



February 15, 2018 Visit Big Sky Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce – 55 Lone Mountain Trail | Big Sky, MT 59716

Present: Ryan Hamilton, Steven Rager, Glenniss Indreland, Crystal Snook, Julie Grimm-Lisk
Absent: Dan Martin, Krista Traxler, Tim Drain, Ennion Williams
Staff Present: Candace Carr Strauss, Caitlin Lundin, Heather Gottschalk
Public: David Madison

Call to order: 8:35 am

Public Comment: David Madison from the Lone Peak Lookout talked with DestiMetrics after the last board meeting and inquired as to how Aspen and Vail release a lot of their data publicly. He asked why we did not give our information out in a similar way. VBS has a retail report that can be shared publicly so that businesses get a snapshot of the month ahead. It is rare that such information is given out and it should be noted that the organization that does that encompasses three DMOs. Its distribution will coincide with the new iDSS CRM platform implementation. We do not report occupancy like other larger DMOs because we do not have branded properties, we have a huge number of RBOs, and there is more background to our location than just occupancy numbers.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

Tim Drain

- Steven Rager moved to approve the January minutes which was seconded by Julie Grimm-Lisk. With a quick discussion about moving the marketing update sooner in the agenda moving forward and all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Financials

Tim Drain

- Tim Drain was not present at this meeting so no motion to approve was made.

OLD BUSINESS

Visitbigskymt.com Website Re-design Process – Updated Project Timeline

Candace/Heather

- Tempest moved the launch date for the new website back to July 1st due to some delays. This news and Tempest's client relations have been incredibly disappointing. Though Tempest acquired iDSS, the integration is not seamless. The VBS team is working to ensure that the front and back ends of the website talk to each other properly.

A. Photo/Video Content RFP

- An RFP is out to 30 providers of photo and/or video content with a due date of Wednesday, February 28th. We hope to get exclusive content for the website, state use, and other opportunities.
- Jim Hager is doing some photography work for Lone Mountain Land Company soon. Candace is continually working with community partners to be made aware of opportunities like this so that we can

pitch in monies on the ground floor to get added to the content rights. The conversation has also been had with MOTBD, but a request to Glenniss to bring it up with TAC was made.

Tourism Master Planning Process – DRAFT Strategy Month-End February

Ryan/Candace

- Frank and William from Destination Think! will have a draft of the strategy to us by the end of February.

Air Transportation Marketing Committee – Update

Glenniss/Candace

- Mammoth Marketing has finally been able to provide us with the numbers from the “Far. From. Ordinary.” campaign which ran from November through January. As it is a partnership with multiple DMOs and private companies, guests are sent to the Far. From. Ordinary landing page.

VBS Membership Topics

Candace/ Caitlin

A. VBS Membership – DestiMetrics Lodging Partners

- We have talked to our accountants and they believe that the VBS DestiMetrics Lodging Partners should fulfill our membership requirements. It is tax season, they will get back to us soon.

B. Inaugural VBS Annual Members’ Luncheon Discussion

- Seeking venue to host the first VBS Annual Members’ Luncheon. Projected 50 people at \$35/pp, to include lunch with a 10-minute update from Dax Schiefer with Voices of Montana Tourism, MOTBD marketing outlook, and unveiling of VBS summer marketing plan, along with hospitality front line worker award presentation. We are trying to create a program that intrigues and benefits our tourism stakeholders in the community. The date coincides intentionally with US Travel Association’s National Travel & Tourism Week – a program to raise the level of awareness about the economic impact of the tourism industry.

MT Chamber Business Days at the Capitol - SAVE THE DATE: January 7-8, 2019

Candace

- Tourism was underrepresented during the 2018 MT Chamber Days at the Capitol and visitors were repeatedly being looked at to shoulder the burden of filling in the financial gaps in the state’s budget shortfall. Candace wants to hammer home the importance and impact of tourism as the second largest industry in Montana. The Big Sky Chamber will sponsor the event again next year to continue to ensure that tourism has significant representation at the start of the 66th Legislative Session Hans Williamson, Sarah Phelps, David O’Connor, and Jan Stoddard have all agreed to participate and there will be room for additional representatives.
- Looking at the sponsor panels at the event and the MT Chamber’s strategic plan, it is clear their board is helping to develop the discussion. Currently, tourism has no board representation. They are excited about entrepreneurship as the fastest growing industry, but those numbers are misleading, and it is an industry geographically centered around Missoula and Bozeman.
- VBS does not have any private funds so we are unable to contribute to lobbying efforts, specifically Tourism Matters to Montana. With the CVB previously under the Chamber, it was able to utilize private funds to contribute \$2,000. In the future, we hope to have private funds that allow VBS to contribute.

New Business

VBS Government Affairs Committee Discussion

Candace/ Ryan

- Does the VBS board feel like it is time to create a committee to discuss government affairs as they relate to tourism. The Chamber has a government affairs committee, but they are tied up with important discussions relating to water, energy, housing, transportation and other infrastructure needs of Big Sky.

There are issues like the J1 Visa program that are directly related to tourism and issues about public recreation are becoming increasingly political.

- Julie Grimm-Lisk moved to create a Government Affairs Committee through Visit Big Sky, which was seconded by Steven Rager. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.
- A charter for this committee will have to be written and members for the committee sought including a liaison from the VBS board to the Chamber board. Julie has expressed her interest in being that liaison.

STAFF REPORTS

CEO Report - Candace

Chamber of Commerce Update

- Candace recently attending the Western Association of Chamber Executives (WACE) and found it very enlightening. There is no unified role of Chambers of Commerce across the country, but they are increasingly being called upon to be catalysts, conveners and champions of and for their communities. The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce is undergoing strategic planning that will move this idea forward in our community.

Rocky Mountain International

- Rocky Mountain International is coming in Kalispell this April. This conference focuses on international travel and tourism operators from five Rocky Mountain states. We hope to enter all the leads that we get at this trade show, and that of Go West earlier this year into our new iDSS CRM platform.

Resort Tax Board Elections

- Buz Davis and Craig Smit have submitted applications to run for the Resort Tax Board. We want to sit down with the candidates and returning board members to do a little housekeeping. We especially want to ensure that they understand the separation of duties between the Chamber and VBS including what the change in fiscal responsibility for the CVB means, how that impacts staffing, etc.
- We also want to help educate the public on how to vote when it comes time for the election.

MOTBD Research Summit – Helena - February 21, 2018

- Candace will attend and speak at the Montana Tourism Research Summit in Helena.
- VBS and the Chamber are both in Prospera's Economic Outlook. Prospera has no proprietary data but simply collects and aggregates information. We need to figure out a way to gauge visitation. Maybe there is a way that we can glean this number from a mix of water usage and resort and lodging tax collections.

Marketing Update - Heather

- We had a little drop off in engagement in February, but we will see how the amazing snow conditions affect that. The plugin code for our VisitBigSkyMT.com analytics was erased so we have not been gathering that data, but we have finally been able to identify what the issue is and work to fix it.
- We are still in the process of augmenting our Trip Advisor landing page. All content that appears on their site has to be approved and they are just getting back to us now.
- The MOTBD JV "On The Snow" campaign has given us some of the engagement numbers. We have received 355,882 impressions from targeted winter content.

Adjourn

- A motion to Adjourn was made by Glenniss Indreland which was seconded by Steven Rager. With all in favor the meeting adjourned at 9:58am

Respectfully submitted,
Caitlin Lundin, Marketing and Visitor Services Manager