



Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes January 16, 2024

Location: The Oxford Hotel, Bend, Oregon

Present: Kevney Dugan, Nate Wyeth, Valerie Wilson, Justin Keyes-Bundy, Serena Gordon, Kelli Carrow, Tawna Fenske, Laurel Hunter, Kelli Carrow, Elena Pressprich, Jason Lusk, Wanda Tigard, Jenniefer Hinsley, Leigh Capozzi, Heidi Hagemeyer, Josie Norris, Todd Montgomery, Noelle Fredland, Daniel Elder, Sam Johnson

Via Zoom: Courtney Braun, Chloe Manke, Diana Spring

Guests: Beau Estes, Cyrus Mooney, John Heylin

Call to Order

Chair Todd Montgomery called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Heidi Hagemeyer moved to approve the November 14, 2023, meeting minutes. Noelle Fredland seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Wanda Tigard presented the current financial statements and report. City funding was under budget slightly last month. Retail Sales were over budget. Revenue YTD is close to budget but slightly under budget. Personnel expenses were slightly under budget. Sales and Marketing expenses were under budget due to timing issues and lower spending based on TRT collections.

The Bend Sustainability Fund is running close to budget. Grant payments have been recently released.

The Bend Cultural Tourism Fund is close to budget. There are some timing variances on operating expenditures that will true up during the next few months.

More details are available in the Board Deck.

Valerie Wilson presented the results of the annual review conducted by Price Fronk & Co. They have stated that they are not aware of any material modifications that should be made. Hard copies were presented to the Board.

Noelle Fredland moved to approve the financial report. Daniel Elder seconded. The financial report was unanimously approved.

Tourism Industry Briefing

Kevney Dugan presented recent tourism industry data. TRT is running under budget for the year. Hotel and short-term rental demand is down year-over-year. ADR is running close to flat year-over-year.

More details are available in the Board Deck.

Kevney also discussed the transportation utility fee proposed by the City of Bend. The City is deciding how they will assess hotels and vacation rentals, which would most likely not be included in the first phase of implementation, where the focus is on single-family homes.

Cyrus Mooney of the City of Bend stated that nothing has been fully decided and there is still time for people to weigh in with their opinions. He expects that the City Council will implement this in phases. There will be a BEDAB meeting on February 5th where the public can provide comments. There will also be a City Council meeting on this topic on February 7th where there will be an open comment period. Cyrus estimates that around 30 other cities in Oregon currently have this fee. The City has been working closely with the City of Hillsboro. Any changes will be written into City Code.

Marketing + Communications Update

Nate Wyeth said that the new Visit Bend website will launch on Thursday, January 18th. He thanked Laurel Hunter for all her work on the new site and said that he feels that the SEO is top notch, and that the new website incorporates cutting-edge standards.

The Leave No Trace principles have been updated and expanded for winter. Pocket guides and a toolkit will be shared and distributed regionally. Visit Bend recently received the Leave No Trace Destination of the Year award.

Elena Pressprich provided updates on recent content creation projects.

Justin Keyes-Bundy covered social media highlights. In-the-moment content has been very popular and effective. Justin also stated that the consumer and industry newsletters continue to be successful.

Kelli Carrow said the winter media campaign has been in place for the past few months. The focus is on three different audience types. Childlike wonder is the main theme, focusing on the inspiration and awareness phases of travel planning.

Kelli also said that the Influencer Program continues through the winter. Responsible recreation has been included in recent influencer posts.

Nate said that the most recent volume of *Ineffable*, volume V, is available.

Jennifer Hobson-Hinsley, Visit Bend's PR contractor, provided updates on recent public relations and local media coverage.

More details are available in the Board Deck.

Program Updates

Valerie Wilson stated that the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund application period is opening today. The deadline for applications is March 7, 2024. A press release will go out today.

Serena Gordon said that the two grant programs will be incorporating Trust-Based Philanthropy principles and Visit Bend expects to be working with a consultant on this.

Serena also provided updates on a few Bend Sustainability Fund projects.

President/CEO Search Process

Todd Montgomery, Board Chair, stated that Searchwide Global has been engaged to seek the next Visit Bend President/CEO. Nicole Newman of Searchwide Global will be in Bend on Wednesday and will be conducting a needs assessment with the Visit Bend staff.

Thank You

Kevney Dugan, Visit Bend President/CEO, whose last day is today, thanked everyone. He has been with Visit Bend since 2010 and has been CEO since 2016.

Board Roundtable

There were no comments.

Community Roundtable

There were no comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Wilson, January 16, 2024