

MORRO BAY TOURISM BUREAU BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 3, 2015 – 9:00am
Vet's Hall – 209 Surf Street | Morro Bay, CA 93442

- I. CALL TO ORDER
Member Solu called the meeting to order at 9:07am.
Members present: Todd Baston, Jayne Behman (late arrival), Aaron Graves, Taylor Newton and Joan Solu
Members absent: Michelle Jacquez
Staff present: Brent Haugen, Aaron Young, Catherine Corley
New members Todd Baston, Aaron Graves, Jayne Behman were welcomed.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
Member Solu opened public comment. Since there were no members of the community to make public comment, Member Solu closed public comment.
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Member Solu asked for approval of the August 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made by Member Solu, seconded by Member Newton and the minutes were approved (4-0).
- IV. TREASURER'S REPORT
Member Newton reported that revenues were trending normally. He explained that the Morro Bay Tourism Bureau (MBTB) received a deposit check of \$1500 from the landlord of the Visitor's Center which was deposited in its account and added to its balance. There is a remaining balance of \$4734.29. Executive Director Haugen was pleased to say that the Visitor's Center was \$3000 under budget. Once all the final expenses related to the Visitor Center is all accounted and the budget is closed out, a full report will be given to the City of Morro Bay as well as the board. Newton continued to explain some of the expenditures where MBTB is trending high. These include insurance, computer and communications and fulfillment.
- V. ELECTION OF SECRETARY
Member Solu requested to table the election for Secretary until the February meeting in lieu of the Vice-Chairman position will be vacant and both can be filled at the same time.
Motion was made by Member Newton to table the elections until the February board meeting, seconded by Member Graves and approved (4-0).
- VI. BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
Executive Director Haugen urged the scheduling of a sub-committee meeting to review incoming revenue and unbudgeted expenses related to Amgen and the Outdoor Writers Association of California 2016 Conference. Haugen also feels this is necessary for making adjustments to the budget as there are many unknowns out there and it is helpful to see where revenues are coming in. Member Solu recommended that the sub-committee be comprised of the Chair, Treasurer and a third board member. Member Graves volunteered and Haugen will send out a meeting notification prior to the next board meeting.

Chair Solu made a motion for creation of the Budget Sub-Committee to include Members Jacquez, Member Newton and Member Graves. The motion was made by Member Solu and seconded by Member Newton. The motion was approved (4-0).

VII. AMGEN & OWAC 2016 UPDATES

Sales Manager Aaron Young reported most hotel contacts are in place and mentioned a film maker coming in to record the AMGEN event. Young continued and explained that the event is expected to impact Morro Bay lodging with approximately 500 rooms and potentially pickup of another hundred rooms. Executive Director Haugen reported that he was included in on a meeting with the City of Morro Bay to discuss and plan the route for Amgen. Haugen explained that through the efforts of the city and other volunteers, there will be maximum exposure for Morro Bay and the business community. Member Solu asked if they have hired an event coordinator and Haugen replied that he will inquire with the city liaison.

Executive Director Haugen said that he is very excited about the OWAC (Outdoor Writer's Association of California Conference) event early October 2016 and discussed the itinerary which includes photography tours and more specialized adventure tours of this nature. Haugen went on and stated that there has been engagement on these tours from both local businesses and organizations as well as Visit San Luis Obispo County.

VIII. FINAL MARKETING & PR COMPANY CANDIDATES & NEXT STEPS

The board reviewed the final (5) five companies and decided on which companies it will present at the January 2016 board meeting. Member Solu reminded members that Board should not be entering into any contracts but move forward to make recommendations for three to be chosen. Executive Director Haugen explained that there were 13 companies that have submitted proposals. Of which, Haugen narrowed it down to the top 5 that met all the criteria. The top 5 companies included Hospitality Marketing Associates, Mental Marketing and Verdin Marketing for both marketing and public relations. Fresh Buzz Media submitted a proposal to handle just the marketing for the organization, while Black Inc Media submitted a proposal for just public relations.

