In Attendance:

**Directors Present:**

Kevin Shelton – Yosemite Resorts

**Christian** Mueller – The Redwoods in Yosemite

Douglas Shaw – Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort

Donna Nassar – B&B Association

Jeff Bray – Yosemite Hospitality – On the telephone

MaryAnn Huff – Northern Mariposa County

Victoria Imrie – Yosemite Zipline & Adventure Ranch (Marketing Committee)

Barbara Robinson – Indian Peak Ranch Vacation Rental

Kim Brisack – Coulter Café and Big Table Ranch

**YMCTB Staff:**

Jonathan Farrington – Director

Julie Hadzega – Travel Trade & Operations Manager

Laura Wattles – Communication Manager

**Advisors Present:**

Merlin Jones – Mariposa County District II Supervisor

Marshall Long – Mariposa County District Supervisor

Candy O'Donel-Browne – Community Member

**Visitors Present:**

Scott Fiester – Executive Director of Mariposa County Chamber of Commerce

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 1:50 pm by Kevin Shelton.

**SELF-INTRODUCTION BY THOSE IN ATTENDANCE**

Self-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 Board on matters, not on the regular agenda. Brown Act regulations restrict the Board from taking action on any subject presented that is not on the agenda.

* MaryAnn Huff announced that the Northern Mariposa County History Center is having their annual Gala on Saturday, February 2nd. The theme this year is the celebration of the Golden Chain Highway map anniversary in October. Tickets are available for Free from Julie at the Tourism Bureau.
* Jonathan Farrington asked Scott Fiester, the new Chamber Executive**,** to say a few words. Scott introduced himself and explained that his full bio is in the newspaper and he is really excited about the direction that the Chamber is going. New programs are being developed for the businesses in Mariposa. He is a collaborator and looking forward to working with the Tourism Bureau.
* Kevin Shelton mentioned that today was LAW Enforcement Appreciation Day.

**INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION MATTERS**

Yosemite National Park Update – Scott Gediman

Scott Gediman was not in attendance but the group commented on the following:

Yosemite National Park Shutdown:

* Marshall Long said that the County has stepped up to help clean some of the areas in the Park.
* Merlin Jones said that the County is willing to step up where needed.
* Jonathan explained that the Tourism Bureau donated trash bags and gloves to the Visitor Center to give out the visitors going into the park and to encourage the "Leave No Trace" messaging. He mentioned that the Tourism Bureau staff is heading into the park tomorrow to check it out and help where we can.
* Barbara Robinson asked if someone was going to put more Porta Potties in the Park and Jonathan said that Tuolumne County has donated funds for that.
* Jonathan mentioned that digital advertising through the Tourism Bureau was stopped and will resume when the shutdown is over.
* Jeff Bray verified that Aramark subsidized staff to keep the concessions open and that the Park service got approval to reimburse them.

Mariposa County Update – Board of Supervisors

Marshall Long announced:

* All of the Supervisors and new elected County members were sworn in at a nice ceremony. The only new members were Walter Wall as the new District Attorney and Vince Kehoe as the new Assessor-Recorder. They are all looking forward to the new year.
* Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) is wanting to get out of the fire protection business and the County is trying to figure out how they are going to fund the ongoing fire efforts.
* The Fire Safe Council is working on a grant to re-write the Crisis Communication Plan.
* He encourages neighbors to help one another on clearing fuel before fire season.

Merlin Jones announced:

* Fire is a huge issue for the County, and they are working on making all of the fire breaks larger. They are also taking weed spraying a step further. The volunteer Fire members are shrinking, and the state is making it harder for them to acquire the necessary requirements.
* The BOS wants to continue to work with the Tourism Bureau in improving their relationship.
* Now that Measure M has passed the Sheriff's Department is going to ask for more money. Chief Binnewies is prepared to come before the BOS.
* Merlin stated, in his opinion that he would like to see the funding model for the Tourism Bureau to go back the three-year rolling average and explains that he couldn't run a business based on the current model.
* There is a grant to add more water sources in the County. There is currently 5 and it will increase to 8 locations.
* Scott Fiester asked if the County is considering any signage reminding people about wildfire. Marshall said yes that is a part of the public education program they are working on.

Treasurers report – Douglas Shaw

* The money on hand at the end of the year is 21 % more than last year.
* BID income 2% higher than last quarter because the Tourism Bureau received a check for November that was delayed due to the County allowing lodging to pay later because of the Ferguson Fire.
* Communications is down 25%
* FAMS/Trade Media is down due to a late start in FAM requests.
* International Offices - Germany down 65% - there was pre-paid
* Travel and Meals is down 56%
* Operations is down 46%
* Salary/Benefits is down 20%
* Jonathan mentioned for what we get from Single Point (outside HR agencies) that is worth the money we spend.

