



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, April 13, 2023
2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Mark Watson, Inns-by-the-Sea; Pam Sheppard, Horizon Inn; Amy Herzog, Executive Director; Candace Fecteau, Tradewinds Inn/The Stilwell; Chris Whitman, Pali Society; Greg Ahn, Folktale (virtual); Michael LaPier, Monterey Airport.

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Burghardt and Nicole Dore, Visit Carmel; Abbi and Ty Whitaker, The Abbi Agency; Hella Rothchild, Carmel Art Festival; Leslie Chavez, MCCVB.

(Virtual) - Suzanne Gravell, Carmel Area Reservations, Alli Williams and Haley Walter from The Abbi Agency; Dawn Galante, Dawn's Dream.

Board Members Absent: Chip Rerig, City of Carmel; Rich Pepe, Pepe International; Mary Crowe, La Playa; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House.

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

Public Comment:

Hella Rothchild wanted to remind everyone about the Art Festival which is May 19 -21. Asking for any assistance in marketing with email blasts, etc. Jeff Burghardt indicated that Visit Carmel is running an ad.

Updates on groups provided by Suzanne Gravell – held to later due to sound issues.

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

MCCVB Update:

Leslie provided an update for the Monterey County CVB.

Spring Campaigns:

- Book Direct
- “The Moment” Leisure campaign
- “All in” Group meetings campaign
- Responsible Travel campaign – in market campaign to encourage responsible travel

New initiative – Travel responsibly billboards off of Hwy 1.

Earned media found in SF Chronicle/Forbes – Artichoke trail.

Weather updates during the winter storms – Involvement from CVB including hotel evacuation program, Monterey County emergency operations center and post storm recovery platform.

The **Artichoke Trail** campaign launched in March with a heavier push beginning in May. Including coverage on Rachel Ray Show. Four Carmel restaurants included in this marketing effort.

Promoting Pebble Beach U.S. Women’s Open with a Monterey Pro v. Pro. Showed video of campaign.

Public Comment Con’t:

Suzanne Gravell offered group booking update. Groups are increasing and she continues to try to pull groups into the 93921 area. Highlighted several recent groups heading into Carmel. Seeing mostly wedding inquiries this spring.

Financial and Market Share Report:

Chairman recognized Mark Watson’s current efforts with sorting out banking issues this month. Brief discussion about where to put reserve fund based on interactions with current bank Wells Fargo.

Mark would like the Board to consider moving the accounts to a new bank. Mark’s suggestion is Pinnacle Bank.

Motion made by Chris Whitman seconded by Pam to switch to new bank based on Mark’s recommendations. – Passed unanimously.

Mark Watson presented financial status.

Sitting at \$1.611 M as of March 31.

Financial report:

- YTD \$26,733 down to budget in income.
- PR expenses \$13,652 YTD under
- Marketing \$152,801 YTD under (will be made up)
- Total expenses \$185,464 under budget YTD
- Still showing positive cash flow at \$112K for the month and \$158K YTD

FY 23 – 24 Budget considerations:

Presented by Amy Herzog

- To the positive
 - Recession/ International Travel / Flex Work /Hotel openings /Boomers positioned to travel
- To the Negative
 - Pandemic savings depleted for many/international competition/inflation concerns/City assumptions.
- Decision to base budget off of historical trends of approx 4.7% growth rate per year.
- Discarded 2020/2021/2022
- Discounted 5% to be conservative.

Projecting TOT \$7.6M versus LY \$8.03M – Projecting approx. 5% decrease YoY

Recommending budget of total revenue and expenses balanced at \$1.93M. Approx. 3% down YOY.

– This includes 11% reserve.

Mid-year budget meeting suggested to re-assess.

Executive Director Report: Amy Herzog reported:**Carmel Wine Walk**

- Wine Walk TM purchased from Carmel Chamber - Check issued
- Insurance policies being renewed
- Visit Carmel now has seller's permit for the Culinary Week Kick Off event.

