

Yosemite/Mariposa Tourism Bureau Minutes
AMENDED PER YMCTB BOD MEETING 04/08/2009
March 4, 2009
Mariposa County Public Library, Meeting Room

Called to order by Chairperson Dan Jensen at 2:05pm

Board Members Present:

Donna Brownell (Arts Council), Treasurer
Brian Bullis (Fairgrounds)
Marilyn Griswold (The Redwoods)
Dan Jensen (DNC), Chairperson
Donna Nassar (B&B's), Secretary
Douglas Shaw (Yosemite Bug)
Kevin Shelton (Yosemite Motels), Co-Chair

Excused Board Members:

David Gloor
Cherylann Schimmelfennig (Hotel Jeffery)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Roger Biery
Candy O'Donel-Browne
Marilyn Lidyoff (EDC)
Lyle Turpin (BOS)

Absent Ex-Officio:

Theresa Castaldi (Coyote Springs Ranch)
~~Kevin Cann (BOS)~~

Staff:

Jeffrey Hentz
Melissa Hernandez

Visitors:

Dennis Cota, (Cota Cole & Associates)
Jonathan Farrington (DNC Tenaya)
Peter Geis (Webmaster)
Herb Gloor
Maryann Huff (Chamber of Commerce)
Dell Knell
Peter Schimmelfennig (Chamber of Commerce)
Gary Walker

1. Public Comments

- a. Gary Walker ("Walker") shares his project Pocket Focus Mariposa booklet with Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau ("the "Bureau") Board of Directors ("BOD") and meeting visitors. Walker has been printing and distributing booklet on own; would like funding from BOD to update booklet and print. Walker estimates costs for update and printing would average \$2000.00. No action taken by BOD.
- b. Dell Knell ("Knell") shares updates on Butterfly Festival. Quilt-Turning event will take place this year. Knell asks BOD to help pass out postcards and to encourage restaurants and businesses to grow butterflies for festival. Help may also be provided in the form of donations, either monetary or by purchasing butterfly eggs for students, teachers,

classrooms, etc. Knell also provides initial information on Taste of Mariposa. Urges BOD to communicate with restaurants. Marilyn Lidyoff ("Lidyoff") inquires as to what gifts and prizes were raffled at previous years' events. Knell replies that such items up for raffle included gift baskets, wind chimes, jewelry, and other items. Jeff Hentz ("Hentz") asks if Knell is working with local hoteliers in creating gift packages for this year's event. Knell answer she is unsure of how to do so; Hentz says Bureau will help. Dan Jensen ("Jensen") advises Knell to contact Yosemite National Park for inclusion in their Daily Report. Knell said she tried to in past but was denied inclusion. Jensen informs Knell and BOD of new NPS contact: Alexis Mayor.

2. Minutes of January 2009 Meeting

- a. Motion by Kevin Shelton ("Shelton") to accept minutes as prepared, motion seconded by Donna Brownell ("Brownell"). Unanimous ayes, motion passes.

3. Treasurer Report

- a. Brownell informs of Finance Committee's intent to open a money market account. Brownell suggests the BOD remove money currently held in the Yosemite Bank account in order to adjust account balance to below maximum \$250,000 FDIC insured, and to move these monies into the current Wells Fargo account as well as into a new additional money market account with West America. Brownell motions for the Financial Committee to open a new account with West America, an account with check writing ability and interest bearing, motion seconded by Brian Bullis ("Bullis"). Motion passes.
- b. No further questions or comments on Treasurer Report.

4. Board Seat Vacancies

- a. Jensen asks for current BOD count: Nine (9) total. Jensen advises BOD does not need to fill the vacant seats; there is no requirement to do so. Jensen further suggests that nominations be discussed and set forward, and that the BOD is allowed a maximum of eleven (11) total members. Brownell asks for clarification on current seat terms. Hentz answers that there was no supporting documentation discovered to outline the staggered seat terms. Jensen states that if not staggered terms then all were appointed to three-year terms. Donna Nassar ("Nassar") advises that under this set-up there will three seats available concurrently in the near future. Shelton reminds BOD that when seats expire they can be filled by incumbents. Jensen requests lists of current BOD members with date of individual appointments. Jensen proceeds to nominate Jonathan Farrington ("Farrington"), of DNC Tenaya Lodge, to fulfill BOD seat vacated by Mike Moran. Jensen believes Farrington will be an asset as he provides a great amount of contacts and knowledge. Shelton seconds motion; motion passes.
- b. Letter of Resignation regarding Dorothy Kuhnel ("Kuhnel"), provided and executed by Peter Schimmelfennig ("P. Schimmelfennig"), presented to BOD. Jensen advises that while open seat was formerly held by a Mariposa County Chamber of Commerce

