



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)
VISIT CARMEL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
At Sunset Center and via Zoom
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921
Thursday, March 16, 2023
2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Mary Crowe, La Playa; Mark Watson, Inns-by-the-Sea; Pam Sheppard, Horizon Inn; Amy Herzog, Executive Director; Candace Fecteau, Tradewinds Inn; Rich Pepe, Pepe International; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House; Greg Ahn, Folktale; Michael LaPier, Monterey Airport.

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Burghardt, Burghardt + Dore; Tim Twomey with the CRA; Ken Spifogel and Alyssa Ross, Flaherty's; Hella Rothchild, Carmel Art Festival; Nancy Dayton, resident; Christine Sandin, Sunset Center.

(Virtual) - Suzanne Gravell, Carmel Area Reservations; Abbi Whitaker, Alli Williams and Haley Walter from The Abbi Agency.

Board Members Absent: Chris Whitman, Pali Society; Chip Rerig, City of Carmel.

Pam Sheppard called the Meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Public Comment:

Hella Rothchild announced that the Art Festival is May 19 -21 and they are looking for advertisers for program. Also looking for donations of food and wine for the VIP event. 831-626-4000 to contact Hella for information.

Bi-annual Citizen of the Year award on March 26th by the CRA.

Christine Sandin announced that they are planning for the new season with a new schedule and brand refresh. The announcement of a celebrity chef for Culinary Week was made.

Minutes: – Mark Watson made motion to approve minutes from February 9, 2023. Mary Crowe seconded. Unanimous approval

Officer Elections:

Officers serve one-year terms starting in April each year. No limits on terms or serving successively. Three officers nominated - Chair, Treasurer and Secretary (Pam Shepard, Mark Watson, Candace Fecteau, respectively).

No new nominations were offered. Carrie made the motion to accept the officers as nominated. Unanimous approval.

Financial and Market Share Report:

Mark Watson presented financial status.

Sitting at \$1.73 M as of February 28.

Wells Fargo Bank account was mentioned as it was not put into the Money Market as planned. This will be addressed with Wells Fargo to be corrected.

Financial report:

- \$282K in income versus \$308K budgeted.
- PR expenses \$4,700 under
- Marketing \$49K under (will be made up)
- Still showing positive \$35K

Market Share report:

- November/December Rev Par down YOY (\$195 to \$177) 9%
- Occupancy down from 66% to 57%. YOY down 13%
- ADR up YOY from \$296 to \$308 up 4%
- Expecting down 1st quarter for 2023 due to storms

Discussion about length of stay. Part of the reason to invest in fly market as they tend to have more extended stays over drive market. Mention of Expedia demand showing almost 30% down YOY.

Executive Director Report: Amy Herzog reported:

Carmel Wine Walk

- We have been licensing the contract to use Carmel Wine Walk Trademark.
- Decision needs to be made as to purchasing the Wine Walk TM.
- Annual Wine Walk Revenue \$9.7K; Annual Expenses \$22.5K
- Bandwango likely to go away which will eliminate \$8.5K in expenses.
- 4,509 sign ups and 2,166 checked in at tasting rooms since June 2021.
- Exec Director recommends purchase of TM for \$5,000. Board consented.

CRID update

- RID renewal - Civitas assisting with renewal. Current timing has renewal complete by August.
- Culinary Week – June 2 - 10
 - Agreement with Plaza for kickoff party (Buzz PR hired to help with this effort)
 - Expanded (festival atmosphere)
 - Forest Theater – Sunday movie night
 - Sunset Center – Thursday night Tell Allen of Chopped
 - Monterey Winemakers Celebration on the 10th

Stakeholder Communication

- Winter marketing overview
- Best Kept Carmel launch
- Burghardt & Dore update

- Culinary Week
- CRID committee
- Pali society properties opening Summer 2023
- PACT meeting for restaurants and hotels 4/25/23

Car Week

- No Concourse on the Avenue for 2023
- Lots of smaller events happening in the village
- Looking at ways to assist with organization of events and possibly produce a calendar of events.
- Looking to fill gaps earlier in the week to encourage longer stays, early week bookings and visitors

