



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, April 4, 2019

2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Jenny MacMurdo; Pamela Sheppard, Rich Pepe, Ken Spilfogel, Mark Watson, Mary Crowe, Amrish Patel, Kevin Krueger

Board Members Absent: Chip Rerig

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel Exec Director; Abbi Whitaker and Ty Whitaker, Abbi Agency; April Locke, MCCVB; Jo Todd, Resident; Jeff Burghardt and Nicole Dore, Burghardt + Dore Advertising; Bobby Richards, Lamplighter, Forest Lodge and Carmel City Council; Suzanne Gravelle, Carmel Area Reservation Service; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House and Carmel City Council; Hella Rothwell, Carmel Art Festival; Berit Keebler, Tradewinds Carmel; Gina Delli-Gatti, Sunset Center; Daniel Janes and Alexis Favis, Madden Media; Kathleen Gallagher, Life-Unleashed; Nancy Chira-Garcia, Scheid Vineyard/Scheid Family Wines; Barak Laub, Carmel Fun; Michael Chang and Caroline Singer, Carmel Lodge Restaurant; Sandra Book, Carmel Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center; and Ashlee Wright, City of Carmel/Library Community Activities.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Rich Pepe called the meeting to order at 2:33 PM

Public Comments: Kathleen Gallagher introduced Life Unleashed, a website dedicated to bringing more events to CBTS centered around pets. Suzanne Gravelle, CARS, is hoping to work with VC to help streamline the group reservation process. The CARS website provides a form for group inquiries. Suzanne would like to put together a nice list of participating groups of Inns interested in working with groups. Barak Laub is expanding his Carmel Fun map to include an app for your phone. Jo Todd reminded everyone that the Carmel Art Walk is the second Saturday of every month. She also contracts to distribute brochures throughout Carmel. Ken Spilfogel is looking for donations for the upcoming event at Sunset Center to benefit the Carmel Youth Center. Nancy Chira-Garcia of Scheid Vineyards would like to request better access to marketing materials including maps to areas outside CBTS. From a cost standpoint VC has not distributed to Monterey Visitors Center. April Locke will follow up with Monterey Visitors Center to inform them of the process to get digital access to marketing material but

printing would be at their own cost. Michael Chang will be opening a new restaurant at Carmel Lodge. It will offer “approachable fine dining”.

Approval of Minutes: **Mark Watson made a motion to approve the minutes from March 7, 2019. Jenny MacMurdo seconded the motion. Minutes approved.**

Officer Appointments: The following nominations for officers were made at the March 7, 2019 meeting: Rich Pepe, Chairperson; Mark Watson, and Treasurer; Pam Sheppard, Secretary. Officers will serve one-year terms. **Mary Crowe made a motion to accept the nominations. Amrish Patel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Carmel Restaurant Improvement District Update: Rich Pepe reported for Anthony Carnazzo that two things were discussed at the committee meeting: Building Brand Asset and Creating a campaign for Restaurant Month in January 2020. Building Brand Asset will start with photography for optimum presentation of all restaurants. It will include interviews with each restaurant and written copy. CRID will begin their campaign for Restaurant Month (January 2020) next month by gathering ideas from visitors and residents. Ashley Brune has several food-focused influencers coming in May to gather content to use during slower times. Ken would like to see an educational element for visitors during Restaurant Month so it’s not all about offering discounts. The idea is to have a solid plan in place by September. Visit CA starts gathering input from their stakeholders in September.

MCCVB Quarterly Update: April Locke reported at the administrative level the new ad agency, Stark, started in January and will be speaking at the quarterly forum on April 23. Paul Martin was promoted to Finance Department. There is an opening for a PR Manager at the MCCVB.

- Sustainable Moments campaign is ongoing and businesses are encouraged to submit their sustainable practices to be showcased through the MCCVB marketing. Business are encouraged to pick up collateral material on sustainability.
- Top Social posts see a 6% increase in engagement when CBTS is mentioned. The average is 4%.
- Matador Network has created a series of outdoor videos highlighting the peninsula activities. The campaign: Explore Monterey by Land, Sea or Air demonstrates the variety of activities available.
- Group Meeting planners were surveyed to discern their needs. Feedback included: unique geographic location, sustainability focus, parallels with client goals, hospitality is a priority and the environment must offer inspiration. SKIFT sponsored article #3 was very positive about their experiences and how it translates to success.
- Promotion of the Dallas to Monterey Flight is ongoing, mostly digital and some print. MCCVB is working with a Dallas based PR firm and garnering lots of earned media.
- Blog content continues to feature CBTS as does Media FAM’s.
- Upcoming items of interest include: Fox Sports destination featured stories for US Open Broadcast, Big Little Lies Promotion, Wine Enthusiast Digital Content Package, Fiscal Year 2019-2020 planning.
- MCCVB will be attending and actively participating in the IPW in Anaheim in June. This is the largest US travel trade show.
- The Integrated Content Calendar is available on the MCCVB website and available for stakeholders to download relevant material for display.

