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January 16, 2020

To: Board of Directors - Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB
From: Robb Wells, President & CEO
Subject: President's Report of September-October Activities

Happy New Year! Here come the obligatory 2020 Vision reference but our strategic initiatives are in fact going to help us establish clarity for the next few years. The Destination Master Plan as well as the Feasibility Study are both underway. The 2020 Business Plan continues to be executed and in some cases has already produced some fruit for the destination. Staff is continuing to build upon the momentum we closed the calendar year out with and we are very excited about how the next two quarters finish from a goals standpoint.

Bi-Month at a Glance

- Made the switch to Touchpoint Communications
- Sports Council submitted Dixie Softball Tournament room RFP for July 2020
- 18 million impressions in publicity impression netting \$169K in value
- Hosted Group Tour workshop
- Revenues are up through November 2019
- Threshold 360 Phase 2 completed with new mapping added
- Visit Beaufort App completion with scheduled launch in Spring 2020

Marketing and Public Relations

Touchpoint Communications was brought on board to fill the void with the vacancy in public relations team at Ferebee Lane. The “gap” agreement with Touchpoint will last through June 2020 with the opportunity to extend the contract through the remainder of 2021 Fiscal Year.

Website: BeaufortSC.org continues to be placement based performance as one would expect with a digital campaign. The overall November-December performance was down YoY with organic traffic seeing the biggest drop.

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Advertising: During November-December, our digital display, search and social campaigns continued running.

- Month over month we saw a slight decrease in CTR (9.59% vs. 9.68% in October), as well as a slightly higher CPC and cost per conversion. This could be attributed to seasonality, as we saw a decrease in CTR from October to November last year. While the cost per conversion of \$27 is higher than October, it is still lower than September's \$28 cost per conversion.
- The "Vacations & Getaways" campaign was the top performer in regards to conversion rate for the first time! The "Beaufort" campaign continued to drive the most amount of conversions.
- YOY we are continuing to see a decrease in conversions. This is attributed to the removal of "smart goals" from being measured in this new fiscal year.
- During November the Facebook campaign continued running for the last month of the flight, running three ads, targeting adults ages 30-60 who are in a relationship that are interested in travel. The ads drove 6,404 clicks to site at a higher cost per click of \$0.68. Of the three ads, the "Winter Warmer" ad received the lower cost per link click of \$0.65. All three ads received similar overall cost per link clicks, ranging between \$0.65 - \$0.73. The paid social campaign is continuing to drive a high amount of onsite goal completions, aligned with Google Paid Search.

For more insight, please refer to the November Paid Media Reports.

General Media Relations: PR team had 5 media pitches in November & December. We hosted 1 travel writer.

Through October, our PR value finished at \$2,184,877.94 in earned media. November's touch-points finished at 57. We closed the month with over 235 million media impressions fiscal YTD.

Destination Services

Year over year, the number of visitors increased by 27% with 1,761 visitors in December 2019 compared to 1,386 in December 2018. Comparing 2019 Visitor Count (29,805) to 2018 Visitor Count (36,862) we had a 19% decrease.

Fulfillment numbers were up YoY (42,679 CY 2019 vs. 29,113 CY 2018) due to increased effort and communication with local partners offering visitor guides to them.

Fam Tours: Hope Philbrick and supported Anchorage 1770 travel writer.

Bus Registrations: 3

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Cruise Ships: 3

Visitor Center Visitor, Fulfillment & Sales Data	NOV/ DEC 2019	NOV/ DEC 2018	% Change	TOP 5 States	TOP 3 Countries
Visitor Center Counts	4036	3,564	13.2%	SC	Canada
				NC	England/France
Visitor Guide Fulfillment (Kennickell)	6522	6,114	6.7%	GA	Germany
Visitor Guide Fulfillment (Local)	1245	1,420	-12.3%	NC	
Welcome Bags	50	n/a		PA	
Visitor Center Sales					
Consignment Sales Commissions	405.98	\$227.30	78.6%		
Ticket Sales Commissions	\$853.40	\$3,283.00	-74.0%		*2018 had BHM Reimbursement
Inventory Sales	\$978.23	\$1,235.49	-20.8%		

Meetings/Festivals:

- Greeted American Cruise Line Ships
- Attended Annual Night on the Town
- Sports Council
- Touchpoint PR Introduction
- Annual Visitor Center Holiday Decorating Event
- Annual Visitor Center Luncheon

Advertising Sales: Continue to invoice, sell and support website, leads and Visitor Center advertising sales. Sold a \$5000 website ad to Savannah-Hilton Head Airport for placement on BeaufortSC.org space in the Arsenal courtyard for their ticket sales. Worked with Sharon Stewart and Homes for the Holidays to provide tourist information to participants.

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Group Sales

Activities

Ongoing - Selecting appointments for *American Bus Association Annual Marketplace* in January. Have 34 pre-scheduled appointments (average for CVBs is 27). We are excited that Colleen Jaegar, BW Sea Island Inn will attend ABA this year as well.

10/31-11/2 - Participated in a tour operator show, *Spotlight on the Mid Atlantic* in Gaithersburg, MD. This was a table-top show where the tour companies visited our booth. There was also an "itinerary building" session where operators worked with destinations to create itineraries that may become a selling tour for them. Leads will be sent to all hotels, attractions/tours & restaurants.

