



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)
VISIT CARMEL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
Sunset Center, Chapman Room and on Zoom
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921
Thursday, August 10th, 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/Stilwell Hotel, Chris Whitman, Pali Society; Mary Crowe, La Playa (virtual); Michael La Pier; Monterey Airport.

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Burghardt, Visit Carmel; Dani Hannah and Abbi Whitaker, Ty Whitaker, The Abbi Agency; Suzanne Gravelle, Carmel Area Reservations; Nancy Twomey, CRA; Lance Wills, Chamber of Commerce; Dale Byrne, Carmel Cares

Board Members Absent: Greg Ahn, Seventh and Dolores/Folktale

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

Public Comment:

Suzanne Gravelle wanted to raise the issue of an article indicating Carmel as the most expensive place to visit in CA. Everyone agrees this is based on inaccurate data in factors. This has been previously discussed, no dissenting opinions were offered.

Pam Sheppard called for consensus regarding removing the September meeting from the schedule. No disagreement from the Board. Next meeting will be in October.

Minutes: – Mark Watson made motion to approve minutes from July 13, 2023. Chip Rerig seconded. Unanimous approval.

Carmel Cares update:

Dale Byrne presented slides and presentation from the Carmel Cares website. A brief outline and history of Carmel Cares was presented from initial idea to implementation of community assistance with safe driving, to town history voice maps (tours), and mindful messaging. When town began to show

wear and inattention to some beautification items in town due to COVID, the development of Carmel Cares as a volunteer effort was realized.

Additional efforts were briefly outlined including Sunset Center, Scenic Drive Restoration and Guardrails, Devendorf Park, Forest Theatre, Vista Lobos Park, Cherry Center for the Arts, Median Minders, Pick-up Posse, Downtown Detail, Tag Team Graffiti efforts.

Brief discussion of Community Based Social Marketing highlighting the desire for collaboration with Visit Carmel, leveraging the involvement and enthusiasm of volunteers and the Board of Visit Carmel.

Destination Stewardship:

As part of this conversation Jeff Burghardt addressed collaboration within the village regarding destination stewardship. Carmel Cares, City of Carmel, Carmel Resident Association and Carmel Chamber of Commerce are highlighted in this effort. Voluntourism – Carmel Cares and Resident's association already involved. Discussion of where this collaboration can be effective.

Monterey Regional Airport update:

Michael La Pier presented.

- Busiest two months in history
- August projections great
- Sun Country and MSP – looking for rates, so moving forward with Minneapolis non-stop.
- Meetings with Alaska Airlines Leadership team – 36-hour visit with Dinner in Carmel
- Small Community Air Service Development Program Grant for AA Chicago

General discussion of air travel outlook in relation to Monterey.

Committee Formation:

For the upcoming nominations for new/returning board members a Nominating Committee needs to be formed. Three seats are up for 2023. The addition of advisory members may also be added.

Chip Rerig made a motion to nominate Chris Whitman, Rich Pepe, and Michael La Pier to return to their current seats for additional terms and add one additional advisory board member to the Board of Visit Carmel. Pam seconded. All agreed, none opposed, passed unanimously.

Discussion of Community Relations Advisory Committee.

- Would attend community organization meetings.
- City Council meetings when needed.
- Abate misinformation

Chip made the suggestion of Carrie Theis for additional member to a Community Relations Advisory Committee in addition to the Executive Director (Amy) and Chair (Pam).

Discussion about putting recorded meetings online for later viewing. Consensus was open meetings as well as published minutes were sufficient.

Chip Rerig seconded Rich Pepe motion for Amy, Pam and Carrie to form a Community Relations Advisory Committee. Any Discussion – none, All in favor - all, none opposed, no abstentions, motion passed.

Executive Director Report: Amy Herzog reported:

Administrative updates:

- TAA renewal Agreement and SOW signed with Abbi Agency.
- 22-23 Annual Report and 23 – 24 Marketing plan in progress
 - To be completed by end of October.

Community Relations:

- Article in Pine Cone re: tourism numbers down
- Meetings and Presentation – Pending
 - CRA Board
 - Carmel Rotary
 - Carmel Chamber of Commerce Board
 - CRA led – “Carmel Quartet” roundtable meeting

Stakeholder communications:

July Monthly Eblast

- Michelin Star / Awards
- Car Week Guide
- Dogs of Carmel Campaign
- CRID Renewal
- VC Bard Nominations

Printed Digital Collateral in distribution.

