



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)
VISIT CARMEL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
The Loft at Hotel Carmel
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921
Thursday, July 13, 2023
2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Pam Sheppard, Horizon Inn; Mark Watson, Inns-by-the-Sea; Chip Rerig, City of Carmel; Rich Pepe, Pepe International; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House; Amy Herzog, Executive Director; Candace Fecteau, Tradewinds Inn/The Stilwell; Greg Ahn, Seventh and Dolores/Folktale; Chris Whitman, Pali Society

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Burghardt and Nicole Dore, Visit Carmel; Dani Hannah and Abbi Whitaker, Ty Whitaker, The Abbi Agency; Suzanne Gravell, Carmel Area Reservations; Nancy Twomey, CRA; Ashlee Wright, City of Carmel; Nancy Dayton, Resident; Ken Spilfogel, Flaherty; Lance Wills, Chamber of Commerce; Dale Byrne, Carmel Cares; April Montgomery, Links Club

Board Members Absent, Michael LaPier, Monterey Airport; Mary Crowe, La Playa

Pam Sheppard called the Meeting to order at 2:35 pm.

Public Comment:

Dale Byrne provided an update from Carmel. Cigarette Butt receptacles are currently being examined for installation in the village. Scenic pathway guardrails being replaced. There are currently 5 – 12 volunteers for trimming, plant care, and cleanup of the downtown area.

Minutes: – Chris Whitman made motion to approve minutes from June 15, 2023. Mark Watson seconded. Unanimous approval.

MCCVB update postponed due to technical difficulties with Virtual connections.

Monterey Regional Airport update – Postponed.

Carmel Chamber of Commerce Collaboration:

Meetings have been production over the last few weeks. History of relationships between the entities examined and possible collaboration topics identified:

- Car Week – creating communications tools for Car Week.
- Taste of Carmel – will help promote out of market
- New Opportunities
- More regular communications
- Consider a Carmel Chamber representative for Visit Carmel Board

Based on recommendations for collaboration a tentative budget was discussed:

Taste of Carmel –	\$12 K for media, \$2.5K for check stuffers, \$4K for creative development
Car Week -	\$5K collateral, 2.5K Creative development
Guide to Carmel –	\$7.5K
Misc. Projects -	Co-branded maps - \$2K
Dogs of Carmel -	New promotion with Art pieces available for “adoption”

Dog Week initiative will highlight the dogs of Carmel statues found around town. The Kickoff for Dogs of Carmel will occur July 24th at Cypress Inn.

Overall estimated support for Carmel Chamber is approx. \$35.3 K

Funds already agreed upon will be re-allocated to cover digital media buy for Taste of Carmel (and Meet the Makers due to close timing of two events).

The takeaway is that both entities working together will be the most productive and cost-effective ways to continue to promote the village.

Executive Director Report: Amy Herzog reported:

Administrative updates

- Confirmed non-profit status with Secretary of State
- Renewal Agreement with TAA in Process
- Carmel Wine Walk distribution of year-end report

CRID renewal update:

- Council passed ordinance for RID with a 2.5% assessment for a 9 ½ year term.
- Survey distributed to Carmel Culinary Week participating restaurants.
- Good feedback
 - More educational events
 - More demos and competitions
 - More controlled kickoff party
 - Continue with SSC, Winemakers celebration, additional off-site kitchen venue
 - Maintain the June dates

Stakeholder communications:

- Culinary Week re-cap
- Stakeholder surveys distributed
- SCC new season
- Carmel Art Walk
- CRID photo shoot update
- CRA Presentation meeting

Regional Coordination:**See Monterey**

- Coordinate See Monterey and Visit Carmel Marketing team meeting
- See Monterey Annual Meeting August 31, 2023
- Jeff Burghardt coordinating on Carmel scenes in new Monterey County destination video campaign

Central Coast Tourism Council

- Amy Herzog accepted second year a president for Central Coast Tourism Council
- Submitting Applications in for grant funding and other partnerships from Visit California on behalf of central coast region

Upcoming:

- August 10 – Visit Carmel Board Meeting
- September 14th Board Member nominations
- October – Taste of Carmel /Meet the makers
- Annual report

Rich Pepe volunteered Kudos to Amy Herzog for her outstanding work with not only Visit Carmel but the other affiliations she currently handles in various capacities.

