



October 19, 2017 Visit Big Sky Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce – 55 Lone Mountain Trail | Big Sky, MT 59716

Present: Ryan Hamilton, Tim Drain, Steven Rager, Krista Traxler (via phone), Crystal Snook, Glenniss Indreland, Dan Martin, Ennion Williams

Absent: Julie Grimm-Lisk

Staff Present: Candace Carr Strauss, Caitlin Lundin, Heather Gottschalk

Guest Present: Frank Cuypers (Destination Think!)

Call to order: 8:42 am

Public Comment: None

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

Tim Drain

- Tim Drain moved to approve the September minutes which was seconded by Steve Rager. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of June Financials

Tim Drain

- Steven Rager moved to approve the September financials which was seconded by Ennion Williams. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Visitbigskymt.com Website Re-design Process – Update/Next Steps

Candace

- Tempest had a comprehensive visit to Big Sky that included experiences in the canyon, meadow and mountain. They enjoyed ziplining at the resort, hiking Ousel Falls Trail, touring Yellowstone Club and Moonlight Basin, as well as eating out and about including Buck's T-4.
- Tempest also recently launched VisitPittsburgh.com without issue and we hope to have the same favorable outcome.
- Heather has worked to compile a dropbox of all materials that Tempest will need and called for the board to send over any documents that they feel are pertinent.

Visitbigsky.com and Mountain Outlaw Opportunity – Update

Candace

- visitbigsky.com was successfully secured by VBS for the website redevelopment. We will keep visitbigskymt.com and just have it re-direct when the new site launches.
- In addition to the URL, the CVB purchased a 2-page advertorial in the November issue of *Mountain Outlaw* that will focus on the mountain resort communities distribution points rather than gateway communities to YNP, so highlighting some "luxurious" lodging, dining, amenities and attractions.

- The discrepancy between the previously proposed price of the partnership with Outlaw and the final price that was paid was questioned. During final negotiations, Outlaw tweaked the terms to the contract and Candace made the executive decision to accept these new terms. The board agreed with Candace's decision.

Tourism Master Planning Process – Intro/Update

Ryan/Candace/Frank

- Frank Cuypers from Destination Think! was in market to observe and conduct a DNA Workshop for a general cross section of the community (40 people max) as part of the Tourism Master Planning process.
- In follow up, a survey will be distributed to the greater Big Sky community to gather further qualitative data that Frank will use to create Big Sky's DNA report.
- Frank's in-market observations included:
 - The BZN airport is charming and a great welcome to the region. It does a great job of telling the story of the region with the colors and the exhibits.
 - He posed the question – Do we want urban visitors here? Danger was listed as one of our main attributes in the Tourism Master Planning discussion and that is exciting but can alienate urban visitors that don't feel comfortable navigating wilderness. We have to keep in mind expectation management when understanding the guest experience.
 - He really enjoyed staying at the cabins at Lone Mountain Ranch. He enjoyed that there wasn't a television in the room and that the only technology was an old timey record player. It made him appreciate the nature and thought it made sense to the destination.
 - Having flashy chain hotels creates the risk to ruin the Montana rustic experience for guests. Zoning is an important part of keeping the tourism experience authentic. It can't just be promotion without destination management.
 - Ryan commented that we have a regulatory body that we don't fully leverage in that regard. We have the ability to regulate zoning in Big Sky within Gallatin County, but the Big Sky Planning & Zoning Board hasn't taken advantage of the opportunity yet.
 - Expectation management could destroy a destination if mishandled. "We can't be sexy to everyone, and we shouldn't want to be."
 - The question was asked how to get the community to buy in to one strategy when all different stakeholders want to reach different people. Frank said that it is the job of the community to come together to validate the strategy.

Air Transportation Marketing Committee Update

Candace / Krista

- The plans for the Air Transportation Marketing have been finalized and nothing has changed since the previous meeting
- Candace did have a chance to speak with Brian Sprenger from the Bozeman Airport about the opportunity to place our 2 kiosks, that are currently retired, in the airport. The one caveat is that they must have destination data for Bozeman and Belgrade.
- The discussion with Brian also included the idea of helping to staff the VIC in the airport. Candace and Ryan will meet separately to discuss the option and what our commitment would need to be to get representation at the Airport.

