



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, September 5, 2019

2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Jenny MacMurdo; Pamela Sheppard, Rich Pepe, Ken Spilfogel, Mary Crowe, Chip Rerig, Amrish Patel, Berit Keeble

Board Members Absent: Mark Watson

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel Exec Director; Ramon Serrano, L'Auberge Carmel; Steven Smith and Ashley Brune, Abbi Agency (Via Phone); Jeff Burghardt, Madden Media; Jo Todd; April Locke and Rob O'Keefe, MCCVB; John Lloyd, Pine Inn; Barak Laub, Carmel Fun App; Suzanne Gravelle, Carmel Area Reservation Service; Ashlee Wright, City of Carmel; Dale Byrne, Carmel Cares/CRA.

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

Public Comments: Jenny MacMurdo announced a Store Front Lighting Workshop at Sunset Center in the Chapman Room on Thursday, September 12. Look for plenty of workshops offered through the Chamber in the upcoming months. The State of CA has extended the Sexual Harassment Training to January 2021 for businesses with 5 or more employees. The training certificate is good for 2 years. Thursday, September 19 for Spanish speaking attendees has lots of room. It's from 2:30-4:30pm. October 3 is the Taste of Carmel. More restaurants are needed. Dale Byrne is providing audio tours of CBTS via Voicemap App. Access costs \$3.99. So far, three tours have been completed and are available on all OTA sites. It's a free event but pre-registration is required. Amy Herzog reminded everyone that Saturday, September 7 is Sunset Center's Annual Fundraiser. Tickets are available 2 for 1. Jo Todd reminded everyone the Carmel Art Walk is this coming Saturday and Diggidy Dog has moved to Mission and 6th.

Approval of Minutes: **Mary Crowe made a motion to approve the Closed Session Minutes from August 8, 2019. Ken Spilfogel seconded the motion. Minutes approved. Amrish Patel made a motion to approve the Regular Session Minutes from August 8, 2019, Chip Rerig seconded the motion. Minutes approved.**

Mary Crowe volunteered to take the minutes at the next board meeting on October 10, 2019 in Pam Sheppard's scheduled absence.

MCCVB Report: April Locke updated the Board on the latest staff changes. Rob O'Keefe is serving as interim President & CEO. Nani Almanza is the new Visitor Services Manager. Group Business Development is replacing Sales and Service Department. PR Agency RFP is underway. April provided a brief recap of the MCCVB Annual Luncheon. MCCVB is focusing on enhancing their communication with residents and their stories. The theme: People Behind the Community Businesses. April highlighted the top social and blog posts featuring CBTS. CBTS is the top region page on See Monterey and the blog "2 Days in Carmel" is performing very well. Marketing continues to push "responsible travel." The MCCVB upcoming plan for 2019-2020 includes a new Ad Agency and a Brand evolution; focusing on Group and Leisure campaign built around Monterey County as a great place to be inspired and will result in business transformations. MCCVB is shifting away from Seasonal Campaigns in an effort to recapture Brand consistency. International travel will advertise Brand across multi-channels using videos as marketing tools. Co-op Ads are available through the MCCVB for \$300 and up. Collateral for businesses highlighting Sustainable Travel and Visiting Responsibly are always available to members. Chip Rerig says the City supports Sustainability as a perpetual pillar. Efforts to involve the CRA in this endeavor are on-going.

Executive Directors Report: Amy Herzog went over the following highlights

- On behalf of the RID, Amy reported that plans for the 1st Annual Carmel Culinary Week are well underway. Pre-promotion began during Car Week with an Eblast with marketing material sent out to VC Stakeholders. The RID received approval to have 20 banners placed on Ocean Ave during Restaurant Week. The Restaurant page has been relaunched on the VC Website. Digital Ads and two influencers are scheduled in the coming month. The Pine Cone featured an article on the RID, VC and Culinary Week.
- Monthly Stakeholder Eblast featured upcoming Sexual Harassment Seminar opportunities, Meet the Makers event information and PR Highlights.
- VC marketing agency is auditing other areas of the VC website.
- HID renewal process/strategic plan is being reviewed. Currently information is being gathered on costs, options and timing.
- Meet the Makers planners have identified areas of improvements for this year's event in October. They include: advanced ticket sales, two pick up locations for wine glasses at the event, staff-manned exits to avoid wine on the sidewalks, add more non-wine makers.
- Progress continues on the CBTS outdoor mural. The City's Cultural Activities Commission has given their support for the project. The building owner, Phil Coniglio, has provided a signed letter of consent. The next step is to create a committee to oversee the process for choosing the art for the wall. The committee will be comprised of Ashlee Wright from the City, the building owner, Phil Coniglio, Amy Herzog and two VC board members. Berit Keeble and Pam Sheppard volunteered for the board member positions. The Committee will meet to discuss the parameters for art submissions and timeline for completion. Stipulations will include: the artist must be local, must include a "place" identifier (CBTS), and scale must be photographable. According to Chip, City is going to address the parking signage to better compliment the wall.
- CCTC continues to work on its re-branding and is onboarding a new PR Agency, DCI out of NYC. They continue with the marketing theme: "It's About Time." Seasonal themes include: Fall-

Culinary, Winter-Art and Culture, Spring-Outdoor Adventure and Summer-Ultimate Family Road Trip.

