



Visit Bend Board of Directors Meeting Minutes March 19, 2024

Location: The Oxford Hotel, Bend, Oregon

Present: Nate Wyeth, Valerie Wilson, Tawna Fenske, Kelli Carrow, Justin Keyes-Bundy, Laurel Hunter, Catherine Carroll, Heidi Hagemeyer, Daniel Elder, Todd Montgomery, Noelle Fredland, Sam Johnson, Josie Norris, Wanda Tigard, Jennifer Hobson-Hinsley

Guests: John Merriman

Via Zoom: Chloe Manke, Carla Moore

Absent: Diana Spring, Courtney Braun, Brandon Tyler

Call to Order

Chair Todd Montgomery called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Daniel Elder moved to approve the January 16, 2024 and February 20, 2024 meeting minutes. Noelle Fredland seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Wanda Tigard presented the most recent financial reports. Revenue for February was \$66.9k less than budget due to lower transient room tax collections. Personnel expenses are running less than budget due to the CEO position being unoccupied. February showed a net deficit better than budget. Cash flow decreased in February. The balance sheet remains healthy. There was a recent deposit received related to the 2023 International Snow Sciences Workshop event. Wanda also covered the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund and Bend Sustainability Fund financials, which reflect the lower transient room tax collections.

More information is available in the Board Packet and Board Deck.

Sam Johnson moved to approve the financial report. Heidi Hagemeyer seconded. The financial report was unanimously approved.

Tourism Industry Briefing

Nate Wyeth covered recent tourism industry data. February data in general was more favorable than January.

More information is available in the Board Packet and Board Deck.

Marketing + Communications

Nate stated that with the new website launch Visit Bend is tracking new metrics such as engagement time, organic search data, and accessibility score.

Laurel Hunter said that there is a new landing page for the recently launched The Real Reel video. There will be additional short videos added to the page. The map feature on the Visit Bend home page has been enhanced, and several new articles are being added.

Elena Pressprich has focused on several Mt. Bachelor related video and photography content. Upcoming content will include the High Desert Museum, backcountry snowboarding, hiking, cave concerts, and whitewater kayaking.

Justin Keyes-Bundy reported on recent social media and content creator and user-generated content highlights.

Kelli Carrow covered high-level ad stats on recent paid media efforts. Spring messaging is now the focus. The new spring video was presented. The influencer program has continued to show success and return on investment.

PR contractor Jennifer Hobson-Hinsley discussed recent public relations coverage and current efforts.

Destination Think! was recently in Bend interviewing several industry partners for its upcoming podcast series.

More information is available in the Board Packet and Board Deck.

Program Updates

BCTF: Valerie Wilson covered recent happenings related to the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund. The application period for the current grant cycle ended on March 7th and the grant review meeting is scheduled for April 3rd.

BSF: Nate presented updates on the Bend Sustainability Fund. Currently-funded projects are moving along toward completion. Project reports are due in May.

Sustainability updates include the launch of Leave No Trace winter principles and review of strategic partnerships and community engagement opportunities.

President/CEO Search Process

Todd Montgomery stated that currently in-person interviews are scheduled for mid-April.

Board Roundtable

The board and staff discussed the proposed changes to Deschutes County tourism funding regarding Visit Central Oregon and Sunriver.

Community Roundtable

There were no comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Notes by: Valerie Wilson, March 19, 2024