



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, February 8, 2024
2:30 PM

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Mark Watson, Inns-by-the-Sea; Chip Rerig, City of Carmel; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House; Amy Herzog, Executive Director; Candace Fecteau, Tradewinds Inn/Stilwell Hotel, Mary Crowe, La Playa (virtual); Rich Pepe, Pepe International.

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Burghardt, Visit Carmel; Dani Hannah, Abbi Whitaker (virtual), The Abbi Agency, Allison Hines, Stilwell Hotel, Tim Twomey, Ashlee Wright; City of Carmel, Kenneth Spilfogel; Flaherty Seafood. Brandon Swanson, City of Carmel, Graeme Robertson, CRA; Margaret Byrne, Carmel Cares (virtual); Suzanne Gravelle, CARS (virtual); Helen Baywadic; H. Daughter Corp.

Board Members Absent: Pam Sheppard, Horizon Inn; Michael La Pier; Monterey Airport; Greg Ahn, Seventh and Dolores/Folktale.

Mark Watson, standing in as Chairman, called the Meeting to order at 2:33 pm.

Public Comment:

None

Minutes:

Chip Rerig motioned to accept minutes from November 30, 2023, seconded by Carrie Theis. Passed unanimously.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

Amy Herzog explained:

- Three officer positions on this board.

- They all serve one year term starting in April each year.
- There are no rules on serving subsequent terms.
- The position that comes up for renewal every year

Amy Herzog opened the floor to nominations for the offices of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

- Candace Fecteau nominated Mark Watson for Treasurer, Mark accepted the nomination.
- Mark Watson nominated Chip Rerig for Chairman, Chip accepted the nomination.
- Carrie Theis nominated Candace Fecteau for Secretary. Candace Accepted the nomination.
- Additional call for any other nominations. None noted.
- Rich Pepe offered approval of the nominees as well as the value of rotating officers periodically.
- Mark Watson offered his gratitude for volunteerism found from the Board
- Amy Herzog noted that Chris Whitman had resigned from the board due to relocation.
 - Suggested the board form a nominating committee next meeting to locate a replacement for the vacant seat.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Administrative Update:

- finished the calendar year end
- issued 1099 to all vendors
- paid our year end sales tax
- renewed our annual contract with Burghardt + Dore as per November 30 closed session.
- renewed and signed a contract with the city to be the administrators for the CRID
- provided the City with our annual COI certificates of liability insurance certificates.
- named the City is one of the insured.
- Visit Carmel will be looking to renegotiate/renew our agreement as administrators of City's marketing contract.

Recap from November 30 meeting:

- discussion about a mid year budget review
- decision to increase marketing spend by about 10%.
- gone from about \$1.8 to just over \$2 million in our revised marketing spend for this fiscal year.
- 11% of revenues continue to remain in reserve

Community Relations update:

- Efforts to ensure Visit Carmel is out in the community supporting various events.
- Some local flavor was shared through slides of board members.
- Amy will be a guest lecturer in February at CSUMB for one of their hospitality courses.
- Visit Carmel will be represented at the MCHA gala to help wish congrats to Mark for being hospitality professional of the year
- Annual meeting at La Playa
 - Approx 80 people in attendance
 - Diverse group representing personal and business interests in Carmel
 - Received very positive feedback
 - Suggested we do this more than annually.
- Highlights to Stakeholders monthly
- Weather monitor and alerts available on Visit Carmel Website
- Link to Monterey County as they have more resources and exposure

CRID Update:

For Culinary Week May 31 – June 8

- Village – wide events
- Kickoff party
- Sunset Center and Forest theater involvement
- Village Kitchen – possibilities for co-op use
- No winemakers' celebration this year
- Emphasis on experiences demonstrations and educational events

Other news:

- Chez Noir up for James Beard award (best new restaurant)
- Links Club- Battle of the bartenders
- Carmel Burger Bar and Café Luna recently under new ownership

Airport MRY update:

- Sun Country Airlines possibly offering non stop from MSP
- Visit Carmel would support in conjunction with MRY and See Monterey
- Focus on Golf and wine demographic.
- AA still in discussion re: Chicago Flight

Destination Stewardship:

- Tim Twomey joining Destination Stewardship Task Force
- Research showing positive feedback
- Website being kept updated
- Social Media Support
- Message incorporated in all collateral moving forward
- Branded Swag – thinking opportunity to create mementos/gifts
 - High quality, On brand
 - Appropriate to demographic
 - Environmentally conscious
 - Possible to market to hotels as well as retail in the future
 - Proceeds of possible future on-line sales could be allocated to
 - Friends of Mission Trail
 - Carmel Cares
 - Carmel Youth Center
 - Carmel Garden Club
 - Friends of the Forrest

Outlook Forum in March – Jeff Burghardt and Amy Herzog attending
Get lots of good information from this annually

Highway One Closure issue discussed

- SLO and See Monterey are both leading effort for this marketing campaign for re-opening.
- Visit Carmel will see how we can join in at the appropriate time.

