



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)

VISIT CARMEL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING

Bingham Room, Sunset Center

Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921

Thursday, February 1, 2018

2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Mary Crowe , Amy Johnson, Kevin Krueger, Jenny MacMurdo, Amrish Patel, Rich Pèpe, Christine Sandin, Pamela Sheppard, Mark Watson

Board Members Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog CHID Director; Jeff Burghardt and Nicole Doré from Burghardt + Doré; Jessica Keener and Jeniffer Kocher from MCCVB; Vice Mayor and Council Member Carrie Theis; Council Member Bobby Richards; Council Member Jan Reimers (for the Abbi Agency presentation only); City Administrator Chip Rerig; Abbi Whitaker, Ashley Brune, and Steven Smith from the Abbi Agency; Gina Delli-Gatti from Sunset Center; Kaitlin Sheppard from Horizon Inn; Berit Keebler from Tradewinds; Jo Todd; Sandra Book from Chamber; Valarie Schad from Carmel International Film Festival; Mark Oman from Carmel Visitor Center.

Individual introductions were made around the room.

Carmel Art Walk brochures were passed out by Jo Todd.

Valarie Schad made an announcement that the Carmel International Film Festival will not continue. She referred to an article in today's Herald for more information.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Amy Johnson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m.

Public Comment:

Christine announced that the Sunset Center just confirmed singer/songwriter Shelby Lynne for Friday, April 20, 2018. A special ticket promotion will be crafted for Visit Carmel affiliates and announced at the next meeting.

Minutes from January 4, 2018:

Christine made a motion to approve the minutes of January 4. M/S: Christine/Mary. Approved unanimously.

VISIT CARMEL Executive Director Report: Amy presented her report in a new format, including updates on Community Relations. Articles about Visit Carmel's Mindful-by-the-Sea program appeared in the Monterey County Weekly as well as Carmel magazine. Amy has been in communication with the stakeholders, encouraging more participation with the Mindful marketing, and also introducing the community to The Abbi Agency.

The Abbi Agency has been in Carmel the past several days meeting with key stakeholders. They have now toured 17 properties.

In terms of Strategic Funding, the City and Visit Carmel are in the final stages of negotiating the contract for Visit Carmel to manage the City's marketing funding. And, Amy has confirmed that Visit Carmel's current insurance policy is in compliance with the new funding source.

An announcement was made about the Monday night (Feb 5) improvement district workshop at City Hall. Amy Johnson encouraged people to attend and support.

Visit California has featured Carmel Beach in two different e-blasts this month. Also, its 2018 Travel Guide focuses on the Mindfulness program.

For the Central Coast Tourism Council, Visit Carmel is seeking to secure a "Hidden Gems" spot on the map, of which 225K are printed and distributed throughout the state.

Financial Report: Mark Watson went over the most current operating statement and balance sheet. We currently have \$68,000 in equity on our balance sheet. On the P&L, Mark reviewed a few new reporting changes that will differentiate marketing versus public relations expenses. We are close to our projections for January, including negative cash flows of approximately \$60,000. Cash flows will ease after payments are received by the City in the coming weeks. (See reports presented.)

Public Relations and Social Media: The Abbi Agency presentation by Abbi Whitaker covered their 6-month strategy for PR and social media. They intend to measure brand impact, digital impact, and bottom line impact. Abbi further broke out the key measurements in each category, such as: can a media story be traced to an increase in booking directly to an innkeeper's site?

Ashley Brune presented the Public Relations Strategy, which includes objectives like increasing messaging of brand pillars, increasing traffic to CarmelCalifornia.com, increasing the number of backlinks etc. She then reviewed their 90-day action plan and all of the tasks they've completed: meetings held, keyword analysis, social media audit, created a system to qualify journalist requests, built a target media list, etc. Left to do: complete a media analysis, coordinate individual FAMs, develop a social media best practices workshop for innkeepers, attend Visit California media receptions, leverage events to promote overall destination messaging.

The Social Media Strategy was presented by Steven Smith. The Abbi Agency conducted a social media audit, and Steven shared high-level learnings like our audience demo: for example, on Facebook it's 75% women. Primary social media locations are: LA 11%; San Jose, 8.5%, San Francisco, 6%, Monterey 5%, Carmel 5%. Top posts & successful content for similar destinations were shared. Goals: increase Instagram audience by 25% over the next year through user generated content, targeted social media advertising and influencer heavy campaigns targeted toward page exposure. Objective 2: Increase San Francisco audience by 40% over the next year with strategies including targeted media posts promoting content directly to the Bay Area audience. Objective 3: Increase Facebook engagement by 10% over the next year. Goals for Twitter and LinkedIn and other specific social media campaign ideas were also presented.

The Abbi Agency also will be looking to engage some influencers (including dog influencers) to visit Carmel, with specific criteria expected.

Marketing and Advertising: Jeff Burghardt presented an update on marketing and advertising efforts. The Winter Campaign is finishing up, and just after Valentine's Day we go into the spring theme of "pure inspiration." Core drive target markets in off-season are San Francisco/Bay Area and whereas the Fall Campaign is focused on LA and San Diego. He went over the media buys for the winter marketing campaign including tv media, online and print media, sweepstakes, and Eblasts. The website traffic is experiencing double digit growth. Nicole presented first runs of the new collateral, including the walking map. Jeff continued the presentation with spring campaign plans. A sample of our accolade video shorts was presented. A compilation video will be made available to run in hotel and restaurant lobbies, as well as with the MCCVB and other relevant outlets. Carryover funds usage was discussed with a presentation of a potential in-flight marketing campaign schedule.

Pam Sheppard made a motion to allocate the \$26,000 to fund the in-flight media campaign with United and Alaska Airlines as proposed by Jeff. M/S: Pam/Amrish. Approved unanimously.

MCCVB Update: Jessica Keener touched upon the continuation of the Winter Campaign and Sweepstakes as well as the "It's On" Season Campaign. She showed the top social posts on seemonterey.com and the latest blog content. Media coverage highlights included publications in the U.S., China and Ireland.

Carmel Chamber: Jenny MacMurdo mentioned the new labor laws workshop that took place and the tax cuts workshop presented by H&W coming up. They are focused on coordinating the shuttles for the AT&T Pebble Beach Tournament – they are still looking for volunteers. They are also working with Sunset Center to finalize the Disney event in September 2018. New plastics ordinance in place, worked with the River School to promote. New dog walk implemented and it incorporates the passport concept. Wine walk passports have just been reprinted and delivered to the Chamber for sale. Need for a new media wine walk pass was discussed.

Additions to the Agenda: Next meeting is March 1 – Amy Johnson will not be able to attend so Mark Watson will run the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:34 p.m.