Love Carmel Like a Local

CVB

- Local stories on tourism
- Artichoke County Trail

Visit California Outlook Forum

- Brief summary of California tourism as a whole
- Discussion about CA recovery
- Discussion about who to market to (don't forget boomers)
- International Travel should be opening up with lots of \$\$ to spend
- New Technologies including AI, TikTok and VR
- Changing direction of marketing away from California Dream to "Childhood Rules" and "the ultimate playground" for adults
- Leaning into sustainable tourism – 12 regional 10-year plans in the next two years

Advance planning

- March 28 Restaurant Meeting at La Playa
- April 13 Regular BOD meeting

Public Relations and Social Media:

Alli Williams presented Feb recap:

Key messages and themes

- Love Carmel Like a Local
- Best Kept Carmel
- Valentine's Day Getaway

Numbers at a glance

- 8 media – two high profile MSN/Yahoo/The Travel
- 6 national
- 14 indirect placements

Media FAMS

Sucheta Rawal – AAA magazine article – shared with MCVVB
Hanna Ball – TikTok creator – Wellness focused.

Best Kept Carmel – Haley Walter

- Launched February 21 – held back due to weather – wanted to give best chance for success.

Social Media

- Lots of growth
 - Instagram 1200% (+3800 followers)
 - Engagement on IG – up 26.9%
 - Engagement on FM up 5.5%
 - Follower growth on TikTok 191.2% (now at 1089 followers)

Stakeholder exposure listed for February

Mark Watson request YOY information moving forward as opposed to just the current months

Marketing Update:

Video of media placement viewed

Top takeaways from Outlook

- “Go where the money is” — Boomer Generation (Age 60+) is the wealthiest
- Slower travel = Longer stays
- “Bleisure” provides longer stay opportunities
- Luxury travel is growing (4-star + hotels)
- Customized tours and itineraries
- Loneliness is big...people need to get out and experience life
- “Here comes China” with huge traveler base
- Economy looks strong contrary to minor recession
- California is becoming the 4th largest nation economy

Wealthy Alumni marketing

- We can market to Alumni meeting our desired demographic – list shared
- Primarily Gen X and Boomer

Winter campaign

- Book Direct focus
- Up 10.88 % increase in traffic to site
- YOY referrals same as last year

Digital Media

- 52% increase digital add increase
- Prospecting Display adds performance CTR .13% (average .1%)
- Remarketing adds .45%

Social

- Video Performance VTR - average 92.7% over industry average of 22%
- Prospecting performance 1.37% over average of .9%
- Remarketing CTR 2.45%
- Expedia Media – ROAS \$1 = \$10.8 (needs to be discounted by 20%)

New Digital Media – on target

- 3.2 Million Impressions YTD
- CTR at .10%VCR at 71%

Eblast

- Open rate 41.2 (16.7% average)

Fly Market Campaign

- .73% CTR (average .10%)
- Objectives - switching to video and carousel for Facebook and Instagram
 - 3+ nights
 - Increase spend

- Increase engagement

Discussion on overall offerings for fly market regarding increases in flights moving forward

Agreed to go with video after discussion

Destination Stewardship

- New Video
- Carousel Adds
- Campaign average 2.16% (industry .90%)
- Google Ads performing below averages
- Partnership includes Carmel Cares, Residents Association etc. Working together, using shared logos on new signage. Essentially moving forward with some items to increase value of partnership.

Website update still in progress

Other Projects | Destination Intelligence Madden Voyage - Visit Carmel + MRV

- Pulling IP-data from the last 2 years
- Building branded dashboard
- Importing existing data sources such as TOT
- 20 Comp-set DMOs - Digital Ads & Budget Analysis

Other Projects | Brand Research Online & In-Person Surveys

- Opt-In Email List - Approx. 75,000 emails - Surveys
- Visitors/Potential Visitors – Brand Awareness Survey
 - targeting San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, and Seattle
- In-Market Visitor Intercepts
- Carmel Retail Businesses & Hotels
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Local Carmel Residents
- Discussion about possible questions and accessibility to surveys. Possible QR code at front desks around town.

Additions to Agenda:

No additions

Pam Sheppard adjourned meeting at 4:45 pm