The Corner Property – Update/ Next Steps

Ryan

- Confidentiality Agreements have all been signed at the Special Joint Board meeting in September.
- The Cooperative Agreement had some requests for edits, but copies have now all been signed.
- The next step is to draft a Buy/Sell Agreement to pursue the purchase of The Corner Property (TCP).
- Candace commented on her belief in this project and that it is important to the community so that we don't have something that is against our DNA as the gateway to our destination.

- From there, we will have to discuss a fundraising strategy. Candace will use her history of fundraising experience to help. She asks that the major industries in town choose champions to help fundraise like Cathy Gorman from Sotheby's and Tim Kent from Big Sky Western Bank. She personally on behalf of her family pledged a gift to the effort.

New Business

Resort Tax Board Resolution Request: CVB Fiscal Sponsorship

Candace

- With the drafting of a Buy/Sell Agreement, the Chamber is using the monies from the sale of their past properties towards the purchase of TCP. VBS will look to take the same amount from its budget being that CVB monies cannot be spent on the purchase of land.
- With the conclusion of VBS' Agency of Record contract there are some budget savings, coupled with the fact that MT Lodging Facility Use Tax collections exceeded projections with that allocation occurring in late June, therefore we have additional monies from CVB this year for marketing. TCP acquisition would constitute the most cost-effective marketing in the future, drawing visitors from US 191.
- The next Resort Tax Board meeting is November 8th and Dan motioned to present this idea of environmental marketing to the board so that monies can be used from the marketing budget for the purchase. Tim seconded this motion and with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.
- Candace additionally presented the idea of moving the fiscal sponsorship of the CVB from the Chamber to VBS to better align Mission, Scope of Work, Funding/Finances. It was asked that the Resolution be shared with the board for its review.

TAC Bi-Annual Meeting (Oct 2-3, Helena, MT)

Glenniss

- FY17 Audit, State budget update
 - State legislature passed an 11th hour bill cutting budgets by 10% and MOTBD is looking for places to cut money.
 - TAC will begin its review of Regulations regarding how CVB funds may be used. This takes place about every two years.

BAHA/J-1 Visa Program – Update

Candace

- Candace is working with CIEE on how J-1 is critical to contributing to Big Sky's workforce. Our 3 legislators are active in this process of speaking about the benefit of this program for our state. We have between 400 – 500 J-1 workers throughout the course of the year and it would be a huge impact on our community.

STAFF REPORTS

CEO Report

Candace

TIGER Grant

- The Big Sky Chamber worked with WTI and the Big Sky Transportation District to submit a TIGER grant application to address the issues identified through the Big Sky Transportation Study for turning lanes up MT Hwy 64. Only 6% of requests are granted. We will know in May, but wouldn't see the money until 2020.

High Tech Summit

- The main focus of the summit was to discuss how to bring higher paying jobs to MT through high tech industries. Technology helps remove the barrier of geography. We're looking how to improve fiber and cell communications in Big Sky. Research in to what has been done in the past needs to be conducted because there is some confusion whether or not fiber has been dropped in the canyon.

Joint County Commissioner Meeting

- The Joint County Commission Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 1st from 10am-12noon. Government facilitation is increasingly a task put on the Chamber by the community. How can the Chamber formalize the process of this responsibility? The Creation of a Big Sky Council that would potentially be able to discuss water, transportation and energy would be a good conduit for the community.

Marketing Update

Heather

- Fuse Wrap Up Call – we have completed our relationship with the ad agency, Fuse, and they have gathered data on our summer campaigns. We have increased our impressions by 24% and decreased our media budget by 3%. They advised that this may be due to increased hyper targeting and turning away from costly mass media channels.

Non-Agenda Items

Resort Tax Board Elections

- FYI, Resort Tax Board elections are coming up in May.

Shoulder Season Events

- Ryan is trying to increase locals' participations in the community by increasing events in the shoulder season in Big Sky Town Center comparable to summer.

Adjourn

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Glenniss Indreland and seconded by Ennion Williams. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 10:39 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Caitlin Lundin, Marketing and Visitor Services Manager

Filename: VBS_MINUTES 10.19.17.docx
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Author: Alex Mansfield
Keywords:
Comments:
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