

**Visit McMinnville**  
**Board of Director's Meeting**  
**September 20, 2017**

**Board Attendees:** Courtney Cunningham, Jen Feero, Dani Chisholm, Kellie Menke, Ty Rollins, Jeff Towery, Maria Stuart, Emily Howard, Erin Stephenson, Cindy Lorenzen

**Absent:** Ellen Brittan

**Staff Attendees:** Jeff Knapp

**Guests:** Morgen McLaughlin, Charles Johnson, Ryan Johnson, Scott Hill, Nick Prelog (by phone)

Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:30am. Knapp reviewed the minutes from August meeting. Chisholm moved to approve the minutes. Howard seconded. Minutes were unanimously accepted.

Knapp presented year-end and monthly budget documents. Nick Prelog was called in to review. Prelog did not note any major variances or 'surprises' with the financials ending June 30. Knapp noted that this fiscal year VM is working on a cash basis rather than accrual, and that he has been working with Bernards & Assoc. to get them all documents they need for their fiscal year end review of VM's financials. Knapp reviewed some of the projects VM is working on that require up-front spending and noted that higher numbers in marketing are due to timing of those projects, not extra spending.

Prelog noted the line of credit balance is at \$80,000, and that in November VM should plan for a payment from the City of McMinnville, and that there is also an expected payment to the line of credit and a payment to the cash reserve. Towery stated VM should have an additional check from the City (due to a late payment from late quarter) on Friday.

Lorenzen moved to approve financials as presented. Feero seconded. Minutes were approved.

Knapp presented the marketing report. He noted in August we saw extra PR coverage due to the eclipse, and reviewed the media visitors VM hosted in August. Knapp reviewed the *Sunset* magazine article on McMinnville that VM had been working on since September 2016, and coverage in *NW Travel & Life*. Eric Asimov wrote a piece in the *NY Times* about Oregon and the Willamette Valley being the most exciting wine region in the world. VM hosted a pre-FEAST media lunch at Valley Commissary, with 8 national food bloggers & writers. Modest amounts of growth are happening in social media, keeping VM relatively on track for goals. Website visits are on track as well.

Knapp noted VM's Comcast ad run has just started with :30s spots. He noted VM should hear if we will be honored with a \$27,500 grant from departments at Travel Oregon for a VisitMcMinnville.com website database switch, and a \$7,500 grant from the Wine Country License Plate program for advertising the forthcoming Taste McMinnville Month in February 2018.

Morgen McLaughlin, incoming director for Willamette Valley Wineries Association, spoke briefly about the WVWA's role in the wine industry and goals.

Knapp noted that Travel Yamhill Valley has been disbanded. Yamhill County is interested in passing a TLT county-wide, but to do so the county commissioners would have to put it on the ballot, which is unlikely to pass. Because of this, Knapp anticipates that VM will play more of a leadership role in tourism in the area, and he has requested a seat on the board of Willamette Valley Visitor's Association.

Knapp updated the group on wayfinding. The Wayfinding Committee is in the design phase, and will review a second round of designs from Sea Reach in a few weeks.

Knapp noted that VM will be promoting Tasting McMinnville Month in February 2018, during which lodging, restaurant, wineries, and retail in town will be encouraged to provide special offers to capture the extra visitors that VM will be advertising to. VM is hoping to earn a \$7,500 matching grant from Travel Oregon to support those advertising efforts. More information will be provided at October's meeting.

Towery gave an update on strategic planning for the city. He will be presenting a report to the council in October on current status. They will be bringing on a consultant to execute the plan. Parallel to that plan, they will be working on an economic development plan with the directors of VM, MDA, MEDP, and the Chamber. Towery and Hill gave updates on the parking study.

Knapp noted August's TLT payment from the city was higher than expected. Occupancy is slightly higher than expected, and ADR is significantly higher. It appears that TLT is up around 20% from the same quarter last year. Knapp noted that a lot of occupancy data is missing in the reports, so he will work with the city to clean up the data as it is crucial to understanding the reasons for the increase.

Knapp updated the group on data procured by the Yamhill County Cultural Coalition that stated that non-profit arts and culture is responsible for \$45M yearly economic impact and 1100 FTE jobs.

Knapp reminded the board of VM's all-day strategic planning retreat in January. Knapp has secured a facilitator for the event.

Knapp introduced Charlie and Ryan Johnson to talk through their upcoming feasibility study for group sales possibilities in McMinnville. Discussion on the topic followed.

Knapp closed the meeting at 11:45 am. The next meeting will be the Wednesday, October 18, 2017 from 9:30am-11:30am.

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