Marketing Report: Jeff Burghardt presented...

Results YOY seeing traffic up 15.26%.

Web referrals up 2.78%

Return on investment \$5,315,482

Branding campaign

- Switched to broader branding.
- Where every day is a work of art
- Mid-week call to action “cool midweek escape” – (also playing off heat in other parts of CA and country) through mid-august

Eblast - 78K opt-in emails

- Book direct message.
- 60 + restaurants in Village
- Best Kept Carmel
- Love Carmel Like a Local

Tear pad printing – completed.

Art walk brochure development

Car Week information brochure development

Public Relations Report: Abbi Whitaker presented...

June key messages – Culinary scene
Barbie Travel Pitch – upcoming

Direct placement
8 media placements – 2 national
Wall Street Journal mention highlight

Looking to feature larger features moving forward.

Hitting brand pillars

Social Media Placement:

Engagement trending upwards

- TikTok followers up 46.1 %
- Impressions on Facebook has increased by 15.3%
- Engagement on Facebook has increased by 6.76%
- Impressions on Instagram have increased by 9.17%
- Followers on Instagram have increased by 16.5%

Crediting increases in large part to Video usage

We had a tiktok go viral – unable to view due to technical issues

Social listening improvement showing positive 27%/ negative 3% with the remaining considered neutral

Marketing: (return to Jeff Burghardt presenting)

Fly market update – hitting our standard markets
Switched to social digital ad campaign and moved away from paid ads for the time being. Seeing great performance.

Seeing increases in engagements.

Will bring back Google display with partnerships, but currently happy with what we are seeing with current campaign.

Brand Partnerships:

- Looking into collaboration with Master Card. They have Travel based programs.
- Booking experiences is an option with partnership.
- Discussion about possible offers for experiences – possibly one per participating hotel

Brand Research

- 3400 surveys completed
- 80 Resident surveys completed
- 30 Stakeholders

Continuing to provide valuable feedback. Reinforcing some of the Boards assumptions regarding pillars as well as demographics. On-going effort

Stakeholder surveys showing good range of businesses

Visitors also looking at Monterey, Napa, Tahoe, Santa Barbara Yosemite. This lines up with visitors as well as stakeholders.

Trends in Travel -

- Off the grid,
- unique experience,
- boomers still showing great opportunities for Carmel

Moving forward hitting key pillars using current and new content.

World Class Destination

Targeting mid-week visits, longer stays and booking direct

Market Share Report:

Presented by Mark Watson

Comp Set for March April 2023

RevPAR

- Carmel 23% down RevPAR – YOY (same as Yountville)
- Monterey up 13% almost everyone else down – assumption is groups that did not cancel even with bad weather

Occupancy

- Carmel 60% down 20% YOY. Only Monterey showing increase YOY
- Carmel fell from highest last year to 3rd this year. Biggest drop.

ADR

- Carmel down slightly (3%) YOY

Weather and other factors once again discussed as possible factor in decline YOY. There does seem to be a pick up occurring as we move to May/June time frame.

Financials:

Mark Watson continued with monthly financials:

- \$1.413M in bank end of June (also end of fiscal year)
- \$1.957M in revenue down 34K
- PR expenses are under \$43K
- Marketing \$16K over budget
- Sales under budget
- Admin small overage
- Net cash flow - \$2,0054 under what was budgeted for FY 22-23.

Starting fiscal year with \$1.227M with a reserve of \$268K

Additions to Agenda:

No additions

Pam Sheppard adjourned meeting at 4:41.