

Visit McMinnville
Board of Directors Meeting
December 19, 2018

Board Attendees: Erin Stephenson, Courtney Cunningham, Maria Stuart, Emily Howard, Ellen Brittan, Kellie Menke, Jen Feero, Jeff Towery, Dani Chisholm

Absent: Cindy Lorenzen, Ty Rollins

Staff Attendees: Jeff Knapp, Kitri McGuire

Guests: Laura Davis, Nick Prelog (by phone)

Knapp called the meeting to order at 9:35am. Laura Davis gave an update from Linfield College.

Minutes from October 17, 2018 were reviewed by the board. Brittan moved to approve the minutes as presented. Cunningham seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

McGuire gave a report on website traffic, media relations, paid advertising, and social media. Website traffic is up 23.4% year over year, with a large increase compared to November 2017. Social media is growing slightly, and with the current climate around Facebook, like destinations are experiencing a decline. Media coverage was slow in November leading into the holidays. Paid advertising efforts using the new creative are going well, and with 2 months' data now, VM will start adjusting budget to invest in the highest performing ad placements.

Prelog was called in to review financials. He noted that for the year, the organization has received more revenue than last year, and that VM is trending slightly lower than budget. To reflect that, the budget has been reduced slightly. There was an issue with QuickBooks, so VM is working with Michelle Senior and Nick Prelog to remedy. VM is expecting \$59,000 in the bank prior to November check. At end of November, after payables, VM should sit at roughly \$38,000.

Knapp introduced a budget document to the board which explains and displays planned expenses over the next 12 months. This proposal was expected, as the board approved an open plan at the start of Fiscal Year 2019. Knapp also presented a document that reflects where discretionary spending could be cut if remaining expenses are higher than expected or revenue is lower than expected. Brittan noted that this plan includes a \$45,000 payment on the line of credit; she also noted that due to timing of expenses VM may have to dip into the line to cover last minute items but they would immediately be paid upon receiving the next check.

Stuart moved to approve financial documents as presented, with the caveat of reviewing the Employee Benefits line. Chisholm seconded. The motion to approve the financial documents as presented was passed unanimously. Cunningham moved to approve the new budget document outlining timing of expenses. Chisholm seconded. The motion to approve the proposed budget was passed unanimously.

Visit McMinnville will be capturing videography and photography in town January 8-9 with a large crew. These creative assets will fuel VM's advertising needs for the next 2 years.

Visit McMinnville hired Rachel Adams as Experience Curator to draw group sales business to McMinnville. She is working 20 hours per week.

VM's annual financial review from Bernards & Assoc. was completed successfully. Knapp will send the final report to the City.

VM is proposing a half day retreat in February to focus on committee work and big projects on February 4 from 1-5pm. The board meeting for the month would remain on February 20 as usual.

The Willamette Valley Visitor's Association (WVVA) has submitted an RFP to Travel Oregon to continue to be the regional DMO for the Willamette Valley for the next 6 years. Knapp has worked with the team at WVVA to uplevel operations and marketing efforts. The Oregon Tourism Commission (OTC) will vote on approval of the RFP in February.

Knapp has met with county commissioners Kulla and Olson to educate the commission on the value and economic impact of tourism. The Yamhill County Tourism Partnership will be working this year to educate, lobby, and lay the groundwork for destination development.

The OTC quarterly meeting was held in McMinnville in early December. Approximately 90 tourism industry professionals attended multiple meetings throughout McMinnville over several days. VM's efforts to provide great hospitality for the group is paying off with additional bookings, group travel opportunities, and media stops.

Jody Christensen is moving from MEDP to do similar work at the Governor's office. Doug Montgomery will be the Interim Director while MEDP does a national search for a new director.

Knapp noted that the airport is a focus for VM. VM toured Precision Aviation, which provides helicopter winery tourism and other aviation services. CEO David Rath also serves on the Evergreen board.

Three Mile Lane planning has started at the city. Knapp has been advising the committee on tourism impact. The City received a state grant to support a corridor study to vision and plan and then have ODOT respond to what the community wants.

Knapp gave a wayfinding update. Knapp has met with Richards at the City; the original plan was put on hold to complete the economic and strategic plans. Knapp will help with an advisory committee to advise on design.

VM has been working with Linfield College in multiple ways. First, Sharon Wagner and business students are working on real world studies that will benefit VM. Also, Knapp held a conversation with Wagner and Greg Jones regarding hospitality programs in the future for Linfield. Greg Jones has also accepted a position on the board at IPNC.

TEDxMcMinnville is sold out. The board discussed the promotion of the event. The board supports promoting the value of the event through VM channels as appropriate.

OMEGA Gymnastics event will take place at Evergreen the second weekend in February and will bring approximately 6,000 people to town.

VM is expecting a travel piece in Robb Report in March 2019 from writers VM brought to town in the Fall.

There is a restaurant incubator coming to Lafayette Ave. with multiple restaurant concepts planned alongside a taphouse.

Red Hills Market will be coming to the Atticus Hotel in March 2019 as Red Hills Kitchen with table service, counter service, and grab and go items.

Pizza Capo will be coming to 3rd Street in the space previously occupied by Heavens to Betsy. Their targeted open date is April 1.

Knapp closed the meeting at 11:35am. The next meeting will be January 16, 2019.

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