

Yosemite/Mariposa Tourism Bureau Minutes
August 12, 2009
Mariposa County Public Library, Meeting Room
4978 10th Street, Mariposa, CA 95338

Called to order by Dan Jansen @ 1:30 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Donna Brunell, (Arts Council), Treasurer
Donna Nassar (B&B's Secretary)
Jonathan Farrington (Tenaya Lodge)
David Gloor (Mariposa Lodge)
Marilyn Griswold (The Redwoods in Yosemite)
MaryAnn Huff (Chamber of Commerce)
Dan Jensen (DNC), President

Excused Board Members:

Brian Bullis, (Fairgrounds)
CherylAnn Schimmelfenning
Doug Shaw (Yosemite Bug)
Kevin Shelton (Yosemite Resorts)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Kevin Cann (BOS)
Lyle Turpin (BOS)
Roger Biery
Theresa Castaldi (Coyote Springs Ranch)
Candy O'Donel-Browne

Absent Ex-Officio Members:

Marilyn Lidyoff (EDC)

Staff:

Jeffery Hentz
Kristine Showalter

Visitors:

David Woodworth
Bradley Cleveland
Carol Johnson
Janetta Phillips

1. Public Comments

- a. Dan Jensen asked if there were any public comments. There were none at this time.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

- a. In reference to Section 7, Page 3 Nassar asked for clarification regarding if the marketing plan was for the DVP planners or the rack cards. Hentz responded this was for the DVP (Destination Vacation Planners). Jensen motioned to accept minutes, Huff seconds, motion passed.

3. Treasurer Report

- a. Jensen asked if there were any questions about the Treasurer Report, asked Hentz if the Annual Report for June is submitted to the CPA? Hentz expressed yes. Motion to approve the treasurer report was unanimously approved.

4. Presentation: Geo-Tourism-Brad Cleveland

- a. Cleveland made a presentation on Geo-tourism and thanked the Board for having him. In Cleveland's presentation he discussed what Geo-Tourism is and the impact it will have on the Yosemite and entire Sierra Nevada area. He passed out a flyer with a press event that will be held at the Mariposa County History Center on Wednesday, August, 19, 2009 @ 10:00 a.m. In Cleveland's presentation, he explained that people are interested in learning more about the history of the Sierras and how it came to be. In addition, people want to know where to stay, what activities there are to do, where to camp, hike, bike, shop, and dine, etc. Cleveland indicated that Geo-Tourism is very important and Cleveland is working on a large scale fund raiser in conjunction with the National Geographic Magazine. Cleveland discussed that he would like to find funding partnerships. Cleveland expressed that funding would help pay for launching an interactive website, sponsor local events, and generate tourism on a larger level. Cleveland indicated there would also be a printed map of the entire Sierra Nevada area. Cleveland asked for a donation to assist with funding. Nassar asked if there would be something on the website that would link to the Chamber of Commerce, sponsors, etc. Cleveland expressed to everyone to attend the press conference to be held at the history center on the 19th of August. Schimmelfenning asks Cleveland if there are any Metrics tracking for the website, Cleveland stated yes. Cleveland stated that the website will track who the tourists are and generate general information reports. These reports will also be available to the tourist bureau.

5. Presentation: EDC\County Partnership & Website – Rack Cards

- a. Biery commented that he would like to form partnerships that will diversify Mariposa County's economic vitality and enhance three key areas including: Arts, High Technology, and Local visitors serving business. Biery discussed and asked, how do we reach the 4 million people that support business. Biery discussed how the use of Rack Cards could be inserted in a book along with a business card, and could be distributed in the hotels, motels, and B&B rooms. Biery discussed where to go on the website, and explained that there are forms, and community information about the towns and events. Nassar asked what are you basing your information as far as what attracts people to the area? Biery explains that they are not doing "Blanket research", but we know people like the area. Brownell asked how to entice people to move to the area? Cann asked what brings people to the area, and Huff responded family, skiing, community. Hentz asked, what would be the best way to expedite the process, as we would need accommodations and partnerships. Hentz is putting together two lodging summits in mid Sept.\Oct. and he could invite Biery to discuss operating with EDC for lodging. There was some discussion about the possibility of using a billboard. Hentz stated that billboards are very cost effective and common. Farrington commented he didn't have much faith in billboards and that the words must be very short to read as one is driving by. Jensen commented that he is not in favor of billboards. Cann comments to check with the County to see what the laws are. Brownell commented that she sees billboards on Highway 59. Biery and Huff suggested maybe doing some advertising on TV. Hentz asked Biery if

he is looking for small businesses in particular, Biery commented yes. Hentz states that it would be an incentive to get away from current operations.

