



YOSEMITE MARIPOSA COUNTY TOURISM BUREAU
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2018

In Attendance:

Directors:

Kevin Shelton – Yosemite Resorts
Christian Mueller – The Redwoods in Yosemite
Douglas Shaw – Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort
Barbara Robinson – Indian Peak Ranch
Donna Nassar – Bed & Breakfast Association
Kim Brisack – Coulter Café & Yosemite Rustic Retreat
MaryAnn Huff – Northern Mariposa County

Advisors:

Scott Gediman – Yosemite National Park
Merlin Jones – Board of Supervisors

YMCTB Staff:

Terry Selk – Executive Director
Julie Hadzega – Travel Trade & Operations Manager
Laura Wattles – Communications Manager
Carrie Kidwell – Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

- Meeting was called to order at 1:41 PM by Terry Selk.

SELF-INTRODUCTION BY ALL IN ATTENDANCE

- Introductions were made.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA BUT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THIS BOARD

-Members of the audience may address the committee on matters not on the regular agenda. Brown Act regulations restrict the committee from taking action on any subject presented that is not on the agenda.

- Kim Brisack, Owner of the Coulter Café, and Yosemite Rustic Retreat in Coulterville spoke about the Coulter Café, and ideas around it with upcoming events and group collaboration with the community of Coulterville. Update with Highway 49 and 132 closure, Caltrans sign does indicate closed. The projection for Highway 132 opening is for Memorial Day weekend. Highway 49 in Bear Valley has no clear signage, this has been addressed with the County on multiple occasions.



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- There have been 30,000 views on Yosemite.com alert page.
- Barbara Robinson was approached by the organizers of the Oakhurst Ragtime Festival and was hoping to bring the “Ragtime Festival” to Mariposa, which has previously been held in Oakhurst. She will be following up with the Arts Council and moving forward with bringing this into Mariposa as a new event to be called “Mariposa Ragtime Festival”.
- Terry Selk mentioned that the Tour Operator GTA has shown a decline in California bookings. Where normal booking windows have been far in advance, there is now a lot shorter booking window, possibly due to flights needing to fill seats and last minute deals etc.
- Kevin Shelton mentioned that there is the new pilot program that is stopping traffic from going into Yosemite in El Portal. This is a trial on how to create less congestion within in the park. However, traffic numbers are comparable to 2015, whereas 2016, and 2017 were record-breaking years.

INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION MATTERS

- Yosemite National Park update – Scott Gediman
 - Road crew has been working diligently on both Tioga Pass and Mariposa Grove.
 - Glacier Point road is open. Camp 4, and Yosemite Falls parking area are currently being repaved.
 - June 15, 2018, will be the grand opening of Mariposa Grove, which has been closed for 3 years. New parking area and shuttle service will now be available. Open invite, if everyone can attend the ribbon cutting on June 14, 2018.
- Mariposa County update
 - No update was provided.



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- Treasurer's report – Douglas Shaw
 - Note to staff, please double check AugustineIdeas Invoice, code 659.
 - Balanced only by Spinardi & Jones through the end of March 2018. Balance sheet, the amount in bank looks low due to delay on a contracted check from the County being delayed.
 - Request to have Carrie Kidwell give an update regarding the “Dedicated Reserve Fund”.
 - Carrie Kidwell – Updated board on how the “Dedicated Reserve Fund” bank account would work. All of the bank accounts, i.e checking, money market & Yosemite.com totals cannot exceed \$250,000.
 - The money market is an account that comes automatically along with the “ICS” account, The money market is where the interest of the ICS is deposited.
 - The ICS account is the overflow account that we transfer monies to and from only with the “Checking Account” in the event that it is over/under the \$250,000 when combining all 3 account totals, i.e checking, money market, and Yosemite.com.
 - Matt Foraker, the V.P of Yosemite Bank, recommended that we open up a secondary ICS account. This secondary ICS account would be our “Dedicated Reserve Fund” with that in mind, we would need to make sure that the checking account, as well as both of the money market accounts, do not exceed \$250,000 at any given time.
 - Board asked that staff look back on the notes, and recording for clarification on the amount set for the “Dedicated Reserve” and to report back to the Board at the next meeting.
 - Douglas Shaw continued going over the Treasurer report. He recommended that we go on a curve budget, and will work with staff to set up for the 2018/2019 budget year. 2017 to 2016 comparison. Communications is down 11%, Consumer trade local down 46% due to registration fee's and invoicing. The TBID is down 1.66%, TOT overall a 2.9% increase in income.

- TBID renewal report – Terry Selk
 - 10-year renewal has been confirmed.

- TOT report
 - In line compared to the previous year.