Upcoming Info and Meetings:

- March meeting moved to March 7 due to Visit California Outlook March 4, 2024
 - Vote to Approve officers.
- April 11 Meeting - Present FY 14 – 25 Preliminary budget
- May Meeting - Approve FY 24- 25 Budget

PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE

Dani Hannah presented January Public relations update

January Recap

- Messaging primarily on new hotels
- February Valentines Day's romance focus
- Support for Annual Report meeting at La Playa
- La Playa Reopen celebration.

IMM Attendance in NYC

- Met with over 30 members of media.
- Pitched story lines, best received were new hotels and the culinary renaissance in Carmel.
- 10 FAM hosting leads in progress.
- Discussion of LA times article on Camel by the Sea without street addresses
 - Neutral story – lots of coverage nationally

Media

3 placements

- Haute Living
- Guest of a Guest
- 7 x 7

Goop article coming this spring.

4 pending media visits

Best Kept Carmel

Agency won a Pinnacle Award for this series

New video rounds will be coming soon.

- Chez Noir
- Folktale
- L'Auberge
- Pepe Family

Social Media

- Overall impression up 15.3%
- Engagements up 31%
- Overall follower growth up 1.9%

YOY impressions up almost 100% Engagements up 22% followers up 17%

- Social care continued
 - 1669 messages received
 - 2.8 days response average
- TikTok up 655 Followers in January continuing to gain momentum

MARKETING UPDATE

Jeff Burghardt presented the marketing update for January.

Integrated Marketing - flow of advertising to increase awareness and visitation

- Awareness
- Inspiration
- Consideration
- Experiences

2023 TV results

- 22,542 Impressions
- 867 TV spots
- 4 Custom programs

2023 Digital

- 67M impression
- 668K clicks
- 3.5 M engagements

2023 Hotel Referrals

- Record number in 2023
- 231K clicks to hotels
- 6.36 % over 2021
- 11 % over 2022

Marketing Calendar – strategy remains similar based on need – slow season now so multimedia heavy. Winter spring mix media toward San Francisco Bay area and Los Angeles.

Leisure Campaign - TV and CTV 30 second advertising performance

- 20 M impressions - increase from 11M from 2023

Display Ads

- Showing Static images for display adds
- Animated Adds

Performance of CTR .6% better than Industry average of .1%

Discussion of Diminishing returns.

- Reaching audience size we are looking for as market is huge.
- Idea is to bring more people to increase engagement and thus exposure

SEM Ads

Conquesting is new but showing to be effective CTR of 15%
industry average CTR 7.5 – 8%

Eblasts - Open rate 41.8 %; CTO rate 8.0%

Mountain TV - Commercial Aired 841 K reaching 230 K households

January results - Hotel Referrals

- 25 K referrals to hotels up 40% YOY.
- This leads up to determine marketing is not near saturation.

RID marketing

- Dining Guide
- Social Video Ads
- Restaurant Reels
 - New restaurants being filmed weekly
 - Each hotel will have a new video for these reels

Culinary Week – Sunset Magazine

Fly Market Ads

Co-oping with See Monterey

Updated Guides

- Refreshed Images
- Also producing Wine Walk

FINANCIAL & MARKET SHARE REPORTS

Current \$1.5 M in bank

Revenues up 73 K

39 K received in interest.

Expenses

Public Relations - 9.9K under – will catch up in Feb

Marketing –under will catch up in Feb

YTD \$1.1 M opposed to \$1.2M. Approx \$140 K down to budget

Market Share report

- Carmel up 1% Rev Par
 - better than comp set other than Monterey (mostly group bookings affected results)
- Occupancy down 2%
 - Better than most comp set but Yountville up but with significant ADR reduction.
- Average Daily Rate up 4%
 - Better than Comp Set
- Overall Market Share increased from 13.8 to 14.3 (4%)

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Invite to Michael La Pier for Fly Market discussion next meeting

Mark Watson Adjourned the meeting at 4:33 PM