6. Treasurer Vacancy

- a. Jensen commented that Brownell is not returning as “Treasurer” and further commented that we could extend, and vote on the Treasurers vacancy at the Annual Meeting.

7. Discussion:

YMCTB Board of Directors – Dates of Appointment Roster and Director term expirations

- a. A Date of Appointment Roster was submitted in the meeting packets for review and discussion. Hentz stated that currently there are five members expiring. Officers must be re-elected by a BOD Action. Biery stated that he spoke to the attorney and was advised that elections could be extended due to the budget. Biery also commented that we could also extend the Treasury vacancy as well. Jensen expressed that all Officers positions should extend to the Annual Meeting. It was recommended that this will be further addressed and clarified at the Annual Meeting. Jensen asked for a Motion, Brownell motioned to approve, Huff seconded, and the motion passed.

8. Discussion:

YMCTB Fiscal Year Budget 2009-2010

- a. Jensen discussed the need for an interim operating budget for the next sixty days. Hentz passed out a budget for next year for everyone to review. Discussion was held that the budget was approved by the Marketing Committee. It was decided that the budget will be further discussed at the Annual Meeting. It was also discussed by Hentz that the marketing budget will be increased by 85%, and that it will built from there. Hentz also indicated that we will add an addition of two staff members. Hentz stated that the media strategy will be to merge brand and shift to on-line strategy which will be cost effective and include design companies. Hentz explained there are three key seasons that need to be marketing. Including fall, winter, and spring. Hentz stated even with the economic turndown, we had a record TOT collection, and we should be able to maintain. Cann commented that the BOS will have their budget meetings on September 15th through September 17th, 2009 and that we should plan our Annual Meeting before.

9. Mariposa County’s Government TOT Contribution to YMCTB, including the possibility of operating the Visitor’s Centers.

- a. Biery expressed tourism is a huge asset, and he expressed the possibility of raising the TOT tax. Farrington stated that we tend to trail six months behind and the first quarter was the lowest ever. Farrington stated that there were no government bookings, and education is not meeting. Farrington commented that the month of April might be better and by using the Market Luncheons events are really

important. Farrington further commented that this is still a warning historically and it limps back 6 months. There were also some comments about the room rates going down. Cann expressed that we must get aggressive in our marketing and attend, and listen to discussions about the budgets at the upcoming Board of Supervisors budget meetings. Jensen commented that Badger Pass will be celebrating their 75th Anniversary and will have a brand new ski lift. Beiry commented that if tourism drops with the County's layoff's it will have a further impact on the taxpayers.

10. Marketing Activities Update: In-Market Luncheons

- a. Hentz explained what In-Market Luncheons consists of. He discussed that In –Market Luncheons are a one-on-one relationship development which creates net-working opportunities. The five luncheon media marketing will focus on the key “meeting planners” and “tour operators” from the Sacramento, Los Angeles, Bay Area, and San Francisco. They will be given a three hour tour on the whole Yosemite\Mariposa area. Hentz commented that DNC\Tanaya will pay for half of the cost which will be approximately 12k depending on the number of attendees. Hentz explained that the “In-Market Luncheons” are hospitality and rooms driven and have been very successful! Hentz further commented that through this process we will gain numerous leads. Farrington commented that a “Meeting Planner’s” only is an excellent networking opportunity.
- b. Website update: Hentz shared that we are in the process of developing a social media called “Yosemite Nation”. Hentz shared that he is working with Astone who will combine the Social Media with Press Releases. Hentz also indicated that the lead generation from the new website has been outstanding.
- c. International Marketing: Hentz explained that the International marketing offices has been approved in the UK and Germany. Hentz explained that the hard costs will be \$10,000.00 to include press release events and other events. This will need to start by September 1, 2009. The goal will be to focus on the whole area of DNA Yosemite and Mariposa.
- d. Hentz commented that Astone is contracted for 60k to do a press release in February, 2010 including social media.
- e. There was discussion about additional staff to develop Triple A, and other projects to promote tourism.
- f. Amgen Tour Update: Hentz broke the news that the Amgen Tour did not work out for next year. He expressed great disappointment as it was a significant loss for our community. Hentz stated he took it personally as he spent a lot of time on it, but is willing try again next year.

11. Closed Session: Personnel Matters

- a. The closed session ended with no Action taken.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.