- Car Week
- Carmel Art Walk
- Carmel Map
- To Come soon: post card/check stuffer for restaurants

Mention of Jeff Burghardt’s outstanding efforts in all printing and collateral materials.

Food Wine and Art Update:

- September CRID focus
 - Assessment of marketing needs
 - New and revised approaches
- Michelin Accolades
- Planning had begun for Meet the Makers event – October 14
- Wine Walk renewals sent out
- Working on wine walk trademark transfer
- New Wine and Wanderings guided wine tasting tour starting up.

Destination Stewardship

- Central Coast Regional Advisory Committee kick off.
- Regenerative Monterey

See Monterey

- Annual Meeting – August 31
- Coordinate See Monterey/VC marketing team meeting in September
- Travel Trade – Providing info on new/updated properties for trade events targeting luxury travel advisors.

Upcoming

- No meeting in September
- Proposed for October 12 – extended meeting
 - Brand research presentation at 2PM – confirmed by Board
 - Board member nominations close
 - Annual report and marketing plan due
- November/December Meetings
 - Resume annual meeting for Stakeholders and community members
 - Tentatively looking at after Thanksgiving.
 - Board Vote on new Board Members

Marketing Report: Jeff Burghardt presented:

- Results YOY seeing traffic up 15.26%.
- Web referrals up 7.76%
- Impressions and Clicks 9.44% increased
- Hotel referrals down YOY -7.1%

Midweek call to Action

- Cool midweek escape campaign - remarketing

Project updates

- Car Week - links and web site efforts
- Best Kept Carmel – Arts video just launched
 - Media strategy videos
- Event Marketing collaboration
- Destination Stewardship collaboration

Brand Position

Most awarded destination – this will be leveraged moving forward

Brand Research

- 100-page brand insights
- Survey results approx. (3,400 responses)

Brand Partnership with Mastercard

- Book “priceless” Carmel experiences
- In progress

Madden Agency transition highlights

RID Marketing & Media

- New website design
- Integrating Culinary into all efforts
- Equal treatment to all restaurants in social advertising
- Video focused future growth
 - Vertical Video which can be used everywhere
 - Some user generated
- Exploring insert for Carmel Magazine in room highlighting *Eat and Drink* with tear pad map and each restaurant with equal coverage

Social Video Sponsorship possibilities

- How to Eat your Way Through...
- Concert Travel Channel – create immersive SM experience.

Update Brand Image

- New Asset Collections
- New Tagline conception
- Refresh brand storytelling to be more engaging
- New Brand Campaign Launch Nov 2023
- Book Direct CTA

Public Relations Report: Dani Hannah reports:

July Recap

- Costal Nona Trend
- National Dog Day
- Barbie accrued some PTO
- New Hotel Release – coming soon

Direct Placement

4 media placements – 3 national

- Wall Street Journal
- Matador network
- NBC
- The Points Guy

Best Kept Carmel featured Cultura for July

Social Media Placement:

- Engagement trending upwards across the board
- July YOY up 15%

Goal Metrics – where they focus and how they will evaluate successes

- Goal to ensure all media coverage is measure against quality metric to ensure every effort aligns with the overall goals and audiences of Camel.
- Measure brand pillar inclusions, assessing what percentage of our key messages are dominating
- 2023 78% of key placements included at least on key message, goal moving forward is to increase to 80%.

Evaluation – PR Goal Metrics

- Reach high intent consumers in Carmel drive market and key flight markets
- In 22 -23 22% of placements were in target markets goal of 25% for 23 - 24
- Earn move overarching feature stories
 - Success determined by journalist engagement,
- Increase direct bookings by driving audiences directly to carmelcalifornia.com
 - Included backlink in online placement increase from 42% to 45%
- Continue promoting travel itineraries through Carmel Restaurant and Hotels weekly

- Increase CTR to the website by 10%
- Prioritize quality over quantity
- Best Kept Carmel
 - Refreshed content strategy
 - 6 blog posts
 - Increased visitation on the Best Kept Carmel site

Financials: Mark Watson presented monthly financials:

- \$1.391M in bank end of July
- \$39K in revenue
- PR 9.8K under
- Marketing 1.6K under
- Sales overage
- Admin small overage
- Net cash flow \$14,000

Additions to Agenda:

No additions

Pam Sheppard adjourned Open Session meeting at 4:39.