



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)

VISIT CARMEL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Sunset Center – Chapman Room

San Carlos and 9th

Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921

Thursday, February 7, 2019

2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Kevin Krueger, Pamela Sheppard, Rich Pepe, Ken Spilfogel, Mark Watson, Mary Crowe, Chip Rerig, Amrish Patel

Board Members Absent: Jenny MacMurdo

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel Exec Director; Ashley Brune, Abbi Agency; April Locke, MCCVB; Jo Todd, Resident; Jeff Burghardt, Burghardt + Dore Advertising; Anthony Carnazzo, The Stationary; Suzanne Gravelle, Carmel Area Reservation Service; Sandra Book, Carmel Chamber Visitor Center; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House and Carmel City Council; Brett Bird, La Playa Hotel and Hotel Carmel; Hella Rothwell, Carmel Art Festival; Berit Keebler, Tradewinds Carmel; Gina Delli-Gatti, Sunset Center; Arianne Bautista, Carmel Barre; Klehri Herzfeld, Go Figure Activewear.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Rich Pepe called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM

Public Comments: Jo Todd announced on Thursday, March 21 she was having a personal art showing at the Monterey Museum of Art from 5:30-6:30pm. Hella Rothwell is requesting marketing help from VC for the Carmel Art Festival that will be held May 17-19 in CBTS. Representatives from Carmel Barre are producing a Fitness and Well-Being Brochure and would like to partner with VC. They are offering the opportunity for visitors to receive 2 day passes for \$35 and 20% off all apparel. They are also willing to host media to attend a variety of classes.

Approval of Minutes: ***Chip Rerig made a motion to approve the minutes from January 10, 2019. Mary Crowe seconded the motion. Minutes approved.***

Carmel Restaurant Improvement District Update: Anthony Carnazzo reported that at the first committee meeting he was elected as chairperson. They spent the first meeting clarifying issues including assessment, street vendors, and ordinances. Stakeholders voiced their concerns but for now the message is “a wait and see attitude” and take a positive approach. The committee reviewed the

feedback from the surveys that have been returned. The next committee meeting is March 5, at which the ad agency and PR will present marketing direction for discussion, and then it will be presented at the next VC Board meeting.

Executive Director Report: Amy Herzog noted:

- The Carmel Chamber Annual Report was out in print and that every Board member was provided a copy at today's meeting. Highlights from the visitor center include 1600 walk-ins, 244 phone calls and 10 booked room nights. The Chamber will be running the AT&T Shuttle through Sunday from the Plaza 6:30am-6:00pm. The Chamber has sent a letter to the State of CA questioning the way the Sidewalk Vending bill was passed and the disregard for the specific character of some of the districts and the blanket compliance issue.
- There will be a reception to celebrate the inaugural Dallas Flight on April 2 from 4-6pm at Del Monte Aviation. AA reps will be in attendance and everyone in the hospitality industry is encouraged to attend.
- Sustainability Summit encourages stakeholders to continue to integrate sustainability in everything we do. This will be an ongoing effort. VC can help by highlighting more efforts on our website and social media. Seek out sustainability stories to promote on social media. Encourage stakeholders to link to pages on VC website that highlight sustainability efforts.
- Stakeholder Eblast communication continues to inform stakeholders about upcoming events, marketing opportunities, and requests for media hosting.
- CCTC update included a representative from SLO attending the VCA media event in NYC. Noble Studios has been hired as the new PR / Marketing Agency and has partnered with DCI on PR. This large NYC firm will be concentrating on an East Coast initiative. The CCTC will host a retreat on the Monterey Peninsula on April 17-18 and will occupy approximately 50 room nights.
- Amy highlighted several key upcoming media fam opportunities sponsored by MCCVB and Visit CA including Australia, Brazil and Mexico. Amy will head to LA on February 11 to attend the 2019 Outlook Forum hosted by Visit CA.

Marketing and Advertising: Jeff Burghardt highlighted the upcoming 2019 campaign which includes the following seasonal themes: Winter (Romance, Food and Wine), Spring (Pure Inspiration), Summer (Things To Do) and Fall (Spontaneity and Weather). The multi-media mix will focus mainly on TV Media and Online Media. SF Chronicle will be the only print media. VC will run another sweepstakes to continue to build on our email list for our Eblast campaigns.