Sales Contacts/Services Provided

Ongoing - working with *Shore Excursions/Victory Cruise Lines*.

They are planning 8 arrivals in 2020 beginning April 4; 10-12 arrivals in 2021. Each arrival of up to 300 passengers will offer multiple tours of Beaufort - one day only.

Ongoing work with Kelly Tours/Grayline to develop additional retail tours in Beaufort

Trips by Patty booked group at BW Sea Island Inn for February 10-12 - 20 rooms x 2 nights = 40 room nights; also 2nd group in March - 20 rooms x 2 nights = 40 room nights - **TOTAL - 80 room nights.**

Met with Carla and Robbie Willis, *Willis Tours* about 4 group visits in Spring 2020. Sent sample Itineraries. Site visit 10/10-11/19. Booked BW Sea Island - March 23-26, 2020 - 24 room x 2 nights = 48 room nights. (Considering 3 additional tours - 3/30-4/2; 4/6-9; 4/13-16 - **TOTAL -192 room nights**)

Communication with Keith Green and Christy Schad, planners for IFA Redfin/Kayak Tour to be held in Beaufort 8/21-23/2020 - **20 room nights for staff - up to 300 room nights for attendees**

Site Visit for And Rawls & Ed West, *SC Economic Development Association Institute* - Aug 5-7 program for 65 ppl - 40 rooms x 2 nights = **80 room nights**. Some may consider extending stay through the weekend. They were very impressed with Beaufort and confirmed that they will bring this program here - thanks to Stephen Murray. In addition, they may consider Beaufort for an additional program in the spring of 2021. **Booked at Beaufort Inn.**

Kelly Tours booked 16 rooms x 4 nights = 64 room nights at Best Western Sea Island for June 2020 senior group

Site visit for Roger Baker with *Kelly Tours*, Charleston Tour Department. Developing a 1-2 night Beaufort tour that will be promoted in Savannah and Charleston. He will bring with him one of their clients, Richard Harrington of Newmarket Holidays, UK. Mr. Harrington may consider this tour for his clients from the UK arriving in Charleston next.

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Additional site with Roger Baker to assist in developing day-trips from Savannah and Charleston for senior groups

Met with Shannon Loper and Matt Watts, Beaufort County Parks and Recreation to discuss details for Dixie Girls Softball Tournament July 2020.

RFP's Sent

RFP for *SC Economic Development Assoc Institute* in Aug, 2020 - sent to BW Sea Island Inn, Beaufort Inn and Holiday Inn and Suites - (planner's choices after site visit)

RFP for IFA Redfish Kayak Tour (2/21-23/2020) 120-160 room nights and 2 banquets

RFP for Dixie Girls Softball Tournament (7/10-14/2020) 600-900 room nights at various hotels

Community Affairs

Tourism Product Development: We continue to work with our attractions to develop a better messaging as well as assisting with TripAdvisor content and review. We have tentatively scheduled a workshop with our partners at Advance Travel for the Spring of 2020.

Stakeholder Engagement: In November, Threshold had 1,652 views, 364 engagements with the videos, and 378 completions. Estimated media value is \$3,701. In December, Threshold had 1,143 views, 227 engagements with the videos, and 298 completions. Estimated media value is \$3,900. (Note: Threshold 360 launched mid-November 2018.)

Research:

Two new surveys have been launched. The first is in the Visitor Center. This captures the visitor profile. Since the launch in the end of July, 289 surveys have been completed.

The top three states represented are South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia with 27.7% being day visitors. 19.4% stayed in a full service hotel, followed by 13.9% staying in a short term rental. Vacation was the primary reason for visiting, 61.7%, and 18.4% just passing through. 10.6% of people said they spent \$200-299.99 on lodging, 27.1% spends \$100-149.99 on retail, 13.0% spend \$100-149.99 on food dining out, and 15.6% spend \$100-149.99 on recreation. The main activities while visiting are restaurants, historical landmarks, sightseeing, beaches, museums, shopping, and SC State Parks. The main demographic is females age 51-70 making an annual household income of \$100,000-149,999.

The other is a post-Beaufort visit survey. This is being emailed to visitors who filled out the sign in sheet in the VC. The emails were sent out in the middle of August, early

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September, and beginning of November. As of January 10, There are 67 responses. Rated their visit a 4.94. 51.5% said their visit exceeded their expectations, and 45.5% said it met their expectations. On a rating scale, the likeliness of returning to Beaufort is 4.38, and recommending it to friends is 4.65. Their experience at the Visitor Center received a 4.7 star rating. Additionally, 31% of visitors said they would have participated in night life had it been offered, particularly live music.

Strategic Plan and Administrative Activities

Administration: The 2020 CVB Business Plan is in full operation. It aligns with the strategic imperatives that the board adopted for the organization to accomplish over the course of the next two-three years. The plan focuses on Marketing, Sales and Visitor Services, Destination Development, Community Engagement, and Operation & Governance. The *Business Plan is attached to this report.*

Venue Feasibility Study Committee - Meeting with Linda Roper to plan January 21-23, 2020 site visit and interviews for Catherine Sarrett, Strategic Venue Studies and Chris Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategies.