



CARMEL HOSPITALITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (CHID)
VISIT CARMEL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
Sunset Center and on Zoom
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921
Thursday, September 19, 2024
2:30 PM

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark Watson, Inns-by-the-Sea; Carrie Theis, Hofsas House; Amy Herzog, Executive Director; Chip Rerig, City of Carmel; Mary Crowe, La Playa (virtual); Rich Pepe, Pepe International; Greg Ahn, Folktale.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Jeff Burghardt, Visit Carmel, Ty Whitaker, Dani Hannah and Brittany Bober, The Abbi Agency, Tim Twomey (virtual), Suzanne Gravelle, CAR; Kati Enea, Carmel Chamber of Commerce; Dale Byrne, Carmel Cares; Anton-Forbes Roberts (virtual); Margaret Byrne (Carmel Cares); Denise Miotke, Sotheby's (virtual).

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Pam Sheppard, Chairman, Horizon Inn; Michael La Pier, Monterey Airport; Candace Fecteau, Tradewinds Inn/Stilwell Hotel.

Mark Watson, serving as Chair, called the Meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tim Twomey made a comment on CRA candidate forum. Went really well and very well attended. Can be viewed on the CRA website.

Dale Byrne commented on Carmel Cares which is working on beautification of the medians on Ocean Ave, among other efforts. Any interest in Visit Carmel sponsoring one of the medians? Kids will start doing art work (sorry couldn't quite hear).

Kati Enea made an announcement regarding the upcoming Candidates Forum and Taste of Carmel.

Chip Rerig commented that he would like to see the Destination Stewardship revisited in a future Board Meeting.

MINUTES:

Chip Rerig made a motion to accept the minutes from July 18, 2024. Greg Ahn seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE:

Chip Rerig and Greg Ahn have been working on nominating committee and question of whether two individuals from a lodging company can serve on the board. If a company has two hotels, can a

representative from each hotel serve at the same time. There does not seem to be any conflicts presented in the by laws.

Carrie made a motion to allow this. Mark called for vote called to allow ownership group of more than one property have more than one representative serving on the Visit Carmel Board. Vote passed unanimously.

Katie Enea and Tim Twomey are officially nominated as advisory Board Members. Vote called passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Presented by Amy Herzog.

Admin and General Updates

- Annual Tax return completed - No taxes owed
- Annual Report in progress. Hoping to have completed by October Board Meeting
- Car Week data consolidation and ideas for moving forward being pulled together for presentation
- Career Fair CSUMB

Stakeholder/Community Relations

- Workshop by Abbi Agency being presented on September 20
- RID meeting postponed to October 15
- Innkeeper Dinner at La Playa November 13
- Upcoming Election – Met with three different City Council Candidates at their request

Chamber meeting

- Assist with printed materials
- Visitor Center reporting and bi-annual meeting possibility
- Love Carmel Like a Local retail location as well as online sales
- Possibility of renting office space from Chamber including storage and consideration for additional discussion.

Meet the Makers

- October 12, 2024
- Hoping for 400 – 450 attending
- Updated Branding
- Asset collection from 2023 being used very successfully

Partnership in Marketing with MRV

- Passenger traffic is growing YOY at 15%
- Capacity for winter is up 20%
- AA pulling down second DFW flight but adding to PHX capacity
- Alaska may pull down the SEA service for winter
- Sun Country seeing a bit of growth in MSP route

Visit California/Brand USA

Hilary Swank Feature on Carmel viewed

Upcoming Info and Meetings

- October 3 - Taste of Carmel

- October 12 - Meet the Makers
- October 17 - BOD Meeting
- October 30 - Annual Report Due

MARKETING UPDATE:

Jeff Burghardt presented the marketing update.

Results from New Brand Campaign

- Launched Jan 2024
- Increased media and stations in Broadcast – good increases in impressions and engagement YOY
- Added connected TV through Mountain – shows total TV spots by city. 5.5M total TV spots
- Added KQED “Check Please” TV ads bookended. 2M impressions. Great buy for the age and socioeconomic demo.
- Engagements up 70% due to new exciting content
- Growth momentum showing, May June July exception results
- Website users (new) up 34% with new users to Hotels landing page up 1,963%
- Showing large increases in fly markets
- 18.15% web referral to hotels growth in FY24

Fall Storybook Campaign

Changing with each season – heavy on harvest for Fall

Eblasts lean into the season. Now 2x/month.

Using hotel call to actions

San Diego magazine – great buy with add and article – California Bucket list with Carmel featured first

Fly Market Campaign

Specific add spot for each location

Co-op with MRY for MTN funding increasing reach

Visit Carmel is still the #1 referral site to MRY

Expedia Conquesting

Click through available to our website

Display adds

Carmel Wine Walk – new mobile guide. More user friendly. Sign in to capture emails and zip codes.

Trackable.

Launch of new digital video campaign

Redone brochure

Meet the Makers marketing overview showed as well as an update on the RID marketing campaign.

Now have complete 22 different restaurant reels.

CA Live episode at La Playa.

New Destination brand Video and Photo Shoot upcoming for more content

PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE:

Dani Hannah and Brittany Bober presented:

2024 numbers

- Media placements 120

- National 53
- Regional 67
- AV domain Rank 73
- Est views 24.8 M
- Engagements 39.5K

Highlights in PR placement from the past year:

- Wall Street Journal
- Diablo
- The Atlanta Journal Constitution
- Goop
- Observer

Social Media Performance - July

- Impressions 49 M – 37.3% increase YOY
- Engagement 1.7 M - 5.3% increase YOY
- Audience 184K – 34% increase YOY. Working with more influencers is impacting this. Plus success of TikTok. Also we are doing more video which helps.

Followers up 33.9 % - industry average 2.5%

August Recap

Focus on National Dog Day
Skip Gen Influencer campaign
Where to go 2025 campaign

Numbers

- 8 Media placements
- Average Domain 80
- 887M reach
- 666K estimated Coverage

Notable Placements

House Beautiful – 12 most walkable cities
Hollywood Reporter
The Mercury News

Influencer highlights

Sara Lynch – Inaugural Flight with MSP to MRY
Zach, Kelsey and Chloe – Dog Friendly Travel

Social Media

- impressions 6 M 24% increase YOY
- Engagement rate 8.4% 104% increase YOY
- Audience Growth 4,571 251% increase YOY
- Impressions 4.8 M
- Engagement Rate 4.1%
- Net Growth Audience 1299
- 4571 New Followers
- 8.49% engagement rate – Industry av 1.3%

- Stakeholders' features shown
- High performing posts highlighted
- Tik Tok update 541 follower growth

Pitching holiday messaging now and a SkipGen influencer campaign.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Presented by Mark Watson.

Balance Sheet

1.3 M total bank accounts

- 24 K up in revenue
- PR marketing on track
- Marketing slightly high – timing
- Admin on track
- End about \$6770 down to budget

Comp Set

- Increase 13% RevPAR for August
- 4% increase YOY in occupancy
- ADR up 9% YOY – new hotels coming back online

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Destination Stewardship. What's next?

Mark Watson adjourned the meeting at 4:16 PM