Marketing Update & Executive Director Summary – Jonathan Farrington

General:

* Jonathan thanked Julie and Laura for their hard work.
* He will try to make the meetings shorter and the purpose of these meetings is to inform the public of what we are working on.
* Jonathan has been asked to re-join the YGP board.
* A quick review of bi-annual Board of Supervisors presentation. Presentation sent in advance for review and questions during Jonathan's presentation.

Jonathan asked the group to look at slides 16, 52 and 53.

* Measure M recap

April 1st is the start date for the TOT increase.

* Annual report

The annual report is finished and has been submitted to the BOS.

* Discuss Winter push "Above the Fog" marketing + Expedia

Wait until closed session.

* JackRabbit re-implementation

At one time the Tourism Bureaus website had a re-direct booking engine that allowed visitors to put in a date range and properties would come up that was within that range. It was discovered that it didn't work properly and was deleted from the site.The decision was made to reconsider the removal of a booking engine and Jonathan researched leading companies and due to costs wants to return to using the same vendor JackRabbit.

* Hospitality Marketing Associates (HMA) Study

The Tourism Bureau is currently working with HMA on a visitor study. This will include a comprehensive review of 40 thousand records from five lodging partners (Best Western, Yosemite View Lodge, Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort, Tenaya Lodge and Yosemite Valley Lodge). This will give a more in-depth look at our visitors and help determine our advertising markets.

* YARTS Route request

Jonathan pitched an idea to Rosemarie Smallcomb and Miles Menetery about creating a route from Mariposa Fairgrounds into the Valley starting in March through Labor Day. The cost would be $50,000 to 80,000 dollars and funding solutions will need to be created if the idea is approved.

* Travel Trade

Jonathan attendedWorld Travel Mart (WTM) in November. He was asked by Visit CA to speak on behalf of the fires in the area. The European market believes that Yosemite has burned down.

Jonathan will be heading to Copenhagen and Berlin in March for sales mission and the ITB trade show. Terry Selk has been hired to help get Jonathan onboard in the international market.

* Town Hall Meetings

Meetings have been scheduled for constituents to meet with the Tourism Bureau and learn what they do and what they are working on. The meetings will be held in El Portal, Mariposa, Wawona and Coulterville (Greeley Hill).

* FAMS – Travel Writers
* Marketing Coordinator/Manager recruitment update

The position generated 60 applicants. Jonathan narrowed it down to 10 and conducted telephone interviews. One candidate was offered the position prior to this meeting and we are waiting for his response. His name is David Bracher and he currently lives in southern California but has purchased land in Cathey's Valley and will build a home there. He has thirty years of experience in art directions and project management.

* Public Relations firm retention update

Laura and Jonathan interviewed three public relations companies and have chosen 360 View Public Relations based in Los Angeles. Marshall Long asked what happened to Townsend Public Affairs and Jonathan explained that Public Affairs and Public Relations are two different things. 360 View PR will help us with outreach to media as a destination.

* Recruitment or nominations for two Board Members

Jonathan announced that we are looking to have a full board of directors and currently have two openings. He has spoken to Brendan at AutoCamp but he is still busy getting AutoCamp open. Kim Brisack mentioned that the Hotel Jeffery is up for sale and the new owners should be considered.

**ACTION MATTERS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION, REGULAR AGENDA**

* Approval of regular meeting minutes for October 25, 2018

Discussion: None

Motioned: Mary Ann Huff

Seconded: Victoria Imrie with none opposed

* Approval to refill Social Media staff position

Discussion:

Jonathan explained that the position shouldn't have been re-filled. We are looking for an hourly, full-time person to fill this position. We are not currently utilizing this part of the company and need to revamp the social media program as a due to lack of staff.

Discussion: None

Motioned: Kim Brisack

Seconded: Victoria Imrie with none opposed

* Review and approval of group sales lead generation proposal

Discussion – A job description for an outside contract position for Group Sales Manager was created. This person would responsible for generating leads for properties in the County that have meeting space. The contractor will receive $1600.00 per month for 6 months and will receive a 10 percent commission for 10% commission for any group that closes.

Ursa Stearns has been chosen for this position. She currently works part-time for Helms Briscoe as a meeting planner. She is familiar with Mariposa properties and has a proven track record.

Discussion: None

Motioned: Douglas Shaw

Seconded: Donna Nassar with none opposed

* Approval to elect Christian Mueller for Board Vice Chairman

Discussion: None

Motioned: Barbara Robinson

Seconded: Donna Nassar with none opposed

* Approval to move Donna Nassar from lodging to non-lodging Board member.

Discussion: Donna Nassar announced that she has closed her vacation rental the Carriage House but would still like to continue on the Board.

Discussion: None

Motioned: Kim Brisack

Seconded: Victoria Imrie with none opposed

**CLOSED SESSION**

Contract related discussions

Personnel matters

**ITEMS TO REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION**

None

**COMMENTS FROM BOARD AND STAFF**

None

**ADJOURNMENT -** Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM