

Visit McMinnville

Board of Directors Meeting November 17, 2021

Board Attendees: Kellie Menke, Jeff Towery, Courtney Cunningham, Ellen Brittan, Erin Stephenson,

Absent: Cindy Lorenzen, Dani Chisholm, Emily Howard, Jen Feero

Staff Attendees: Jeff Knapp, Kitri McGuire, Jamie Corff

Guests: Scott Hill, Steve Rupp

Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:35 am at McMenamins Hotel Oregon Paragon Room.

Knapp and Brittan gave a high level overview of current financial status. Currently Visit McMinnville is approximately \$115,000 over budget, and expecting the November revenue to be much higher than originally expected. Occupancy/books at lodging properties looks promising through the winter. VM borrowed a small amount against the line of credit to cover expenses until the November check is received, and then will be immediately paid back.

Board quorum was not reached to approve financials or previous minutes; board members present were supportive of current status.

Minutes from the Board meetings in July, September, and October meetings are still needing to be reviewed and approved by the Board. Quorum was not reached this month; approvals were tabled for the December board meeting.

VM has brought on digital advertising agency Avenue and Weinstein PR for new media relations efforts. Winter advertising efforts began in September with brand awareness building; advertising is now moving into efforts such as social and digital that move potential visitors from awareness of our destination to making a purchase or travel decision.

Towery wanted to confirm amounts received so far in this fiscal year have reached levels identified in the agreement. The City would like to have a check in after November check to review where financials stand. Towery will align with Jennifer at the city for a potential supplemental budget (they will need to do that at the City as well).

Knapp reminded the Board of budgeting processes, which will start in January and lead to a meeting with the City Council in May to present a final draft. Brittan noted reviewing potential overages quarterly would be disruptive. Knapp suggested a mid-year check in, and will have a discussion with Towery after the meeting.

Stephenson noted that there will be two new small lodging properties (Tributary on 3rd Street and Boutique Retreat on Alpine). She also noted the City originally planned to do audits every 3 years, but

that hasn't happened after the first one. Towery noted the last audit was prior to his arrival, but that cost of doing the audit was more than the recovered revenue. He was unsure of organizations that provide a service to manage this, and how much that costs. Towery noted that Nick at the city would be a contact to reach out to for management of this.

Knapp opened a conversation regarding VM Board members and structure. Post Rollins' departure, the Board needs to fill a lodging vacancy. The executive committee (Stephenson/Brittan) recommended Erin Gilchrist of A'Tuscan Estate. Board members had provided positive feedback prior to the meeting. All members present were in support. Stephenson, as Board chair, is able to appoint Board members without an official vote. She will send absent members an email to confirm consensus, and extend an official invitation to Gilchrist soon.

Stephenson was asked to join the Oregon Tourism Commission, and on Monday presented to the State Senate. The next step is a Senate vote. She will miss the December board meeting due to her first Commission meeting. Knapp will confirm which members are able to attend to ensure consensus can be reached.

The Mayor's State of the City address will be February 15, 2022 at 5pm. Hill noted that Maria Stuart will be recognized. Brittan suggested a sub-committee or group to oversee a potential artistic remembrance of Stuart.

Knapp suggested a sub-committee be created to help with work on development projects. Cunningham, Menke, and Hill voiced support sub-committees as part of the VM structure moving forward. Knapp suggested a discussion at the upcoming Board retreat.

Knapp noted that VM staff is doing a multi-day DEI training. He noted that while VM has an equal employment opportunity statement, we don't have an equity statement, and that could also be a part of the Board retreat. Hill and Towery suggested connecting with the city's DEI group to inform VM Board training/equity statement. They are working on a program that should be ready in early 2022.

Knapp discussed economic development within the City. Towery noted ARPA funding that will be used in the City. Two projects suggested by MEVLC, the Innovation Center at the airport and a Third Street streetscape project plan, were approved and will be receiving funding. Brittan noted the innovation conversation should also be tightly involved with attracting diverse leaders and young business owners.

Representative Noble earmarked \$750,000 for economic development through Covid recovery funds. The City asked the MEVLC to advise how those should be spent. Conversations are happening around workforce, especially around the hospitality industry. Knapp has also had conversations with leaders all over the state to consider developing a McMinnville based programs for hospitality training and career pathways. There is money available and strong interest in making it happen, but concern over capacity to actually execute a project of this size. Knapp has put in a request through MEVLC to take 1/3 of the earmarked funds to create a contract position to lead the project.

Knapp gave updates on:

- Mural project
- NE Gateway beautification
- Quarry Park feasibility study/economic impact final draft received
- PR update – Weinstein projects

- FEAST
- Matt Lightner's restaurant/Tributary hotel updates – international draw
- WCLP grant for IPNC, Destination Ready program potential

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The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am.

The next meeting will be held on December 15, 2021 at 9:30am.

Meeting minutes recorded and respectfully submitted by Kitri McGuire.

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