



MENDOCINO COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION, INC.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 **TIME:** 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

LOCATION: Travelodge Ukiah, 1720 N State St, Ukiah, CA 95482

CALL-IN LOCATION: Mendocino County Tourism Commission, 345 Franklin St, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

Call-In Number: 1-800-567-5900 **Access Code:** 694806

Guests: Pauline Zamboni, Ruth Sparks, Richard Strom, Joe Webb, Daphne Haney, Jodi Smith, Gracia Brown, Scott Schneider, Alison DeGrassi

- I. CALL TO ORDER-The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:29 PM.
- II. ROLL CALL-John Kuhry, Marcus Magdaleno, Sharon Davis (phone-in), Jo Bradley, Jitu Ishwar, Susie Plocher (phone-in), Deborah Kettner, Bernadette Byrne, Jennifer Seward. Absent: Debra DeGraw (Excused), Jan Rodriguez
- III. CHAIR'S COMMENTS-The Chair announced that public comment will be limited to keep overall meeting time down.
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –Marcus Magdaleno made a request to the Chair that Debra DeGraw's absence be excused. The Chair concurred.
- V. APPROVE MINUTES FROM APRIL 12TH MEETING—**Motion to approve minutes without changes made by Marcus Magdaleno; Seconded by Deb Kettner. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).**
- VI. PYGMY FOREST BANNER— Ruth Sparks announced that the flags will be placed at both Visitor's Centers and Chamber of Commerce's around the County. Board members acknowledged that this is an important item that highlights a unique aspect of Mendocino county, there was however concern from the Board that there is no policy yet in place to handle such funding requests. Additionally, the Finance Committee will need to look into where the banner funding would come from since the signage line item is already over budget. **ACTION ITEM: Motion to approve a support cost of \$500 to purchase 20 banners for pygmy forest made by Jennifer Seward; Seconded by Marcus Magdaleno. Motion passed (5-3).**
- VII. UPDATE FROM EVENT & PARTNER RELATIONS MANAGER—Gracia Brown gave a brief explanation of her job duties consisting of business site visits to clarify why MCTC exists and reminding people of why tourism is important countywide. During her lodging property visits, she confirms contact and website information, provides and receives print collateral, inquiries about marketing methods, confirms lodging offers and amenities, requests suggestions and feedback on how MCTC can assist and tours property when possible. Gracia has also been trying to get a feel from partners on marijuana tourism.

The Chair suggested that Gracia quantify the results from her outreach and comments that she receives, which she does to some degree using “Sales Force” along with her notes from in person meetings and attendance of countywide mixers and social functions. The BOD requested that Gracia produce a report for the next meeting detailing visits from April-May sharing useful information as it pertains to the BOD.

- VIII. UPDATE FROM PERSONNEL/AD-HOC SEARCH COMMITTEES—Jennifer Seward reported that the Search Committee has met and received a list of five potential candidates with two backup names and will be conducting the first round of interviews then determine which candidates will move forward to a full Board interview. She is very positive that these candidates would not have been found without the aid of SearchWide.
- IX. 2016/2017 DRAFT MARKETING PLAN AND BUDGET—Scott Schneider stated that this budget draft is based on numbers from the BID Advisory Board. He stressed that the main categories of the budget can't be changed until after MCTC has a contract with the County. The Chair suggested directing the appropriate Committees to address and complete sections of the draft by the next meeting. Alison DeGrassi highlighted Marketing and PR, stating that Development Councilors International (DCI) recommended changing up the PR trends for 2016/17. The Social Media goal is to achieve 20,000 new website hits per month. Alison addressed a question from the Chair regarding the mobile game app that would be able to peak visitor (primarily “millennial”) interests and highlight various festivals in the county. Richard Strom spoke on the importance of Sales with his participating in consumer trade shows and developing regional partnerships with Familiarization or *FAM* trips. He stressed that there are also significant benefits with the North Coast Tourism Council partnership and their emphasis on international tourism sales. According to Visa View, over 5 million dollars was spent in Mendocino County by international visitors with over 2 million going directly to lodging. Carl Ribaud reported on the Situation Analysis that highlighted various trends (consumer lifestyle, destination, economic, etc). Carl pointed out the uniqueness of place regarding Mendocino county. Overall they want to increase demand for overnight visitation during key times of the year. He emphasized the importance of driving people to the website in order to influence their choice of using Mendocino county. Carl addressed a question from the Board regarding the low growth rate of Mendocino compared to surrounding competitor counties by stating that this could partially be contributed to access. There is also no product development or anything new bringing tourism in. Gracia Brown mentioned that the Festival Committee is working on a new signature event with the Mushroom, Wine and Beer Festival and finding better ways to market lodging specials in the area and working to market larger tourist events.
- X. UPDATE FROM ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE—Sharon Davis reported that these drafts are very standard with the Conflict of Interest policy being based on the IRS version. The policies are in addition to and do not supplant form 990. 1) ACTION ITEM: Approve Conflict of Interest Policy draft. **Motion to approve policy draft made by Bernadette Byrne; Seconded by Deb Kettner. Motion passed (9-0).** 2) ACTION ITEM: Approve Fulfillment of Board of Duties & Obligations Policy. **Motion to approve policy draft made by Marcus Magdaleno; Seconded by Jo Bradley. Motion passed (9-0).**