(“Chamber”) Member, it is not a requirement of the seat. Jensen advises filling this open seat as an odd number of BOD members would be preferable in voting matters. Jensen calls for discussion regarding open seat. Marilyn Griswold (“Griswold”) asks if anyone has demonstrated interest in seat. Hentz reads paragraph from P. Schimmelfennig letter in which P. Schimmelfennig states his desire to fill seat vacated by Kuhnel. Jensen asks, absent a nomination for P. Schimmelfennig, if complications would arise from the appointment of P. Schimmelfennig to BOD as his wife Cherylann Schimmelfennig is currently on the BOD as a lodging representative and business owner. Jensen asks that if Chamber representation is desired, is there another who can provide so other than P. Schimmelfennig. Brownell advises of negative experiences encountered on previous Boards wherein two members of the same household both held positions on the same Board. The Arts Council has adopted a one person per household rule regarding BOD members. Shelton asks if Maryann Huff (“Huff”), President of the Chamber, would be interested and available in acquiring the open seat; Huff answers affirmatively. Shelton suggests BOD revisit idea of similar policies at later time and in compliance with the Brown Act. Shelton states he finds it important for the empty seat to be held by a Chamber member and nominates Huff to open seat vacated by Kuhnel, nomination seconded by Brian Bullis (“Bullis”). Nomination passes.

5. Brown Act Review and Presentation by Cota Cole & Associates

- a. Hentz introduces Dennis Cota (“Cota”) of Cota Cole & Associates. Hentz received Cota’s name as a referral from Rick Benson in regards to better understanding and abiding by the Brown Act. Cota gives presentation on his services and lists similar counties and bureaus he has advised. Cota would like to advise the BOD on familiarity of the Brown Act and disclosure. He states that actions taken in violation of the Brown Act can later be found void and furthermore, can result in litigation, overturning of actions established and subsequent actions or policies made pursuant to, and that prosecution can seek recovery of legal fees. Cota does not believe we need the intensity or scale of a county counsel or city attorney, but to have these resources available if and when need be. Cota proposes his services for a workshop on the Brown Act and compliance, as well as four free meetings wherein he would sit as counsel; in between the workshop and meetings, assistance would be available through his office. Roger Biery (“Biery”) inquires whether Cota has had experience with other BID districts. Cota replies he has experience with similar structures, but not directly with other BID counties or districts. Cota also states he has worked for Trinity County, Madera County and San Joaquin. Jensen asks if Brown Act educational workshops and tutorials would be subject to the Brown Act; Cota advises could be if BOD desires, or could be closed as long as no discussion of official BOD business occurs. Shelton moves to engage Cota Cole & Associates, Brownell seconds. Biery commends Cota on flexibility of contract options. Farrington questions whether spending limits on engagement should be enacted or not.

Cota advises contract could be drawn with spending limits in place. Motion passes unanimously.

- b. Jensen asks Hentz to prepare task list of areas and tasks the BOD should seek advice upon. Cota to work with Hentz on identifying these costs. Funds to come from previously approved Legal Fees or Professional Services budget.