- Marketing update



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- Terry Selk mentioned that all appointments are filled at IPW this year, there was a higher request for appointments. IPW is the largest travel trade show in the US. Where appointments allow one on one conversation with potential consumers. Approximately 8,000 people attend this tradeshow.
- CalTravel is an industry seminar, mostly for informational material.
- Terry, Julie, and Laura will be attending both tradeshows towards the end of the month.
- Julie Hadzega referenced the most recent FAM being Serina Bergman, Media FAM, with Metro Online out of the UK. Serina utilized travel through public transit, she had a great time and a true experience. Serina's online article, "Why you should visit Yosemite even if you're not an outdoorsy person" was shared amongst social media.
- The website has a strong partner referral, at 92% of goal, with still 2 months left in the fiscal year.
- Overall traffic is 52% higher, with website users up 42%, and organic traffic has increased 34% compared to last year.
- Most visited blog post, the Road Conditions Alert, with over 30,000-page views.
- Social Media is continuing increase in followers. Facebook posts engagements are performing well despite the new algorithms.
- Facebook: 90,107 Follows, with a 0.05 percent change. Great results with the Flower Hike (Hites Cove) reaching over 38K people.
- Instagram: 18,592 Followers, with a 2.65 percentage change.
- Twitter has a zero-percentage change. Currently with 50,000 Followers.
- Pinterest has had a 0.63 increase in monthly viewers.
- Terry Selk mentioned the upcoming community and industry meetings currently ongoing that the YMCTB team is currently attending.
- Terry Selk mentioned the following information regarding international travel:



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There has been a downward trend in international arrivals to the U.S at a half a million, which represents the third year of decline in the US share of world travel. America's share of the international travel market has been on a decline since 2015, and from 2015 to 2017 it dropped from 13.6 % to 11.9% according to the U.S Travel Associations.

The GoPro Australia - Four ambassadors spent 1 week in Mariposa County, with two campaign segments, April and August. April results had a combined 53 posts with engagement of 89K and a reach of 2.6 million. 4 native posts received engagement of 8.3K and a reach of 106K.

China has had a shift from group travel to independent travel. The market allows a growing experiential opportunity, such as backpacking, self-driving tours, sampling new cuisines, experiencing the local life, culture, museums, theaters, and concerts.

Terry attended three travel shows while in Scandinavia, this included, Sweden and two travel shows in Denmark. Brand USA co-hosted USA Travel Show underlining the importance of the Scandinavian market to the USA.

- Local marketing idea
 - Julie Hadzega has been in the process of purchasing domains such as www.visitmariposa.com, www.visitcoulterville.com, and www.visitfishcamp.com. She is also working on per the Board of Supervisors approval, revamping of Highway 140 welcome sign, along with the sign in Coulterville
- Website update and proposed 2018-2019 activities – Presentation – T. Selk
 - Over 200,000 more visitors to the site, with a 25% engagement growth, with a total of 410,000 lodging referrals, and 90,000 restaurant/things to do referrals.
 - Last year vs this year to date, organic search is up 21.16% with users with a total of 19.75% new users and sessions increasing 26.74%.
 - Over 20 blogs, pages, and/or landing pages created, with 134 new keywords, ranking on page 1 for Google, new keyword rankings for #1 position in google.
 - Moving forward; Revamping the stakeholder pages, creating a local stories section, giving the event page a refresh, and enhancing current Mariposa Page, i.e. events, related blogs, highlighting photography within Mariposa, creating more content around Mariposa, i.e. restaurants, and businesses.



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- Booking Widget consideration.
 - Jackrabbit Booking Widget; Additional costs \$7,000-\$11,000 per year, their lodging rates are not 100% accurate for the properties. Jackrabbit reported 17k Book Now Clicks, with 40k visit website clicks and 2k Phone clicks.
 - YMCTB will be researching other options for a booking widget on the Yosemite.com website
- Voice integration is on the rise. 50% of all searches will be conducted by voice search by 2020.
- Pantheon Hosting update: Currently \$4,800 per year, with an increase anywhere from \$5,400 to \$9,000 and will be the new projected pricing plan.
- Advertising update and proposed 2018-2019 activities – Presentation – T. Selk
 - Strategy & recommended media buy
 - Stronger digital presence with media plan potentially introduces new partnership opportunities and data-driven audience buying. Paid Social, i.e. Instagram & Facebook. Stream Audio, YouTube TrueView, email blasts Strengthen landing pages, content-driven planning. Recommended print advertising thru Diablo Magazine, presence on digital, email & print. Social Influencer Campaign
- Executive Director Position Update

ACTION MATTERS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION, REGULAR AGENDA

2018/2019 Budget approval

- Kevin Shelton motioned to accept the working Budget for 2018/2019. Donna Nassar seconded, all were in favor with none opposed.

Approval of meeting minutes for March 28, 2018 meeting.

- Kevin Shelton motioned to accept meeting minutes for March 28, 2018, Donna Nassar seconded, all were in favor with none opposed.

Approval of special meeting minutes for April 11, 2018, Teleconference Board Meeting.



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- Kevin Shelton motioned to accept meeting minutes for April 11, 2018, Donna Nassar seconded, all were in favor with none opposed.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD AND STAFF:

- None

ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:26 pm.