car Weeks, she will call them to follow up. Amy is also looking for the CVB's "Navigating Car Week" PDF. Christine mentioned the addition of Aston Martin to the Sunset Center events list in August for Car Week. Jeff Burghardt stated that he also had been talking to Aston Martin about promoting their event at Sunset Center.

Public Relations and Social Media: Kristen Hunter gave a report on her June activities including: contest research, preparing social media influencer protocol recommendations, responding to numerous media leads, phone and visit requests, setting dates for the November FAM, etc. She then highlighted all of the

June media coverage received. July plans include: news release development to cover mindfulness, experiential images, mid-week escapes, media posts on: wellness (hiking, biking, walking, spa) and the arts (Bach Festival). She mentioned still wanting to host blogger “Bitches Who Brunch” but needed restaurant participation. Restaurant recommendations were thrown out from around the room.

Marketing and Advertising: Jeff Burghardt gave his presentation, beginning with the Mindfulness campaign elements – photography, collateral (mindfulness guide), retreat program/speakers (Nov/Jan/March), promotional coverage (Mindful Magazine), marketing components, etc. He is envisioning a mindfulness festival in one or two years. They are also working on a brand refresh – creating an experiential brand image including: logo & tagline updates (showed works in progress), video, photography, website, etc. During the logo presentation, questions came up around the approval process and the political protocol around this issue. Chip explained that a bridge contract for 3 months will be put in place for Burghardt+Doré until an RFP is complete. The RFP for city marketing services is required by law, but a number of options will be presented for Council consideration at the August Council meeting. For example, one option could include the Council directing its City marketing funds to Visit Carmel for their discernment in disbursement. In this case, Visit Carmel ends up directing all marketing decisions, including the approval of a new city logo. Chip encouraged everyone to participate in the August Council meeting if we have thoughts or opinions on this. Back to Jeff: the remaining 2017 media plan was presented. Fall focus for TV will be on Los Angeles. Print will focus will be on San Francisco (SF Magazine, SF Chronicle). He also discussed the use of Adara, e-blasts, website promotion, brochure distribution, etc.

Financial Report: Mark Watson went over the most current operating statement and balance sheet. Mark simplified the balance sheet report, which shows that we have \$154,000 in the bank. We started the year with \$255,000 rolled over from last year, bringing the annual budget up to about \$770,000, Visit Carmel has allocated about \$713,000 through the end of the calendar year. He also went through the highlights of the Operating Statement. Mark reviewed recent numbers from our competitive set: over the last 12 months we are up 5%, Monterey is up 4%; Calistoga is up 3.6%; Santa Barbara up 1.8% (their numbers are skewed by short term rentals ceasing).

Additions to the Agenda: Rich made a quick comment about perceptions out there in the community regarding marketing for visitors to the area and feels Visit Carmel shouldn't be blamed for day visitors. For example, in general more people are traveling and Chinese tourism is way up. There is a larger picture that we are just a microcosm of. We all hope the community at large understands this. Rich also reported on the potential restaurant improvement district – a group met yesterday. He is still working on consensus and doesn't feel they are quite ready to form an official RID just yet, he thinks with more time they will be open to the idea. It was suggested that maybe we get through the summer and re-approach the restaurant owners when the business has slowed down a bit.

Mark wants to put an item on next meeting's agenda: work with Jeff on a review of Jack Rabbit findings.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:51 PM