



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)

VISIT CARMEL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Via zoom

Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921

Thursday, February 10, 2022

2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Rich Pepe, Chip Rerig, Mark Watson, Candace Fecteau, John Lloyd, Mary Crowe, Greg Ahn, Michael LaPier, Carrie Theis, Chris Whitman, Pamela Sheppard

Board Members Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Amy Herzog, Visit Carmel Executive Director; Tim Twomey, CRA; Liz Bowling and Angela Rudolph, Abbi Agency; Jeff Burghardt, Nicole Dore, Erik Dargitz and Bryan Tracey, 62Above; Suzanne Gravelle, CARS; Dale Byrne, Carmel Gives and CRA; Ken Spilfogel, Flahertys; Beth Bowman, Sunset Center.

Rich Pepe called the Meeting to order 2:32pm

Public Comment: Dale Byrne spoke on behalf of Carmel Gives who is partnering with Air by Design and WYND to bring the Verified Clean Air Program to businesses in CBTS. 10 CBTS restaurants are expected to get authorized use this week and more in process. Goal is to have all restaurants participating within 3 months with the hope of achieving national exposure. Grant programs are available. Rich Pepe has been trying to reach Jeannie Friedman regarding the status of the 2022 Concours on the Avenue. Chip informed the Board that the City has been in communication and says the application has been filed with the City but plans are undecided for now. Chip has a call into Sandra Button regarding the Pebble Beach Rally that has usually come through CBTS on Weds to inquire about 2022. At this time, CBTS does not have any scheduled events for Concours Week.

Minutes: **Chip Rerig made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2022 regular meeting. Chris Whitman seconded the motion.** Motion passes unanimously.

Need for Virtual Meetings: in keeping with new Brown Act requirements, Amy Herzog posed the question to the Board about continuing to offer the Virtual Meeting option for the time being. **Chip Rerig made a motion to approve keeping the virtual meeting option going forward. Mark Watson seconded the motion.** Motion passes unanimously.

Nomination of Board Officers: Amy requested nominations for 1 year terms for the 3 available positions and reminded the Board that there is no rule on serving subsequent terms. Treasurer Nomination by Chip Rerig: Mark Watson accepted the nomination; Secretary Nomination by Pam Sheppard: Candice Fecteau accepted the nomination; and Chairperson Nomination by Amy Herzog: Chris Whitman accepted the nomination with the caveat that if he needs to step down than Pam Sheppard will assume the position. Pam Sheppard agreed to be back up if necessary. Nominations were closed. Board will vote on nominations at the March meeting.

Destination Stewardship: Amy Herzog has been researching other DMO programs and will be talking to the directors of the Truckee and Monterey programs who have both received awards for their Destination Stewardship programs. A customized program is essential and Amy has recommended the following 5 steps to implementing our program. They are as follows:

1. Collaborate to create a unifying vision
2. Create an Ad Hoc Committee made up of at least 2 Board Members, a representative from the City, CRA resident(s), a representative from the MCCVB and a representative from both our PR and Marketing agencies
3. Focus on protecting our Natural and Cultural assets
4. Revisit our marketing to leverage trends
5. Reframe how we measure success-ensuring growth, sensitivity to how it benefits the community and recognizing the long-term investment.

Amy asked for Board volunteers to serve on the Ad Hoc committee. Chris Whitman, Pam Sheppard and Chris Rerig volunteered.

Executive Director's Report: Amy reported

- 62Above and Abbi Agency have both signed their contracts and a copy of both was sent out to each Board member.
- Amy will not be attending the Outlook Forum which starts this Sunday but has given her spot to Jeff Burghardt. Jeff and Liz Bowling will both be attending and representing the destination.
- Anthony Carnazzo was nominated for RID Chairperson.
- Carmel Wine Walk license will expire on May 27, 2022. Carmel Chamber has offered to lease it to Visit Carmel at \$500/yr or sell it to us for \$5K. Currently, not all wine rooms are participating in the Wine Walk advertising (11 out of 18, respectively have paid the \$750/yr fee). Since the revamped Wine Walk began in June 2021 the feedback has been positive. The website has seen a 52% increase in traffic to the page and there has been 1607 mobile downloads YTD. After Board discussion, the Board agreed to pay the \$500/yr for another year and work at getting greater wine room participation before investing in buying the license out right.
- New owner of Pangea Grill and a new restaurant, Chez Noir, is opening. Both are on board to participate in the RID. There will be no Gourmet Fest this year.
- There was tremendous support from the Inns during the Fire evacuations in Big Sur. Amy alerted the Board that monitoring the coverage during a crisis is important to maintain accuracy.
- Recap of Carmel Culinary Week reported that due to a COVID related compromised event overall stats were down from 2020. Discussion following a survey and the RID committee produced the following feedback: possible changes to the date of the event and length; explore new technology options, retain the Kick Off Party and keep it at Carmel Plaza; Special Events are a must; enhancing programs; marketing the event earlier and adding back in a Grand Prize. RID is also considering Sponsorships.

- Visit California offering to pay for a Destination Optimization Program. The goal is to clean up internet searches. Visit CA will be partnering with Miles Partnership to work on this. Amy will reach out to them on behalf of Visit Carmel and credits our relationship with the CCTC for access to this program. The “Am I Dreaming” campaign is planning to launch during the Super Bowl.

Marketing and Advertising: Jeff Burghardt

- Reported on current campaign highlights. Heavy digital mix with the addition of Expedia and VRBO prospecting ads. TV included CBS coverage during the AT&T Pro Am. Paid digital media drives 42% of the traffic to our website. We currently are sending out 1 eblast a month. Website referral to hotel for this period is 2nd to all time high in 2017.
- Projects include a promotional component to the Carmel Art Festival and a photo gallery refresh. Marketing is currently hold back larger spend till Spring.

Nicole Dore and Erik Dargitz overviewed for the Board their ideas for a brand refresh. Erik Dargitz is a Creative Director with 62Above. They previewed two concepts for Board discussion and direction.

1. Work of Art - Builds upon Artistic History and includes a custom landing page to drive traffic specific to the campaign.
2. Storybook Kind of Place - Builds upon a whimsical storybook approach that zooms into actual scenery. The landing page will include a “deeper dive” on the landing page that enhances the story line.

Nicole and Erik would like direction on which campaign to pursue for greater consumer appeal. Board discussion directed toward the 1st concept around the Artistic History.

Public Relations and Social Media: Liz Bowling and Angela Rudolph reported

- Recap of January activity. PR focused on Carmel Culinary Week which had both regional and national media attention. A representative from Forbes Magazine participated and produced an opt-ed and blog post. 10 Media placements in the month, 7 regional and 3 national.
- February 19 CBTS FAM with Noel Burgess from the Bay Area. Abbi Agency is working a draft of a release geared toward influencers when they are in-market.
- Social Media had an increase across all platforms in January, a rebound from December.
- Carousel posts are performing well.
- Abbi Agency gathered content in January during Culinary Week.
- Nature content is performing well.

Financial Report: Mark Watson reported VC ending in January had \$877, 412 in the bank. VC received their quarterly \$25K from the City. Mark attributed the effects of COVID on the destination for the \$18K shortfall in expected revenue for the month. Marketing budget is under for month \$99,719, \$101K YTD due to the cutback in spend. Expenses were also under for the month by \$32,871 because of a reduced spend during Culinary Week. Amy notified the Board that market share reports are in the works for future meetings.

Additions to the Agenda: None

Meeting Adjourned at 4:30pm