

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

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 20, 2023, 9:30 A.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

Erin Stephenson	Chair
Adam Garvin	City Council Liaison
Hallie Whyte	
Cindy Lorenzen	
Teresa Smith	
Jennifer Feero	
Erin Gilchrist	
Lisa Macy-Baker	
Diana Riggs	

GUESTS:

Jeff Knapp	President and CEO, Visit McMinnville (VM)
Lee McCollins	Director, Marketing and Communications, VM
Olivia Rovang	Associate Development Coordinator, VM
Kris Wessel	Hello McMinnville Community Connector, VM
Steve Halasz	Blue Room Research

ABSENT:

Jeff Towery
Dani Chisholm

Minutes prepared from a recording by Enza Apa of Minutes Solutions.

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 9:35 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING

On a motion duly made, it was resolved to approve the minutes of the Board meeting held on August 16, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

3. REVIEW OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

On a motion duly made, it was resolved to accept the unaudited financial statements ending July 31, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

4. VISITOR DATA PRESENTATION FROM BLUE ROOM RESEARCH

Steve Halasz presented a visitor data report to the Board.

Despite New York's Airbnb ban, demand for vacation rentals remains high across the country. McMinnville should continue to ensure that owners of vacation properties understand their obligations to register their property, renew their permits, and pay their taxes yearly.

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Jeff Knapp and outgoing staff member Kitri McGuire met to review outstanding files and projects and to ensure continuity for the organization upon her departure. Lee McCollins has moved to the position of Director of Communications and Marketing. Jeff Knapp is working with the Executive Council to identify what critical skills are needed for the organization to grow and move forward.

6. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Lee McCollins updated the Board on recent communications and marketing endeavors.

- a. **PR:** Rachel King, editor at Fortune, stayed at the Tributary Hotel and wrote an article published in August 2023 highlighting great food and agritourism opportunities in Yamhill County. Ōkta was listed in the New York Times as one of the top 50 restaurants in the country. The contract with the PR agency has been extended, with upcoming discussions scheduled to determine the PR focus for the next 12 months.
- b. **Advertising:** Lee McCollins met with Avenue to learn about their systems and discuss future digital marketing efforts.
- c. **Billboards:** Lee McCollins will be meeting with Outfront Billboards to identify new opportunities for billboard advertising throughout the Portland metro area and to evaluate whether it is feasible to use digital billboards to ensure art and messaging remains fresh.
- d. **Art for Ad Campaigns:** Art is being solidified for the winter and spring campaigns and will continue to use the casual, handwritten-doodle style.
- e. **Video Captures:** Upcoming video shoots include a harvest blogger vertical video with Lisa Allen and video shoots at upcoming events including BikePoc and Wine Country Pride.
- f. **Crush:** The October issue has been sent to print. Lee McCollins will be meeting with James Howe to strategize content and themes for future issues and to reevaluate its distribution lists.
- g. **Website:** VM is pivoting away from using OTIS, the Oregon Tourism Information System, as it does not function well and no longer meets the needs of the organization. Daylight, the digital product and website design agency, is building an internal vendor and event management software system for VM.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Organizational Structure and Plan Update:** A new minute-taking service is being trialed.

- b. **RARE Program Update:** Jeff Knapp introduced Olivia Rovang, the new Associate Development Coordinator. Her focus will be to develop connections within the community and to work on projects related to sustainability and food systems.
- c. **Hello McMinnville Update:** Jeff Knapp introduced Kris Wessel, VM's Hello McMinnville Community Connector: a community services initiative supporting the urban renewal district and engaging locals to help keep the community clean, safe, accessible, and welcoming. Kris Wessel shared that her current focus includes finding and maintaining volunteers and creating a template for Hello McMinnville volunteer training. She is also implementing the Hello Lamp Post project at select sites around town and developing the scripted conversations and responses to possible visitor questions. Data gathered through Hello Lamp Post will help VM learn more about the needs of its visitors and local businesses.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **Grant Updates:** Grant proposals have been submitted for the Hello McMinnville and RARE Programs. A funding request to create signage throughout the county between McMinnville and Yamhill has also been submitted.
- b. **ODOT Community Charging Rebates Program:** VM is working with Jenny Berg to finalize details and strategic locations for the installation of charging stations in McMinnville. The ODOT rebate covers up to 75% off Level 2 charging ports, up to a certain maximum.
- c. **Outdoor Recreation Updates:** The creation of river access for Yamhill River has been identified as a priority at the state level. VM is participating in discussions with stakeholders to determine how it can help create better accessibility.

9. **CITY UPDATES**

Adam Garvin shared that the city is actively contemplating the possibility of a bi-annual budget process. Interviews for a new Fire Chief are taking place, with the intention of having the position up and running by mid-October, 2023.

10. **NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on November 15, 2023.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 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