

**Visit McMinnville**  
**Board of Director's Meeting**  
**July 20, 2016**

**Board Attendees:** Erin Stephenson, Carmen Peirano, Maria Stuart, Ellen Brittan, Scott Hill, Martha Meeker, Courtney Cunningham

**Absent:** Cindy Lorenzen, Emily Howard

**Staff Attendees:** Jeff Knapp & Kitri McGuire

**Guests:** Steven Rupp

Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:38am. Knapp noted Visit McMinnville is 1 year old this month.

Brittan moved to approve the June minutes. Cunningham seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Greenstone is ill and is not able to join the overview of the monthly financial reports. Brittan brought up the \$12,500 budget item in June for Web Development that did not appear to be totally used; Knapp mentioned that was for the Wine Walk app that we have only paid a portion for so far. The remainder will be paid out in July most likely.

Brittan mentioned that VM is expecting ~\$150,000 in returns for Q2, which VM would receive in August after a 30 day window for lodging properties to submit after the close of the quarter. Overall, VM is slightly below budget.

McGuire went over social media, PR and website stats. Social media followers are up; website traffic is down slightly. Discussion was had on PR impressions, recent media and editors who have been brought to McMinnville. McGuire will report next month on the write-ups and impressions gained from bringing those editors to town.

Stephenson discussed that as a non-profit, the executive committee has been serving as policy makers for personnel-related decisions, such as pay, benefits, and holidays, but serving in this role has not been officially assigned to them. Cunningham motioned that the executive committee also serve as the personnel committee moving forward. Peirano seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Knapp presented research on the recently proposed idea of using a refurbished mobile trailer for a visitor center. Over the last month, Knapp has spoken with two local banks regarding financing and two companies that rebuild trailers to gather competitive quotes and information. Using this information, Knapp presented a report that estimated the total cost for one year of operation would be \$113,616. Knapp also did research on informational kiosks as an alternative, and estimates that for the ~\$25,000 VM originally budgeted for special projects we could get at least two informational kiosks for key tourist locations in town. Knapp mentioned that with two potential new hotel properties in the city, VM could potentially have incremental funds in the next two years that would allow VM to make more of an

investment in a visitor's center. His recommendation is that the mobile visitor's center discussion be tabled at this time.

Brittan suggested that as this is a big strategic decision, VM's board should wait until the winter board retreat to decide if the mobile visitor's center is viable, and to decide timing.

Knapp discussed the Memo of Understanding between VM and Nathan Knottingham of the Chamber of Commerce regarding VM's financial support of the visitor's center. In the MOU, it states that VM will provide compensation for any materials mailed out on VM's behalf, but no other financial or staffing support. Brittan moved that the board of VM is in agreement with and accepts the MOU from the McMinnville Chamber of Commerce. Stuart seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Rollins joined the meeting at 10:12. Knapp revisited the mobile visitor's center discussion. Rollins noted that the board should not table the discussion for too long, as the lead time for any type of a visitor's center would be significant.

Discussion was had on the lack of wayfinding in McMinnville. Meeker noted that a cross-functional committee needs to be created to increase/improve wayfinding and directional signage. MURAC has ~\$2M for wayfinding and design for the new Alpine District, but will not have any funds for 2 years after the completion of that area in fall 2017. Stephenson suggested the VM board participates in the creation of a committee to discuss options for wayfinding, including available Travel Oregon grants. Stephenson will reach out to Jeb Bladine and Rob Stephenson. Knapp will reach out to Rebecca Quandt of MDA. Cunningham will reach out to Scott Cunningham, president of the MDA board. Stuart suggested that Sunny Miller of Elizabeth Chambers Cellar and Kelly McDonald in the Granary District also be brought into the discussion.

Knapp discussed VM's search for a new website development and SEO partner.

Cunningham mentioned search returns not functioning the way we expect; links to businesses are not operating the way that is expected.

Knapp discussed the Wine Walk app. Currently it is in the approval stage for the Google Play store and the Apple app store.

Knapp discussed the Bridge Campaign. Knapp will be meeting with MDA, MEDP and the Chamber to discuss the development of a printed piece that fully explains the community roles

Knapp discussed the upcoming audit of VM's financial procedures. Knapp met with Kyle Reynolds of Bernards & Associates to kick off that audit. In following years, VM will do reviews instead of audits, until the board feels another audit is needed.

Knapp discussed ongoing conversations VM has had with the Oregon Truffle Festival. This festival is over 10 years old and attracts a very high-end visitor, almost entirely from out of state, in the month of January. The board feels this event is perfectly aligned with our goals. OTF currently partners with the Newberg Cultural Center. Knapp has utilized our visitor development fund to underwrite transportation to events for guests staying in McMinnville. Also, all Saturday night dinners will take place in McMinnville (a total of ~180 guests). In return, he has asked that Visit McMinnville get mentioned in the event name on the website and printed materials (currently is named Newberg & Yamhill), and links

get placed on their website directing visitors to [visitmcminnville.com](http://visitmcminnville.com) to make their lodging arrangements.

Knapp mentioned the International Food & Wine Writers meeting will take place in town in September. It is a single night conference for ~12 writers. VM has agreed to underwrite food and lodging for the conference. Knapp is working with Jeb Bladine and Rusty Rae to facilitate.

Knapp met with the WVWA tourism committee and will continue to attend once every several months. The WVWA is very interested in working together to VM. McGuire will be meeting with a representative of their marketing team to discuss ways VM can partner with the Pinot in the City event in Dallas.

Knapp and McGuire discussed MNI digital marketing. VM has engaged MNI's services to purchase branded digital ads on strategically chosen target sites and site networks to directly reach potential consumers in our defined target demographics.

Knapp discussed Geneva Garcia, VM's summer intern, who has been a hard worker and a positive addition to the VM. She has been producing videos, cinemagraphs, and photos of places and activities around town to build a cache of social media and website content. She will continue with Visit McMinnville through mid-August.

Knapp discussed current status of VM's survey ambassador program. So far we've received about 10% of our survey responses. VM's two ambassadors spend about 20 hours a week in 4 hour shifts engaging visitors at key tourism points, such as along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and at the Evergreen Aviation Museum. Knapp shared some initial data.

Brittan mentioned the winter board retreat. Knapp mentioned Monday, January 9 as a potential date. He will confirm that date with the board after the meeting.

The board excused Steven Rupp, Kitri McGuire and Jeff Knapp for an executive session.

The board reconvened with Kitri McGuire and Jeff Knapp at 11:38. The board heard recommendations from the nominating committee for the new voting board member. Jennifer Feero was nominated for the position. Rollins motioned for approval. Cunningham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Knapp adjourned the meeting at 11:40am.