XI. UPDATE FROM ADHOC BYLAWS COMMITTEE—Jennifer Seward suggested that the three-year term should be changed to one year, she also pointed out that the newly approved Conflict of Interest policy may not be in alignment with what is in the Bylaws. Board members had questions regarding whether staff can vote on Committees or not. Supervisor McCowen reminded the Board that they are not fully independent and are indeed Brown Acted and some of the Bylaw changes that may be contemplated would also have to be approved by the Board of Supervisors to be valid. The Chair directed the Office Manager to create a new draft that brings the Conflict of Interest Policy in congruity with the Bylaws, that staff have no voting rights, and that the term limits stand as is. This will be an approval Action Item at the next BOD meeting in June. **ACTION ITEM: Approve recommended changes to the Bylaws. Motion to approve draft #8 recommended changes to the MCTC Bylaws made by Marcus Magdaleno; Seconded by Jitu Ishwar. Upon consideration, the motion was withdrawn and tabled to the next meeting.**

XII. UPDATE FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE—Marcus Magdaleno reported that the current account balance with checking and savings totals \$480,818.00.

- 1) **ACTION ITEM— carried over from April 12th meeting. Motion to approve addition of \$10,000 into the line item titled “Other Income” and add another line item called “Board Development” made by Jo Bradley; Seconded by Jitu Ishwar. Motion passed (9-0).**
- 2) **ACTION ITEM—Jennifer Seward requested that the budget be amended for the next meeting to include Employee Liability as an Operational Expense. Motion to approve 3rd Quarter 2016-17 Fiscal Year Financial Reports made by Jennifer Seward; Seconded by Jitu Ishwar. Motion passed (9-0).**
- 3) Update on status of MCTC Business Credit Cards--There was no need for a secured credit card. Chase needed 3 pieces of information to verify the business and contact address. This information will be resubmitted and the IGM hopes to have the first card mid-May.
- 4) **ACTION ITEM—Motion to approve Finance Committee recommendations for staff credit card limits (Director of Tourism Development-\$10K, Tourism Development Associate-\$2500, Event & Partner Relations Manager-\$1K, Office Manager-\$1K, Communications Coordinator-\$10K) made by Jitu Ishwar; Seconded by Jo Bradley. Motion passed (9-0).**
- 5) **ACTION ITEM— The Committee suggests \$5000 as the discretionary spending limit for the new Executive Director. Any check over \$5000 or any budgeted item that goes over its limit, should require approval from the Board Treasurer and a second signature. Motion to approve \$5000 (within budget) for Executive Director and Interim General Manager discretionary spending limit made by Jitu Ishwar; Seconded by Jennifer Seward. Motion passed (9-0).**
- 6) FC recommendations for best method for accounting of income on financial reports-- The Auditor sends this account balance to MCTC Bookkeeper and MCTC invoices the County for that amount to be paid. The Treasurer has recommendations regarding compensation rates and large expense approval items that should come before the board. These will be reviewed and considered at the next Board meeting.

XIII. REVIEW THE FINAL BID REPORT—Marcus Magdaleno stated that the contract paragraph on Page 4, above Section D is somewhat misleading as it makes it sound like the County forced MCLA to go back into contract. Pauline Zamboni responded that this paragraph is actually the approved version with language based on John Dixon's comments from the April BOD meeting. Pauline also clarified Page 5, Section E: the amount of TOT received listed does not include the cities funding, just the County's. Marcus pointed out that on Page 13, the recommended amount to be stated as income is actually higher than the previous year's actual income yet is stated as "conservative". Pauline confirmed that the number came from Scott and Carl's Marketing Plan budget figures. Marcus also made a clarification regarding Page 13, above paragraph VII: that though MCLA did not have a separate account for reserve funds, it was on the Balance Sheet but the money was never transferred. Marcus recommended that in the future the matching amount also be listed in addition to the BID payments.

XIV. INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER REPORT—Joe Webb reported that contractors Alison DeGrassi and Scott Schneider have contributed above their original contract levels, partially due to the staff shortage. He assured the BOD that the annual Personnel budget was set for \$348,500 through March, with the current report at \$248,918 leaving \$14,000 under budget. SearchWide has been included within the budget, however the IGM clarified that it was added in under the assumption that another overage would occur as it has in the previous fiscal year. Lastly, he stated that his six months as IGM is coming to a close and the work load has been roughly 40% more than what was originally contracted. He offers the BOD two proposals: #1 is to get the work load back down to what the original contract was, #2 is for 40% more money to continue the work load at the level it has been from the last 5.5 months.

1) ACTION ITEM—**Motion made to accept IGM contract proposal #1 consisting of 40% less time made by Marcus Magdaleno; Seconded by Jennifer Seward. Motion passed (9-0).**

2) ACTION ITEM—Discuss and possible approval of contract proposal #2—No Motion was offered.

XV. DISCUSSION REGARDING DATE OF MCTC REGULAR BOARD MEETING—Marcus brought to the Board's attention the possibility of moving the meeting to Wednesdays. The Chair asked Supervisor McCowen if he would like the BOD to move their meeting date. The Supervisor responded saying that the BOD's first priority is to find what works for them. The Chair asked the Office Manager to send out a Doodle Poll to see what other Directors might prefer.

XVI. SET NEXT MEETING-The next meeting will be held on the coast on June 14th at 1 PM.

XVII. ADJOURN-The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:25 PM