



CARMEL RESTAURANT IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CRID)

COMMITTEE MEETING

Seventh & Dolores Steakhouse

Seventh & Dolores

Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921

Tuesday, March 5, 2019

2:00 PM

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Greg Ahn, Sarah Kabat-Marcy, Colleen Chen Panzuto, Anthony Carnazzo, Rich Pepe

Committee Members Absent: Ken Spilfogel

Also in Attendance: Mark Watson, Inns by the Sea and VC Treasurer; Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel Exec Director; Jeff Burghardt and Nicole Dore from Burghardt + Dore Advertising; Ashley Brune, Steven Smith, Dylan Anderson, Haley Gibbs from The Abbi Agency; Sarah Smith, Flaherty's; Greg Profeta and Carolyne, Forge in the Forest.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Anthony Carnazzo called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM

Public Comments: None.

Approve Minutes: Anthony Carnazzo asked the Committee for a vote to approve the minutes from January 15, 2019 meeting. Rich Pepe made the motion to approve. Greg Ahn seconded. **Minutes unanimously approved.**

Financial Review: Amy Herzog presented a planned projected budget and allocation recommendations for 2019. Mark Watson, Visit Carmel treasurer confirmed that it has been recommended from Civitas that the CRID budget be tracked separately from the CHID and City budgets. Amy created a ratio for Administrative items that would be shared expenses (i.e. accounting fees, insurance policy) and that ratio is based on revenue projections for the year. For 2019, that ratio calculates to CHID 77% / CRID 23%. The allocations allow for full reimbursement back to the City of Carmel, Visit Carmel, and the individual restaurants that fronted the funds to create the Assessment District totaling \$38,601. In addition, \$128,500 is allocated for marketing, \$12,194 for admin, and \$19,239 for reserve.

Marketing: Jeff Burghardt, Nicole Dore, Ashley Brune, Steven Smith, and Amy Herzog presented an integrated marketing plan that entailed a major photo production, a digital advertising plan, social media influencers, public relations pitches and community/stakeholder involvement. Four objectives were identified. #1 Promote a unique & diverse dining destination image. #2 Increase restaurant revenue, especially in Q1 & Q4. #3 Develop a marketing plan to serve all restaurants. #4 Integrate marketing, advertising, PR and social.

Branding and Advertising: Visit Carmel will always be the brand, but the restaurants will have their own brand identity as well. Discussed what messaging words make CBTS restaurants distinct, which seasons we will target most (Q1 and Q4), as well as geographic markets (CA drive and fly markets and more local at times).

Food is a #1 driver of travel decisions, but professional photography is paramount to marketing culinary. As a first step, B+D will contract with high level photographer David Martinez to do a 5-day photo shoot at every assessed restaurant to produce both a food as well as a structure (interior or exterior) shot. This accomplishes multiple goals: build assets to use by Visit Carmel for both advertising as well as PR; ensures some equity so that all restaurants can be represented; provide those assets back to the restaurant so that they may use them to elevate their own branding. There also will be website upgrades and content creation to help give each restaurant more “personality.” Digital ads will be created and every restaurant will be featured in various versions. Many different methods would be used including carousel ads, prospecting, remarketing, geo-targeting people when they are in town. Other benefits to this plan are that the restaurants can start to see benefits right away and the digital ads will allow tracking and measurements.

Anthony suggested that if there are some restaurants that have already heavily invested in updated photography and it fits with the branding, we can use that existing material as to avoid redundancy.

PR and Social Media: Once we have all our photography assets, The Abbi Agency will schedule out each restaurant for a dedicated social media post to ensure all receive exposure on Visit Carmel’s owned social media channels. The PR campaign will focus on inclusion on food/dining-related “listicles” as well as the messaging of unique and diverse restaurants – more per capita than any other U.S. City. The Abbi Agency plans to contract with two SF Bay area influencers this May as well as two in the fall to spend a few days in CBTS with a restaurant focus. In addition to exposure on their platforms, we will use it as an opportunity to acquire more lifestyle/authentic photography assets.

Mark Watson pointed out that when working with the media or influencers, you may not always get what you expect in terms of exposure for your own business, but you are still promoting the destination. And, ultimately by working together, what’s good for one is also good for all.

The Abbi Agency is already working on collecting gift cards from the restaurants to use with media and has signed up for all restaurants e-newsletters and social media channels in order to stay abreast of news.

Stakeholder Participation: Amy discussed that there are ways to increase participation within the community that will enhance results for the restaurants. Every hotel front desk is asked for restaurant recommendations, yet many hoteliers and front desk staff are out of touch with where to suggest and they especially are not aware of the newer spots. We should implement a program by which the hotels dine at a local restaurant. Also, we will hold a marketing workshop in early Fall specific to the restaurants. We will present the marketing plan, provide instructions for how to best capitalize on marketing opportunities, review best practices when working with the media, etc.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting: Discuss in more detail possible participation in California Restaurant Month, including what other destinations have done. What does it take to get banners on Ocean Ave median? Also it was decided that it would be helpful to come up with “themes” (sustainable, breakfast, pubs, etc.) to help with storytelling – creating natural ways to group restaurants.

Greg Ahn also suggested we should be thinking long-term goals as well.

Next three meetings will take place on the first Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m. – April 2, May 7 and June 4 at Seventh & Dolores.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:00PM