



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, April 11, 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 (virtual), Greg Ahn, Folktale; Pam Sheppard, Horizon Inn; Rich Pepe, Pepe International; Mary Crowe, Marc+Rose (virtual).

Also in Attendance:

Jeff Burghardt, Visit Carmel; Nicole Dore, Visit Carmel; Abbi Whitaker, Ty Whitaker, Dani Hannah(virtual), Brittany Bober (virtual), The Abbi Agency; Graeme Robertson, Tim Twomey, CRA; Ashlee Wright, City of Carmel; Kenneth Spilfogel, Flaherty's Seafood; Kati Enea, Sygale Lomas, Carmel Chamber; Jeff Baron, City Council; Lindsey Stevens, See Monterey; April Montgomery, Links Club; Niko Rojas, social media; Hella Rothwell, Art Festival; Suzanne Gravell; CARS (virtual); Margaret Byrne, Carmel Cares (virtual).

Board Members Absent: Michael La Pier; Monterey Airport.

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

Public Comment:

Margaret Byrne wanted to mention upcoming pickup on April 20th. 80 Volunteers working towards picking up all litter as a Carmel Cares event.

Minutes:

Chip Rerig motioned to accept minutes from March 7, 2024, seconded by Carrie Theis. Passed unanimously.

Carmel Chamber Discussion:

Discussion of the visitor center mentioning that VC is open 7 days a week. There are 38 volunteers and in 2023 over 20K guests visited the Venter with over 3,000 email inquiries. They currently have an annual operating budget of 128,000 per year.

There is a proposal asking for support which includes collaboration as well as a proposed monetary allocation of \$30K per year.

Pepe made a motion to approve the Chamber's funding request at \$2,500/month. Additionally, to consider the \$30,000 annual investment starting July 1 when we know what the City is doing.

Greg Ahn amended the motion to approve budgeting \$30,000 per year, billed and paid monthly beginning May 1. Mark Watson seconded. Discussion included how to build on the collaboration in the future.

TOT Discussion:

Mark presented an analysis for discussion regarding a proposed increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax. The city is considering a 20% increase in TOT this fall. The analysis showing that actual harm to the stakeholders and city may occur having the opposite overall effect desired with the increase.

Decision to have the Innkeepers Association take the lead on this topic. Strategy presented to ask the City to give us the time to grow the TOT organically and not raise tax.

See Monterey Report:

Presented by Lindsey Stevens.

Discussed social media seminar offered by See Monterey which was very well attended.

2 time Poppy Award winners for best group meetings marketing and best crisis recover campaign.

Spring Campaign

- "Find your way here" leisure campaign
- "All in" Group meeting campaign
- "You're in" Luxury Campaign

Paid and earned media highlighted.

Current initiatives

- Strategic roadmap and resident sentiment survey
- IPW 2024 will be attended by See Monterey
- Non-stop flights to Minneapolis – launching ad campaign August 8
- Regional Icons – to be used for the website to give visual identity to areas
- Visitor profile Study – QR codes up including in Carmel

Programs and projects:

- Check Please on KQED
- With Chez Noir hosting luxury media event
- EATER calamari heat up map.
- More to Monterey County influencer campaign
- New SeeMonterey.com build.

FY 24-25 Budget:

Any presented some considerations in making revenue projections for the FY 24-25 Budget. Total forecasted TOT revenue is \$8,199,960. And projected recommended expenditures are \$2,585,862. Also included a few notes:

- Forecasted TOT based on historical trends and modified by expected full inventory of rooms and higher ADR (+6.2% projected YOY).
- Reminder: TOT for FY 22-23 = \$ 7,454,145 TOT for FY 21-22 = \$ 8,267,749
- CRID revenue generally about 3.3% of TOT revenue, or a 4-5% increase YOY.
- Assuming the \$120K from City. Not official. This FY will spend ~\$330K from cash reserve.
- Reserve fund policy requires at least 11%, with \$952K projected remaining unrestricted.
- Cash Reserve Funding of \$500K is a suggestion. Part of this can be held under “New Opportunities” in PR & Marketing.

Executive Director Report:

Community Relations

- KQED event
- Chamber Table going for Visit Carmel
- Welcome to Kati Enea

Crisis communications – Highway 1 slip

March E-blast pushing Culinary Week.
New openings and ownership mentioned

Culinary Week update for new events

Visit California

- Outlook forum
- Poppy awards – finalist
- Conde Nast Partnership
- Chinese Influencer campaign
- New Brand platform – Ultimate Playground will be using Carmel by the Sea in some paid media
- CCTC moved to Asilomar

Upcoming Info and Meetings

May 16 Meeting

- Discussion Goals and strategies for 24 – 25
- Draft budget for review
- TAA contract renewal (closed session)
- Exec Director Review (closed session)

June 20

- Refined Marketing plan
- Present Final FY 24 – 25 Budget - Approve

Public Relations Update:

Dani Hannah presented March Public Relations update.

Overview

- IMM follow ups
- Spring Road Trips
- Nostalgic Travel – a fairy tale escape

PR Goals

- Medial outlast that will provide increased awareness or elevation
- Securing stories in direct flight and drive markets
- Garnering stories in Digital media to drive back to discovery of Carmel
- Non-traditional FAM opportunities

Media

Conde Nast Traveler 17 Great American road trips

Style Caster – Most romantic Weekends

Live like it's the Weekend – Perfect Long Weekend Guide

Vogue – By the Sea: Refurbished Mainstays

Best Kept Carmel launched with second installment

Brittany presented the social media March recap:

Social Media

Goals

- Increase followers by 10%
- Increase overall impressions by 15%
- Increase overall engagement by 15%
- Increase Video vies by 15%

Facebook Target audiences outlined

Instagram Target audiences outlined

TikTok Target audiences outlined

Audience growth showing greatest change in TikTok 30% increase total change 6.5 % increase

Impressions showing greatest increase on TikTok

Engagement 10.6% increase in TikTok

Video Content vies up 25%

Featured stakeholders listed.

Marketing Update

Jeff Burghardt presented the marketing update for March.

Multimedia Winter Spring Campaigns

Media Mix

- Digital/ TV/New Media hitting fly and drive markets
- TV medial 18 M impressions with 1481 spots
- CTV medial 2.9M impressions
- CTV 2.9M completed views
- MNTN 2.9 impressions
- Digital 25.9 M impressions / 2.9M engagement

Q1 E blasts open rate 38.2%/ Industry Avg. 20.2

Paid Digital up 52%

March showing 107K new users for web traffic

Q1 – Jan up 40% /Feb up 10% /March up 21%

Hotels referrals reflected in these increases

Video Showcase – 8 minute video completed

New hotels highlighted

KQED “Check Please “premier screening at Sunset Center

Restaurant Campaign

- 6 more restaurant reels completed
- Media Mix
- Responsive Website
- Digital Ads
- Culinary Week Ad in Sunset

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

Pam Sheppard Adjourned the meeting at 4:55