

**Visit McMinnville**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**April 17, 2019**

**Board Attendees:** Erin Stephenson, Dani Chisholm, Maria Stuart, Ellen Brittan, Kellie Menke, Jeff Towery, Emily Howard

**Absent:** Courtney Cunningham, Cindy Lorenzen, Jen Feero, Ty Rollins

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

**Guests:** Scott Hill

Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:35am.

Knapp discussed the Governor's Tourism Conference. Visit McMinnville won the Outstanding Overall Tourism Marketing Award, and progress was made in projects like cycling, destination development, grant funding, and partnerships. Knapp will send additional information on agritourism to the board. Board members suggested having Scott Bruecker to speak at the next meeting on destination development. Mayor Hill suggested reaching out to Organic Valley creamery. Brittan suggested looking into "agritourismo" in Italy for an example of successful agritourism programs.

Knapp had a meeting with ORLA at the Governor's Conference. ORLA assumes that SB 595 is dead as no further meetings or hearings are scheduled. Brittan noted that OWA's lobbying representative also assumes that it is dead.

Knapp updated the board that MDA executive director Brad James has left the organization and their board is trying to find a quality replacement. Chisholm sits on the board of the MDA and also advised on the situation, noting that the MDA is trying to redefine their purpose. The MDA will also be more fully defining the EID (current plan expires on July 31). MDA will present plans at the City Council meeting on April 23. Knapp requested a board discussion next month on whether VM should make a formal statement in support of the MDA in June.

Knapp updated the board on the new MEDP director, Scott Cooper. Hill, Menke, and Towery updated the board on recent meetings with the Governor (Cooper was also present) on funding the bypass.

Knapp updated the board on outdoor recreation opportunities. County Commissioner Kulla has become a champion for cycling and is providing help and resources on county roads, etc. They will be pursuing FLAP funding opportunities, as VM suggested to him last month, on Westside Road.

Arts & Culture – Knapp is working with Sharon Morgan on opportunities to combine information and financial asks with tourism at the county and state levels. Morgan is wrapping up a project that has created a database of arts and cultural resources. There are also grant opportunities (Oregon Community Foundation Small Arts Grant); Stephenson asked us to forward information on this to Morgan.

Knapp reached out to the county and the arts coalition about the opportunity to put a mural on the HHS county buildings to draw people from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street onto 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

Knapp updated the board on open positions in regional tourism. Visit Newberg is looking for an Executive Director now, and another supporting position later. WVVA is also hiring an Executive Director.

Minutes from March were reviewed. Howard was left off the attendees and will be added. Chisholm moved to approve with that amendment. Howard seconded. Minutes were passed unanimously with the noted amendment.

Financial documents were reviewed. A \$40,000 payment was made to our line of credit in March (currently the line sits at \$35,000, lower than the expected \$55,000). Knapp had a personnel review in April and his pay increase will be retroactively applied back to January 1. VM was slightly under budget in advertising costs due to timing. Personnel costs were slightly higher than expected due to higher TLT income in February. Knapp noted changes on the balance sheet; \$158,000 was cash on hand at the end of last month. Stuart moved to approve financials as presented. Howard seconded. Financial statements were approved unanimously.

Board reviewed goals and objectives for VM next year, the basis for VM's proposed budget. These objectives are based on a 5% budgeted tax revenue increase; VM has a 7% stretch goal. Board suggested making goals document more clear (non-marketing language, categorizing goals with broader headings, connecting with data on economic development). Stephenson suggested adding addition of tourism related businesses/jobs (with a focus on supporting, not on recruiting). Menke suggested telling more stories so council can better connect with the narrative of economic development, not just marketing. Stephenson suggested that we add an effort to determine baseline data on VM.com referring visits to stakeholder sites. Brittan suggested we add that we'll seek grant opportunities.

Board reviewed the proposed budget. Additions since last month include kiosks (at Evergreen and the airport) and a cycling map. Also included was a media relations event in New York (instead of Seattle) in October, and increased year-round advertising (not just in low/shoulder seasons). Groups sales investment was upped to reflect increased contractor efforts. Board suggested that Knapp look into rules regarding contract positions. Budget also shows a payment of \$25,000 toward the line of credit in August, with a full payoff later in the year. Board members were in support of staff moving forward with this budget, with a full vote to occur at the May board meeting.

McGuire reported on marketing. March was the last month of the color block creative, so investment in paid ads were lowered slightly to have more budget to push the new Land of Plenty creative in April. Website visits were up 24% over March 2018. Instagram followers now top 5,000. A consumer newsletter will go out in May with a contest to win a WVVA Pendleton blanket.

Knapp reviewed group sales opportunities and projects, including meetings with the Oregon Sports Authority, Oregon Humane Society, tennis tournaments, etc. Rachel Adams is compiling a list of local event planners and is putting together fam tours for those decision makers.

Stephenson suggested we add dog friendly opportunities to marketing efforts.

Knapp closed the meeting at 11:45am.

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, May 15 at 9:30am at the Visit McMinnville offices.

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