

**VISIT MCMINNVILLE
424 NE 4TH STREET
MCMINNVILLE, OREGON 97128**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
JANUARY 17, 2024, 9:30 A.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Hallie Whyte | |
| Cindy Lorenzen | |
| Teresa Smith | Treasurer |
| Lisa Macy-Baker | |
| Dani Chisholm | |
| Jennifer Feero | |
| Jenny Berg | City Staff Liaison |
| Adam Garvin | City Council Liaison |

GUESTS:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Jeff Knapp | President and CEO, Visit McMinnville (VM) |
| Lee McCollins | Director, Marketing and Communications, VM |
| Enza Apa | Recording Secretary, Minutes Solutions |

ABSENT:

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Erin Stephenson | Chair |
| Erin Gilchrist | |
| Diana Riggs | |

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and the Directors having been given adequate and proper notice of the meeting, the meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m.

2. REVIEW OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

On a motion made by Teresa Smith, seconded by Dani Chisholm, it was resolved to accept the unaudited financial statements ending November 30, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Professional services are over budget due to the engagement of Cascade Employers Association, but VM has been adjusting its expenditures to balance the budget. The small discrepancies in coding between advertising and online marketing will be adjusted.

3. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Proposed VM Organizational Chart: ACTION – Jeff Knapp will share the finalized Destination Management/Stewardship job description with the Board.**

Cascade continues to provide much needed support during VM's transition and has helped develop job descriptions for the proposed organizational chart. The priority is to hire a destination management/stewardship position, followed by administrative/operational support and marketing assistance.

- b. **Strategic Planning Session:** *ACTION – Jeff Knapp will send the Board a calendar poll to determine a suitable date for a VM strategic planning session.*

Jeff Knapp recapped VM's previous organizational goals and shared that a large priority in the future is the tourism improvement districts (TIDs) and how to help move McMinnville forward as a developing destination.

4. **CASCADE HR UPDATE**

The final draft of the 50-page employee handbook will be shared with staff by the end of January 2024. Employee job descriptions and files are being audited and edited and a job description for the destination stewardship position has been finalized. Staff harassment training will take place in Spring 2024 and annual staff reviews will be completed by the end of February 2024.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

Jeff Knapp shared that the term “destination stewardship” more accurately describes the work of VM and better aligns with its goals and mission. He asked the Board to consider adopting “destination stewardship” instead of “destination management” to describe the organization.

6. **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

Lee McCollins presented a report on recent communications and marketing initiatives and projects. The Visit McMinnville website has been refreshed and is performing well; various cross-promotions have been initiated to promote winter in McMinnville; and media engagement has been healthy. Digital advertising across various platforms is proving to be a great return on investment with a marked increase in engagement. Marketing imagery with people or beautiful scenery is resonating more with viewers and resulting in more engagement.

The strategy in 2024 is to lean into the food and beverage sector. VM is hosting a visit from the international PR agency Mateo & Co. with the intention of courting global coverage and future opportunities to elevate the food scene in the Pacific Northwest.

7. **DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

ACTION – Jeff Knapp will follow up with Teresa Smith and Kris Wessel to determine if de-escalation training can still happen and if it remains a priority for the city.

Hello McMinnville signage will be installed by the end of January 2024. The program will focus on community and visitor engagement and will be a good tool for data collection and supporting local businesses.

On Saturdays over the holiday season, volunteers were visible downtown connecting with visitors and shop owners and helping to clean downtown. The program was a success and will continue when volunteers are available. Better Impact is a volunteer coordination system and software that will be the backbone of VM's efforts to engage and retain volunteers.

VM is working with the marine board and leaders from different communities in Yamhill County to support the development of river access for the Yamhill River. A feasibility study is being conducted to determine potential state and county investment in this initiative.

VM received a grant to develop signage and a wayfinding system to promote gravel cycling routes around McMinnville. The signage will be rolled out by summer 2024.

8. CITY UPDATE

Jenny Berg will be replacing Jeff Towery on the board for the next six months as recent commitments are preventing him from attending meetings.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Jeff Knapp has been talking to Susan Muir regarding upcoming sports opportunities and how to draw sports tourism to the region.

Jeff Knapp stated that a frequent criticism from visitors has been the number of tasting rooms in the downtown area. During the strategic planning session, there should be a discussion on how to help curate diversity and balance in local business ownership.

Dani Chisholm acknowledged that Third Street did not look magical during the holidays. She shared that the MDA is currently in the process of receiving bids to remove the damaged twinkle lights from the area.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Directors meeting was not discussed.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting closed at 10:40 a.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Director

Director

Date

Date