



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)

VISIT CARMEL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Hotel Carmel

San Carlos and 4th

Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921

Thursday, January 9, 2020

2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Mark Watson, Pamela Sheppard, Rich Pepe, Ken Spilfogel, Chip Rerig, Amrish Patel, Berit Keeble, Jenny MacMurdo, John Lloyd

Board Members Absent: Mary Crowe, Ramon Serrano

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel Exec Director; Steven Smith and Ashley Brune, Abbi Agency (Via Phone); Jeff Burghardt and Bryan Tracey, Madden Media (Via phone); Carrie Theis, Hofsas House and CBTS City Council; Jo Todd; April Locke and David Cater, MCCVB; Suzanne Gravelle, Carmel Area Reservation Service; Frankee Ruiz, Carmel Plaza; Gina Delli-Gatti, Sunset Center; Ashlee Wright, City of Carmel; Christian Pollack, Pepe Intl; Nicola Reilly, Monterey Symphony; Sandra Book, Carmel Visitors Center.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Rich Pepe called the meeting to order at 2:37pm

Public Comments: Suzanne Gravelle recapped group sales that came through her business for 2019 and said 2020 was off to a good start. She feels strongly that Visit Carmel needs to continue to work cohesively with stakeholders to promote group sales and possibly consider having a point person for group inquiries. The Board suggested adding this topic to next month's agenda. Jo Todd reminded everyone that the Carmel Art Walk is the 2nd Saturday of the month and new brochure cards promoting the Walk are now available. Ken Spilfogel announced the Carmel Youth Center is looking to fill 500 volunteer spots during the AT&T Golf Tournament. Ken would also like the Board to consider attending IPW (formerly Pow Wow). He feels it is a huge opportunity to promote CBTS. The Board agreed to add the topic to a future agenda and to discuss with David Cater of the MCCVB. Jenny MacMurdo from the Chamber announced they will provide AT&T Tournament Shuttle service again. Gina Delli-Gatti highlighted some upcoming events taking place at Sunset Center including an almost sold out XYZ Comedy Series and a Lecture Series featuring the Rolling Stone Report, Year in Music. Chip Rerig broached the subject of the Measure C Sales Tax Initiative. Citing a fiscal emergency, Sales Tax would go from the 1% already collected via Measure D to 1.50% (so a net increase of .50%). So far, the City has

received good support from the Carmel Chamber and the Carmel Residents Association. The level of service that the City currently provides to its 3800 residents surpasses other districts. As an alternative or additional idea, an excise tax on non-resident homeowners also has been proposed for further exploration. Discussion includes assessing non-residents with a \$5K-\$10K tax per year, the rationale being that these people do not contribute to the economy on a regular basis. Chip Rerig would like to include the Visit Carmel Stakeholders in future discussions. On January 14 at 7pm at Sunset Center and January 16 at City Hall there will be a discussion on Climate Change.

Approval of Minutes: ***John Lloyd made a motion to approve the Minutes from November 14, 2019, Mark Watson seconded the motion.***

Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau report: David Cater, MCCVB expert in International Travel trade, projects international travel will increase by 2.5% in the next 2 years. France and India saw the biggest growth in 2019 and Mexico and Brazil the biggest decline. SF is the top region for visitors and spending. Central Coast is in the top 10 regions for visitations but spending in our region has been flat. We are seeing a decline in Asian travel due to Visa restrictions and the Trade Wars. Customized and private tours are the new choice of travel for the Asian consumer with women significantly more likely to travel than men. David continues to monitor travel trade channels and interface with tour operators and wholesalers to make sure Monterey County is represented in these markets. David briefly touched on IPW logistics. Any business that is derived from IPW is contract-based. Individual hotel operators need to negotiate their own contracts and room blocks. CO-OP attendance with the MCCVB at POW WOW is \$4K.

April Locke provided the following updates at the MCCVB:

- Staff updates include Julia Avery Shapiro, Marketing Specialist; Huong Tu, Bookkeeper
- Brand Roll-out slated for February 1, 2020
- Fahlgren Morine is the new PR Agency
- April highlighted CBTS SM posts and Blog content citing "2 Days in Carmel" is the highest performing content on See Monterey.
- Earned Media highlights included a spot on a Japanese Travel Show – Tabi Salad; articles in Modern Luxury, Afar, Forbes Travel Guide, 360 West Magazine, and Texas Meetings & Events
- MCCVB Mid-Year Forum is March 5, 2020
- New on the MCCVB website is a new Content Request Form to help boost public relations content and media outreach efforts for stakeholders.