After much discussion amongst the board and questions related to agency dynamics, it was decided by the board to only consider the agencies who would handle both the marketing and public relations for MBTB. Member Graves made a motion to schedule presentations at the January board meeting for Hospitality Marketing Associates, Mental Marketing and Verdin Marketing, Member Newton seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

IX. 2016 BOARD RETREAT

Executive Director Haugen announced that he would like to schedule a Board Retreat in 2016 to discuss short and long-term goals, roles and responsibilities, plus revenues through a facilitator. Haugen will be sending out potential meeting dates for this half-day retreat for the board. Haugen also explained that this meeting will be open to stakeholders and the general public.

No board action was taken.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & STAFF REPORTS

Executive Director Haugen covered PR and Marketing reports from Mental Marketing and Verdin

Marketing. Haugen commented, October and November were busy media months and Morro Bay saw a lot of positive return on investment.

Haugen also mentioned that popular media such as Facebook are indicators that websites which incorporate great visuals and tell a story and to inform the public. Haugen stressed that agencies have to stop passive marketing during the low or shoulder season and be more aggressive and use direct marketing techniques to drive business to Morro Bay.

Member Behman asked Executive Director Haugen for specifics on goals of The Morro Bay Weekender weekly email program and its performance. Haugen responded that he is pleased with it in general and responses and the number of clicks or engagement is growing. He further explained that he is monitoring and tracking what categories and topics have seen better responses to use for the future.

Executive Director Haugen reviewed the Sales Report results for Oct/Nov and YTD for Advertising, Trade Shows, Sports, Meetings, Prospects, etc., which showed positive results.

Sales Manager Young said that he is working on reaching out to the pet-friendly community as well as partnering with local athletics programs such as Cuesta College and Morro Bay High School sporting events, and Morro Bay businesses. Executive Director Haugen emphasized that MBTB is reaching out to different groups in different ways including trade shows and expos, mostly in California. Haugen explained that MBTB is now promoting Rock the Holiday events and the FREE Gift Friday promotion, including participation with more than 32 Morro Bay businesses. Haugen continued in explaining that MBTB is working on updating the Pet-Friendly brochure, but are creating a Morro Bay Pet Friendly Trail map is in the works and will be available in soon and the new MorroBay.org website launched recently with updates in every category including photos, language selection, verbiage, things to do, shopping, restaurants, events and more.

Member Behman asked for discussion on possibility of adding small meeting space venues.

Executive Director Haugen asked for any recommendations and mentioned he would like to see the Bureau partner with local businesses for training. He reviewed the 2015-16 short term goals to increase midweek business and overall occupancy, expansion of public relations, Morro Bay image building, and new experiential website. Member Solu expressed the Board's enthusiasm with the revisions.

Member Brent displayed the new website for the Board and explained the logistics and benefits of this user friendly version and its ease of adding and modifying information.

Long term goals discussed included plans to "Become China Ready", features in major publications and plans to help attract new product for Morro Bay.

Member Solu thanked Brent and the Bureau for all of the hard work they have put into this report.

XI. DECLARATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None at this time.

XII. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Member Newton was pleased to say the bike path on Main Street is coming along nicely and thanked all those involved for their support.

Member Solu said that the Morro Bay Tourism Business Improvement District meeting would be held December 10, 2015 at Vet's Hall. Solu also explained that the annual Lighted Boat Parade was taking place this weekend.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Member Solu made the motion to adjourn meeting which was seconded by Member Newton.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00am.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Morro Bay Tourism Bureau is to promote and increase tourism in the city of Morro Bay by improving and strengthening the condition of the Tourism Business Environment. The objective shall be accomplished through the development and operation of a Tourism Improvement District and other marketing, branding and promotional programs and initiatives.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk (805) 772-6205. Notification 24 hours prior to the meeting will enable the city to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.