Public Relations and Social Media: Ashley Brune and Steven reported via telephone conference call:

- Nine media placements had the combined potential readership of over 125M. PR messaging has seen a decline in Mindfulness from 2018 to 2019 but a steady increase in dog-friendly and romance. CarmelCalifornia.com has a domain rank authority (DRA) score of 59 but placements in publications have a combined DRA score of 79.
- Abbi Agency is working on placements in the following publications: Organic Authority, Los Gatos Magazine, AFAR, TRVL, Marie Claire and SD Union Tribune. Four press trips with influencers are scheduled for May including 3 micro influencers and an influencer from Modern Luxury/Vegas Magazine.
- Total SM followers increased 1.9%, VC's engagement per post is 4X higher on FB than its competitors. VC has the highest fan growth on SM than its competitors. LA continues to be our top city with female audience continuing to dominate across all channels on SM.
- SM launched a new campaign #distinctlyCarmel. This campaign spotlights the intricacies that make CBTS unique, and encourages visitors to explore. VC has begun posting more "owned photography" as opposed to user-generated content on social media channels.
- The first Spotify Playlist for VC has launched with a romance theme. The primary goal is to increase brand awareness and engagement. A secondary goal would be to maintain a healthy increase of approximately 5% on average. Abbi Agency feels we are in line with our competitors. Smaller influencers get higher engagements due to a more intimate relationship with their audience. Abbi Agency is releasing a "Traveler Influencer Survey" the results of which will help direct their PR push.

Marketing and Advertising: Jeff formally announced that the merger with Madden Media is complete. He introduced Dan Janes, CEO, and Alexis Favis, Account Director, who then gave a brief media presentation (after Jeff's marketing update) about the Madden Media Group including how this will benefit VC.

- Seasonal Theme: Pure Inspiration in full swing. Multi-Media mix remains the same. Winter Sweepstakes winner has been awarded.
- YOY slightly under last year. We are seeing good growth in key markets. LA is up 15%, Sacramento up 18% and Denver up 30%.
- Fitness pillar is currently #14 most visited page during the 1st QTR with Mindfulness at #22. Jeff is considering phasing out the Mindfulness Retreat but adding the Mindfulness brochure with a more robust presence on the VC website.
- Drone shoot of CBTS is all lined up with the City. Permits are in hand.
- April 9-11 AA will send out its eblast to 13 million members in which CBTS Ad will appear.
- Dallas-Monterey Flight continues to be advertised with a Digital Marketing campaign and dedicated landing page on the VC website.
- 2019 Marketing Projects are making progress. Web itineraries are being added to the VC website and web content repurposed for the US Open. Eblast and mailing lists are being enhanced. The website now will have an elist feature to help increase the mailing list.

Madden Media benefits for VC include:

- Larger resources: 7K tools are available to aid consumers in their online searches. The user experience is critical.
- Madden is a Google premiere partner. Apparently Google is focusing on what they call "micro moments." 85% of travelers don't decide what they are going to do until they get to the destination. CBTS currently scores 48% on Mozlocal (SEO ranking search authority that

measures their results by crawling your site) Madden's goal is to raise that score to 80%. Our score is lower due to the results showing Carmel businesses have 50% duplicated entries and inconsistent information. Restaurant sites received an overall 17% ranking. Google has a DMO partnership program. Madden will offer a step by step process to help Stakeholders interface with Google to help raise our overall performance on Mozlocal. Madden says Stakeholders should see the biggest improvement in the first 2-3 months, citing maintenance and consistency are very important. Madden intends to hold workshops to provide help to improve Google search for Stakeholders.

- Stakeholders need to be aware that Search Co-ops are available to help keep competing keyword costs down.
- VC content will continue to be managed by Jeff, Nicole, Amy Herzog and the Board. Their goal is lower overall costs and higher performance.

Amy reported that Chip, Rich, Jeff and Nicole have met to discuss the merger. Amy highlighted areas to keep an eye on. They include: budget, objectivity, conflict of interest, and synchronicity with all other existing contractors. Timing and the existing contract need to be addressed ASAP.

Additions to the Agenda/Future Agenda Items: Rich would like to have a group discussion about the upcoming U.S. Open.

Meeting adjourned at 4:24pm