6. YMCTB Marketing Activities Update

- a. Hentz shares that the Bureau invited to participate in and work with Agranature events, specifically the Agriculture Nature Tourism Advisory Committee Meetings. Hentz asks if a BOD member can attend the following meeting dates with him: 3/20/2009, 3/27/2009, 4/13/2009, 4/24/2009 and 5/15/2009 from 9:00am – 12:00pm. Lyle Turpin informs BOD that the committee meetings are open for public hearing and comment, and two (2) voting seats are available for public occupation. Bullis will join Hentz at meetings.
- b. Hentz is happy with outcome of AMGEN Tour of California. Tour operators were impressed with Mariposa County. Medalist Sports interested in making Mariposa a larger part in upcoming years. Riders were elated by cheerleaders, happy spectators, and the marching band. 2.2 million attended the races in just eight (8) days; 400,000 more than expected. Hentz states that the demographics of race spectators and participants fit well with Mariposa County target demographics. Jensen shared that Scott Geddiman of National Park Services was also impressed with Mariposa and delighted to be a part of the events. Biery asks if AMGEN or Medalist expressed interest in riding through Yosemite National Park. Hentz responds that there has been a large amount of interest shown and that everyone is looking into this possibility for upcoming years. Melissa Hernandez ("Hernandez") congratulated by Hentz and all BOD members on her work and effort in coordinating the AMGEN/Mariposa events.
- c. Update on selections of public relations agency presented by Hentz: Three advertising agencies submitted proposals on time and met the criteria, including budget parameters. Marketing Committee reviewed presentations by the three agencies and selected AStone Agency for three projects, one of which is the new Destination Vacation Planner ("DVP"). Deadline for materials for DVP is 3/25/2009. Hentz passes out two pieces/markups of advertisements currently in the works by AStone Agency. Hentz states the DVP will not be completely ad-free, but that the ads allowed will complement the DVP, with a focus on hotels, restaurants and other tourist-related business.
- d. Spring Ad Campaign: Hentz announces the new spring campaign will be a departure from sweepstakes towards a new, internet-heavy campaign, with a focus on branding. Launch date for new campaign is expected between 3/15/2009 – 3/23/2009 and will run until 4/30/2009. Key areas such as Bakersfield and the Bay Area will be targeted with an internet, radio and print campaign. This campaign will cost around \$300,000 with a 5-6 week run; Hentz says the value of coverage and additions being supplied by AStone Agency value the campaign at approximately \$400,000. AAA Advertising and markets

will also be targeted, reaching an estimate of 500,000+ homes with inclusion in *Via Magazine*. A fall campaign with AAA will include a feature in AAA's Southern California magazine *Westways*, and will include focus on Badger Pass as a highly-sought family ski destination.

- e. PR: AStone Agency working on composing an electronic press kit and super media FAM. Billboard prices for companies holding billboards along Hwy 99 and Hwy 41 are currently being sought. Farrington questions if there is value in placing billboard advertisement along these highways, and Hentz answers that they would serve as a reminder of all of the routes to and from Yosemite within Mariposa County. The new Mariposa Adventures rack piece is distributed for viewing among BOD. This piece was a collaborative effort among the Bureau and the Mariposa County Economic Development Council, and will be distributed throughout the state and at other specified strategic locations.
 - f. Digital Gear / Website: ETA for new site is 4/30/2009. New skin and look in progress for current site, to replace contents until new site is ready. New skin will complement new ad campaign and will feature link to lodging and lodging packages.
 - g. Sales Activities: Bureau attended several key trade shows, including the Bay Area Travel Show at the end of January 2009, with an attendance of approx. 5,000; and the Los Angeles Times Travel and Adventure Show, with an attendance of approx. 22,000. At the latter Hentz encouraged future collaborative participation among the other bureau's promoting Yosemite. As a result, next year there will be a Yosemite Pavilion with the Bureau leading the charge on this initiative, and Madera and Mono County will participate, among others. The Go West Summit, a marketing event, was also attended. Hentz met with tour operators, etc at this event, and contacts and leads were forwarded to Mariposa County hoteliers and lodging partners. Hentz also attended the RSA Conference and continued to meet with tour operators and media professionals. In addition, the AMGEN Lifestyle Festivals netted approx. 20,000 booth visitors, and secured approx. 500 new leads for database. Hentz working on branding Mariposa County as the Festival Capital of California. For the international market, Hentz will be attending CTTC UK Media Day and the ITB Berlin Tradeshow. Germany is in the top ten of visitors to Yosemite National Park. Hentz plans on attending shows tapping the South Korea and Japanese markets, as visitation from South Koreans expected to double in the next year due to visa limitation changes.
 - h. Upcoming Activities: Pow Wow International, a huge tourist industry event, will start 5/15/2009 and the Bureau has secured a double booth. Hentz expresses desire for a new Bureau logo; submits mark-up created by Larry Vilott and asks for BOD feedback. Hentz shares feedback from recent Lodging Symposium. Hoteliers of Yosemite West expressed concern for being included in Bureau events and marketing campaigns; Hentz and Hernandez working to unite them all.
7. Proposed YMCTB Procedure Manual: Comments and edits still needed from BOD.

8. Update on Personnel Matters: Jensen would like a private meeting with Hentz in near future to discuss review of office, staffing needs, etc. Jensen also requests that for next BOD meeting, the hotelier representatives supply economic updates and status reports. Hentz currently working on job description for additional staff member to potentially come on board in April 2009. Farrington suggests Hentz distribute a calendar of upcoming events so willing participants can sign-up.
9. Adjourn
 - a. Griswold motions to adjourn; motion seconded by Shelton. Meeting adjourned at 4:18pm.