- Key update to the marketing budget includes the cancellation of the Lifestyle 360 inflight 90 sec commercial on UA now that UA offers their inflight media for free. This is no longer a good media buy. The \$23K budgeted for the inflight campaign will be shifted to digital marketing during the Peak Season which the Board decided was necessary to keep an online presence.
- VC will be shifting to the Spring Campaign on February 12. VC will continue to use online marketing to push the Fly market. So far, VC reports 428 unique visits from the Denver direct marketing campaign. With the Dallas flights scheduled to begin in April, Jeff is asking all Stakeholder Inns to load their Dallas Flight special offers on the VC website. AA is giving VC access to their 13 million Eblast mailing list to market the Dallas flight.
- Jeff continues to analyze and apply the Quantcast data to the marketing campaign. The data is very robust and will be an ongoing task to adjust the marketing efforts to reflect the data and optimize the results.
- Projects include refining the email marketing strategy, new video and TV production highlighting the "I Had Know Idea" concept; and updating the new marketing projects that will highlight

popular themes to increase website engagement. Themes include: “Top 10 Things To Do in Carmel”, “Welcome US Open Visitors” and “Hwy 1 Dream Drive to Carmel”. Video coverage will include: drone video tour of CBTS, and longer video coverage of CBTS for the Visitor Center and other stakeholders.

Public Relations and Social Media: Ashley Brune reported:

- PR Recap included 7 pieces of coverage, 1.84 million online readership, 6.68K coverage views, 193 social media shares.
- Inns and Culinary continue to dominate the messaging in both December and January with Architecture showing a large increase in January.
- VC saw a small decrease in SEO impact but still holds strong at 65.
- Key Media placements included Vail Daily, Brides. Upcoming FAMs include VCA partnerships for Mexico, Australia and Brazil. Abbi Agency secured visits with USA Today, Wander Magazine and Rocklin/Roseville Today.
- Social Media saw a 2.6% increase in followers. Instagram impressions increased by 54.7%. Social engagements are up 104.5% with Twitter and Instagram increasing by 136% and 120% respectively. CBTS had the highest fan growth amongst our competitors with a 2.14% increase. SM audience is predominately female with LA as the top city. VC saw its top performing Instagram post of all time during the month of January with 24,154 impressions.
- Abbi Agency plans on pursuing more radio and social media giveaways – 1 every quarter. They are launching a new social media campaign “Distinctly CBTS” – plans include close-up pictures that make hotels unique. The Spotify Playlist launches in March.
- In Quarter 2, utilizing the theme “Pure Inspiration” will focus on users to “find your creative spark in CBTS”. Building on the history of the EG conference which is essentially a think tank of inspiration, Abbi Agency is hoping to secure the coordinator of EG, Mike Halle, to create a podcast promoting CBTS and EG (can work with Gina from Sunset Center). This type of PR/Marketing fits into the growing audio content/quick story market. Abbi Agency is hoping to link this Podcast to Meeting.com which has good domain rank authority.
- Quarter 3 will focus on creating and promoting “Things To Do” itineraries and get visitors thinking about sustainability. Ideas for engagement include a photo contest and Meet the Makers social media campaign.
- Quarter 4 will focus primarily on Podcast using data compiled from Quantcast. These podcasts statistically demonstrate a higher conversion rate because the user chooses to be engaged and the shelf life of a podcast is longer because they can be archived.

Financial Report: Mark Watson reported that VC has \$156K in the bank. The CRID currently owes VC \$14,837 for the formation of the RID. Mark strongly suggests that VC provide separate accounting budgets that track the income and allocations for the City, CHID and CRID contribution/assessments. With this additional tracking, Mark would like to hire a bookkeeper to prepare the P&L and balance sheets with oversight by the VC Treasurer. Mark anticipates the bookkeeper would be required to work approximately two days a month to prepare the necessary accounting reports. Due to the timing of the expenses, VC is currently \$35K ahead of the 2019 budget in January. Mark still feels that to be better prepared for the beginning of the next calendar year budget, a bigger reserve needs to be in place. Timing of VC cash flow has typically been an issue. Chip Rerig will confer with Amy Herzog to facilitate finding a bookkeeper to ensure that VC is keeping within the legal boundaries and that appropriate oversight is in place.

Additions to the Agenda/Future Agenda Items: Jo Todd reminded everyone about the upcoming Saturday Art Walk. Chip Rerig reminded the Board that Amy Herzog's anniversary is coming up in October and felt a mid-term evaluation was in order. He commented that Amy's efforts to pass the CRID had gone above and beyond in her duties as Director of VC. He would like to add this item to the March agenda. This would be a closed session following the regular monthly meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:24pm