- February 10 is Visit CA 2020 Outlook Forum in San Diego. September 20 is CA Surf Day.
- Mary Crowe offered to host the November meeting at the La Playa Hotel. Amy questioned whether November was the optimum time to have a full presentation as we have at past Annual Meetings. The Bylaws do not require us to do a full-blown presentation, but we do need to elect our new Board Members. Council members and stakeholders do attend. April/May was suggested as better timing for an Annual Presentation/Open House-style meeting to coincide with the Annual Report. A suggestion was made to make a spring meeting that is less formal and provide a “panel forum” and possible Q&A with the agencies and board members. The Board agreed that feedback is more plentiful if the meeting is more “social” in nature. Board also discussed not meeting in December and resuming in January to approve the 2020 budget.

Pam Sheppard made a motion to cancel the December meeting and resume regularly scheduled Board Meetings beginning on January 9, 2020. Jenny MacMurdo seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Relations and Social Media: Ashley presented the following recapped via phone-in:

- 6 Media placements, SEO score of 59 with a combined score of 80.
- Media Highlights included articles in Diablo Magazine and Elite Daily (est readership 2 million). August is National Dog Month. Articles in Forbes Magazine (est readership 32 million) and Reader’s Digest (est readership 3 million) highlighted dog-friendly CBTS. Sunset Magazine choose CBTS as their Reader’s Choice 2019 Travel Awards.
- Fall FAM got a great response from Restaurants that will feature a “Progressive Dinner.” Abbi Agency is looking for hotels to provide lodging in October for FAM.
- The Agency is working with Carmel Plaza on a Bay area holiday shopping pitch.

Steven recapped on Social Media via phone-in:

- Overall followers for August increased by 1.6% over the previous month. Instagram and LinkedIn saw the biggest increase. Impressions are up 25.8% with FB impressions up 35.4%. Engagements saw the biggest increase over the previous month FB and Instagram are up 51.9% and 28.9% respectively. Car Week and #DistinctlyCarmel Photo Contest are cited as the reason for the jump in impressions. We are seeing a higher percentage increase on Instagram than our competitor average, currently VC is 3rd highest among all our competitor set.
- Social Media posts continue to highlight one stakeholder partner from both the hotels and restaurants every week. Drone footage is performing well. Meet the Makers posts will feature who the makers are and what inspires them. Abbi Agency will continue to collect stories and images for future posting.
- Steven mentioned the possible need for a workshop to help restaurant stakeholders with posting on Social Media.

Marketing and Advertising: Jeff Burghardt reported on the current marketing plan:

- Marketing Calendar has us entering the Winter Spontaneity and Weather campaign.
- Summer “Love Carmel Like a Local” digital ads getting traction with \$106K impressions to date. Google AdWords continue to see increased clicks over 17,600 with a CTR of 6.32%. Paid Social Media Clicks also continue to increase monthly over 24,000.
- Google/YouTube/FB and Instagram continue to dominate the digital ads with a 57.6% market share.
- Fall Marketing Media will focus on growing our top feeder markets in CA. The top three being SF, LA and San Jose respectively using Branded TV commercials and Print Media (SF Chronicle

solely). Increased awareness using digital advertising and will be measured in engagements and website clicks.

- New Welcome Eblast has been implemented when visitors' opt-in to VC mailing list. New seasonal eblasts are planned as well.
- Madden Media has hired a Visit CA creative and production team to begin a series of videos for VC. Six themed story boards have been created and casting has begun for these planned cinematic and stylish videos.
- RID marketing will continue to feature image-driven mobile and desktop presentation. Madden is working on updating each landing page for all the restaurant stakeholders. Nearly all the restaurants have been interviewed and content has been written for the website. According to Jeff, Google decides on the frequency of which ads get more visibility based on whoever gets the most clicks and engagement. The budget for the paid SEM Ads is divided into 70% core feeder markets and 30% local. According to RID committee members, 80% of opponents to the RID have come around. Chip said that the 2nd RID assessment is coming due and the City has sent a "nice" reminder letter to those still out of compliance.

Additions to the Agenda/Future Agenda Items: Reminder that the next meeting will be October 10th (the second Thursday) at Sunset Center in the Chapman Room. The Board will be reviewing a draft of the 2020 Budget. *(This was not part of meeting minutes, but just so there is no confusion, next meeting on Oct 10 will now take place at La Playa.)*

Meeting adjourned at 4:21pm