Financial Report: Mark Watson gave the following report:

Current bank balance shows \$10,315 in the checking, \$274,666 in the savings.

- 2019 Year End showed Visit Carmel was under on revenue by \$22K and underspent by \$18K so overall Visit Carmel finished the year \$4K under budget.
- Looking ahead to the 2020 Budget, the overall consensus of the Board was to take a conservative approach. Projected income for the year includes the HID at \$646,473, the RID at \$200K, and the City contributing \$120K. Projected overall spending includes: PR budget of \$120,000, Marketing budget of \$612,000, Sales and Promotion Budget of \$7,793 and Administration Budget of \$159,718. Projected Reserve Budget coming in around \$350K by year's end.

John Lloyd made a motion to approve the 2020 Proposed Budget; Jenny MacMurdo seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Executive Directors Report: Amy Herzog went over the following highlights: Moz update response from the Hotels is 11 stakeholders to date. November and December E-blasts were sent out providing marketing highlights and upcoming events including Culinary Week update and changes to the Board and Committee positions.

- Monterey Airport will be announcing a new destination market on January 15.
- The Outdoor Mural Committee has chosen Marie-Claire Gorham Treseder as their Carmel artist.
- Carmel Culinary Week has 25 participating restaurants; 23 Prix Fixe menu offerings; 20 Events scheduled throughout the week; 20 banners will be along Ocean Ave promoting the event, brochures and posters have been distributed to all stakeholders; 52 tickets sold and 462 passports downloaded to date. Carmel Culinary Week has garnered tons of community support. Marketing efforts include a robust digital campaign on SM as well as cross promotion between stakeholders. Visit California has also provided promotional support with several targeted ads.

Marketing and Advertising Update: Jeff presented the following by phone: December and January Marketing focus across all channels is on Culinary Week. Marketing efforts include TV Commercials, Digital Video, online Banner Ads, printed materials for stakeholders and visitors and Ocean Ave publicity Banners. Timely changes to the Visit Carmel website will feature a homepage that highlights Culinary Week and Itinerary options and a landing page with links to the Passport.

- 2020 Winter Marketing will highlight the newly created commercial spot, a custom lifestyle segment on California Live (an NBC Bay Area segment), Social Media Digital Video featuring the new commercial and drone footage and video infused Banner Ads. The food destination digital campaign will continue to feature stakeholder restaurants.
- 2020 Tracking Results and Goals estimate a \$1.8m ROI from Direct Referrals (Jack Rabbit) and \$1.1m ROI from Visit Carmel Website referrals. 2020 Clicks, Impressions and View Goals are estimated to increase by 16.5% over last year. Visit Carmel is expected to significantly increase their existing Digital Media Campaign budget across all channels in 2020 and add the additional media campaigns, Google YouTube Video, with an introductory budget of \$17,550 and FB Instant Experiences, budgeting \$9,700.

Public Relations and Social Media: Ashley and Steven presented the following recap via phone:

- CBTS had 6 media placements and a combined SEO score of 87.
- Media placements include Sacramento Bee and Forbes Travel Guide.
- Social Media focused on Carmel Culinary Week highlighting a Bay Area Giveaway and placements in Visit California restaurant month promotions.
- 2019 PR Review had 74 Media Placements and a combined SEO score of 75, 52 backlinks to CarmelCalifornia.com, 33 Bay Area Media Placements and 41 Brand Building National Media Placements.
- Social Media Insights highlight a 1% growth in overall followers. The biggest growth was in Instagram (26.1%) and Twitter (42.2%). Visit Carmel continues to see the highest growth in its competitor set.
- SM 2019 PR Review – Net follower growth 15,545, Follower Increase 21.7%, Impressions 16.5 million, Engagements 696K, Website Referrals via Social 26K and Social Media Posts 990. 2020 goals include a 2 million increase in Impressions, approx. 100K increase in Engagements, approx.

10% growth in Followers, 10K increase in social referrals and a reduction in bounce rate from 60% to 50%.

- In 2020 Abbi Agency will continue to build on their photo content library, grow itinerary based content and capitalize on high performing past posts.

Additions to the Agenda/Future Agenda Items: As previously mentioned IPW/POW WOW and Group Bookings will be added to a future agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 5:07pm