

Visit McMinnville
Board of Director's Meeting
January 18, 2016

Board Attendees: Erin Stephenson, Maria Stuart, Scott Hill, Courtney Cunningham, Cindy Lorenzen, Jennifer Feero, Ty Rollins, Candace Haines

Absent: Carmen Peirano, Ellen Brittan, Kellie Menke

Staff Attendees: Jeff Knapp & Kitri McGuire

Guests: Michelle Senior, Nick Prelog (by phone)

Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:34am.

The Board introduced themselves to Michelle Senior, accountant for Visit McMinnville.

Knapp called Nick Prelog from Perkins & Company. VM's new financial structure will be Prelog acting as CPA and Senior as day to day accounting services. Knapp and Prelog will begin building the FY2018 budget this week. Knapp will share budget progress in the coming months.

VM will continue to use the budgeting model that Greenstone Financial built. Hill asked Prelog if he feels our budget model is going to work for VM. Nick has concerns about the integrity of the model and will review it in detail for mistakes. In preparation for FY2019, VM and Prelog will work together to determine if the Greenstone model is going to be appropriate moving forward.

Knapp reviewed the financial statements and VM's financial situation. He noted that VM secured a line of credit through Key Bank, and that VM has retooled the marketing budget to reflect the change in budget circumstances. VM will be dipping down below our \$75,000 temporarily to spend towards approved marketing projects, but as VM continues to receive payments from the city, will be building it back up. Currently, VM is tracking very close to budget.

Stephenson noted that VM is approximately \$10,000 short in revenue, due to overestimating growth in the summer months (limited growth is possible in summer months due to lack of room availability). Growth was around 2% (9% expected). Stephenson and Knapp noted that that will follow VM through the year, unless major strides are made during the shoulder/off season in this FY.

Hill opened a discussion on the contingency amount, and when to use the contingency vs. the line of credit. Knapp presented a policy created by the Executive Committee relating to VM's Line of Credit.

Hill noted that we might consider growing the contingency over time to a sum larger than \$75,000, so that VM eventually doesn't have to accrue interest on a line of credit. Stephenson noted that moving forward VM will keep that \$75,000 enshrined. Hill noted that VM's line of credit has very favorable rates, especially as VM as an organization is only 1 year old.

Stephenson asked Hanes how far in advance of the renewal of contract VM needs to renegotiate with the city. VM's contract with the city states that if either party wishes to end the contract, written notice would need to be delivered no later than January 1st of the year in which the notifying party wishes to terminate.

Hanes noted that in the contract with the city, it refers to the "forecast" in section 4C. Hanes' intention was that that was the city's forecast, not VM's, but the contract does not state that specifically. Hanes suggested that VM have that corrected when it is renegotiated with the city next.

Stephenson and the executive committee motioned to vote on the presented Line of Credit policy. Lorenzen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

McGuire discussed social media, PR, and website traffic. Social media is on track to meet goals. While website traffic is not as high as VM expected, visitmcminnville.com received over 100,000 unique visits from 1/1/16-1/1/17. To compare, Travel Oregon told VM they would have expected a new DMO with a new website to only receive 20,000 unique visits the first year. Multiple media visitors are expected in January, including Sophia Bennett (freelancer for *The Atlantic* and *1859*), Brian Freedman (Forbes.com) and Javier Cabral (*VICE Munchies*).

McGuire presented an upcoming TV and streaming video advertising purchase with Comcast. Over the next several months, VM will spend \$20,000 total (\$10,000 on TV and \$10,000 on digital streaming video placements) in the Portland DMA to an audience that matches our summer survey respondents. VM is using a new :30s video for this placement, which focuses on McMinnville as a cozy place to get away.

The board discussed the Oregon Truffle Festival and the effect it has on lodging and local businesses. Stephenson suggested that VM checks with lodging partners to see YOY results of OTF lodging. VM will look into other details of organization and communication with McMinnville businesses (including restaurants).

Knapp presented an agenda item: funding \$10,000 from Visit McMinnville budget towards the \$34,000 wayfinding strategic plan with Sea Reach. Knapp noted that the \$10,000 would be attributed to special projects. Stephenson noted that the long-term benefit for VM is in connecting tourism marketing districts and directing potential visitors from the highway into downtown. Hill noted that since wayfinding is a sub-committee of VM, it's important that VM is a leader in funding the plan. Cunningham noted that our messaging needs to be clear that our support is tourism related, not infrastructure. Hill noted that the City wants to be involved, but not driving the project. Howard noted that she wants to ensure that the purchase of the plan is funded in full.

Howard moved that the board of VM vote to approve a \$10,000 contribution toward the creation of a strategic wayfinding plan focused on creating connectivity and increasing tourism to McMinnville, with the caveat that the plan is funded in full. Cunningham seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

Hill will be stepping down from his role on the Visit McMinnville board, as our contract states we must have a city councilor. Hill has appointed Kellie Menke to replace him. The board thanked Hill for his service.

Stephenson noted that VM has a resignation in effect due to non-attendance from Carmen Peirano. Stephenson noted that the board is able to exist without immediately replacing that board member.

Brittan has stepped down from the nominating committee. Howard will step into a leadership role on the nominating committee. Feero will fill the vacancy on the nominating committee.

Knapp thanks the board for their attendance at the board retreat and strategic planning. Knapp has engaged a facilitator to review the notes/plans, help create action items, and see the big picture. Knapp noted that an upcoming meeting will be extended by a few hours to develop that plan with the board.

Knapp noted to following:

- Knapp was contacted by Jimmie Lucht, ED of Visit Albany and President/Chair of the WVVA, to speak to their board.
- Knapp will be speaking at the MDA retreat tomorrow.
- Knapp spoke with Wayne Bailey of Youngberg Hill and TYV. Bailey noted that VM should not engage TYV for the next few months, as they are determining their viability.
- Knapp will be reaching out to Todd Davidson, CEO of Travel Oregon, to meet on a variety of topics.

Stephenson mentioned that the upcoming Steve's Hotel will likely provide \$239,000 in TLT.

Feero moved to accept the minutes from the December meeting. Howard seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Knapp closed the meeting at 11:35am.

Next meeting will be the Wednesday, February 15, 2017 from 9:30am-11:30am.

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Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Kitri McGuire, Marketing Manager for Visit McMinnville.

ACTION ITEMS

- VM Board and Knapp will note to have section 4C of the contract corrected when VM renegotiates with the city next.
- VM will check with lodging partners to see YOY results of Oregon Truffle Festival lodging.