CRID update

- March 28 reception well attended. Appropriate information provided to restaurants.
- Need signatures of more than 50% - should be fine
- Council meetings May, June and July

Culinary Week

- 13 restaurants and 6 wineries signed up so far to provide during the Kick Off Party
- New ticketing platform – Tock
- Outsourcing to Buzz PR
- Poptopia for entry check-in
- Working on live music options
- Move Village wide to increase draw
- Sunset Center – Ted Allen
- Winemakers Celebration
- Information shared with hotels including posters and flyers

Stakeholders communication

- March E-blast –Carmel Arts Festival/ Best Kept Carmel/ Car week update/ storm relief/ Earth Day MCHA auction
- Art festival program
- Carmel Chamber Guide
- Cantinetta Luca Sold
- Folktale Wine Bar opening in May

Car Week

- Carmel Magazine working on article
- Looking for update on happenings to boost early week

Destination Stewardship

- Reprinting time- adding new logo and branding to collateral
- Consulting firm hired by Visit California for new regional tourism strategic plan
- Regenerative Monterey

2023 – 2024 Planning session with Marketing and PR

- Trends
- Audiences
- Metrics Review/goal setting
- Marketing strategies
- Specific campaigns
- Creative Assets
- Budget considerations

“Year of consistency” and “Quality over quantity”

Recommend next board meeting to be closed for contract renewals as well as discussion about marketing plan and goals

June 8 – Refined Marketing Plan / Present budget for approval

July 13 – New Fiscal Year/ CRID renewal approved

Marketing Update: Jeff Burghardt presented:

Brand Research

- Brand awareness survey
- In-market survey
- Carmel by-the-Sea hotel guest survey
- Valued Visitor Survey
- Carmel by-the-Sea resident survey

Jeff shared some early results from surveys with promise of much more detailed results

Destination intelligence dashboard early results (1st Q)

Fly market Display Campaign

- 9 x industry average (CTR .88)
- New Creative
 - Target DEN, DFW, SAN, SEA + 50 mile radius
 - Living in respective market
 - College graduates
 - Top 25% HHI
 - Interested in Beach Travel, resorts, luxury lifestyle, luxury Travel

Add performance for campaigns

- continues to show increases in most metrics – Video and display adds leading the way
- Using same assets as fly market

Expedia Media

- showing 10.9 ROAS

Eblasts

- 41% open rate

Carmel Culinary Week

- New pages for Culinary Week
- Village events – to expand through entire village
- Eliminating use of Bandwango
- Flyers and posters going out next week as well as digital graphics
- Will be “pushing all the buttons”

Destination Stewardship

- Working with Carmel Cares and CRA
- Voluntourism
- Running digital ads in market
- Lots of supportive comments on the social media ads

Social Media

- Showing great response from engagements

Hotel Opportunity / Free audio Map tours – downloads

Found on Visit Carmel Website

- Fairytale House walk
- Scenic Road walk
- Driving Tour
- Downtown one-hour tour
- Off the beaten path tour
- Historical highlights from the mission areas
- Bohemian Art Scene
- Camel point walking tour
- \$7.99 website – \$3.99 at visitor center

Public Relations and Social Media Update

Alli Williams presented March recap:

Key messages and themes

- Carmel Bohemian
- Spring Travel
- Culinary Week
- Outdoor adventure

Numbers at a glance

- 9 media – two high profile Forbes/Yahoo – others The Times (UK), The Knot, Locale, Monterey
- 6 national
- 22 indirect placements

Media FAMS

Jill Robinson – foraging message – forest to table culinary

James Marriott – Visit CA collaboration

Jody Robbins – Visit California collaboration

Best Kept Carmel – Haley Walter

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

Social Media

- Great growth
 - Instagram followers 2.5%
 - Impression on FB - 8.9%
 - Engagement on FB 7.3%
 - Follower growth on TikTok 11.4%
- Engagements and follower up YOY – engagement down
- Social Care and listening
 - 353 mentions
 - 36% positive / 62% neutral
 - Messages received 555 - time of response 1.5 days
- Some engagements (especially through IG) are lagging in some part because our library of content is getting low. There will be an effort to increase what we have.
- Audit may be performed to determine what content we need/have

Additions to Agenda:

No additions

Pam Sheppard adjourned meeting at 4:30 pm