

VISIT BIG SKY

September 18, 2018 *Visit Big Sky Board of Directors Meeting Minutes*

Big Sky & Greater Yellowstone VIC – 55 Lone Mountain Ranch Road | Big Sky, MT 59716

Present: Ryan Hamilton, Steven Rager, Mike Parker, Julie Grimm-Lisk, Ennion Williams, Ryan Kunz, Justin Bain

Call-In: Tim Drain, Krista Traxler, Annie Pinkert

Absent: Dan Martin

Staff Present: Candace Carr Strauss, Emilie McGee, Lori Wetzels, Caitlin Lundin

Public:

Call to Order: 8:42 am

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of July Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes for July made by Tim and seconded by Steven. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Finance Committee Report / Approval of Financials

- August financials reflected three changes. The first was Resort Tax income was lowered to \$640,000 to reflect the FY19 allocation versus requested funding by VBS of \$715,000. Second, the CVB revenue was changed to reflect the approved rollover funds from the state. Third, program expenses were lowered due to the reduced allocation of Resort Tax funds. Motion to approve the August financials was made by Ennion and seconded by Steve. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

VBS Board Operations and Admin

- Candace walked the Board through the move of the CVB fiscal sponsorship from the Big Sky Chamber to VBS as of December 2017, and as a result, the additional board responsibilities. In FY18 VBS paid for a small portion of its staffing expense for the first time. Candace asked for a motion to approve hiring Kari Gras, a Human Resources consultant to review the Employee Handbook, HR policies, the Management Agreement with the Big Sky Chamber, and to create job descriptions and performance reviews for staff. Julie made a motion and Mike seconded. During discussion, Tim Drain asked for clarification on the expense to hire Kari. Her rate is \$75 per hour. With that, Ryan called for approval and the motion passed unanimously.
- Having been CEO for 20 months, Candace requested a performance review by the VBS Board. The Big Sky Chamber Board has received the same request and suggested, Ryan as Board Chair from VBS and Scott Johnson Big Sky Chamber Board Chair conduct it together. It was decided that board members would communicate provide feedback directly to Ryan who would then communicate it to Candace during her review.
- A discussion was had on the status of the DestiMetrics contract. Currently no traction has been made as VBS is still waiting for approval/sign-off from Boyne to allow Big Sky Resort to participate.

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Membership definition details in the VBS by-laws may need to be changed if VBS is unable to renew the DestiMetrics contract. A new status update will be given at the November meeting.

Big Sky Gateway Foundation

- A discussion was had with Laura Hoehn, attorney with Trister, Ross Schadler & Gold who specializes in non-profit law regarding the relationship of the Big Sky Gateway Foundation with VBS, and if the 501(c)(3) which was created to erect an entryway designation at US 191 and MT Hwy 64 for the purpose of informing the traveling public of Big Sky existence. There is no longer a need for this with the new ownership, but is it possible to still have philanthropy as a tool for funding VBS' efforts on behalf of the public good. Candace has asked for a motion to retain her to investigate this matter. Her rate is \$150 per hour. A copy of the engagement letter was provided to the board. Ennion made a motion to accept the engagement letter and Ryan seconded the motion. No discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Committees

- Recruitment of members for VBS Board Committees is underway. Mike reviewed his work for the Funding committee reporting that he has five individuals in the community interested in joining, he will be setting a meeting in the next week. Ryan Kunz successfully recruited three members to the Events committee, Justa Adams, Haley Rowland and Rachel Stewert. The first meeting is set for October 2nd. Julie with Destination Development and Krista with Marketing are still recruiting for their committees. Charters are being prepared by staff and each committee will have a VBS staff point person to assist with administrative duties, i.e. setting meeting dates, agendas, minutes, etc.
- Candace shared that she met/spoke with Kristin Gardener, Jessie Weise, and Ciara Wolfe regarding Vail's recent designation as the first Sustainable Mountain Resort in the the World having received the Mountain IDEAL certified sustainable destination designation. Some research has been done related to Big Sky seeking such a designation. However, with the upcoming Community Visioning effort being reviewed by Resort Tax on behalf of the Big Sky community, best to be in a holding pattern so that perhaps this conversation can be a part of the much larger community-wide conversation.

NEW BUSINESS

DEVELOP the Destination

Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Montage Big Sky at Spanish Peaks

- On Friday, September 14th, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new Montage Big Sky at Spanish Peaks opening in Spring of 2021. Justin Bain gave a brief overview of the project and timeline for completion. The Montage build out is expected to take 33-months. In addition to Cross Harbor, County, State and Federal representatives were present in addition to the founder of Montage and the CEO of Sutton Construction who will be building the hotel.

Destination Analysts

- An overview of the proposed scope of work for visitation research with Destination Analysts was presented. However, if Boyne prohibits Big Sky Resort from reporting their data, this project will be difficult and inconclusive so it is on hold until the DestiMetrics situation is resolved. Just a note that

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new MT Lodging Tax revenues will begin to show up with the state's settlement with Air bnb. Collections began as of June 1st. There is however no way to know how much was collected to be able to compare YOY change due to improvement of the sector vs. new monies being infused.

PROMOTE the Destination

#FlyBZN Air Development Marketing Committee

- Krista gave an overview of the Air Development Marketing Committee meeting that took place on September 14th here in Big Sky. Expanded efforts will be placed on marketing in Long Beach, CA the hub for a new direct flight from JetBlue initiating service in mid-December. There was also discussion of purchasing additional domains to track the efforts of the new marketing campaign. The Far From Ordinary campaign was described as being too vague, all agreed that it was great name for a social media handle but perhaps not as a website domain. VBS contributes \$37,500 annually to this effort. Discussion was had related to the private contributors to this marketing effort perhaps paying VBS for the co-operative effort, which in turn would pay the Gallatin Foundation. It would allow private marketing dollars being allocated by private businesses to "show up" on the radar at Resort Tax Allocations, because at present they do not and it is a substantial amount being spent.

Visitbigsky.com

- Team Big Sky reported on the current status of the new website. The contract with Tempest has expired and a new website developer/designer is being scouted. Candace and Emilie have met with two developers in Bozeman, Wild Blue Design and Joe Bergantine. A scope of work is being developed and both developers will deliver a proposal following.

OnX Maps

- The project with OnX maps is still on track and moving forward with the hope of a beta Spring 2019.

STAFF REPORTS

CEO Report

- Smart Meetings Southwest is in Austin, TX next week. First foray for VBS into the MICE market. The following week is the mandatory fall Tourism Advisory Council meeting in Helena. The Big Sky Chamber has organized a Leadership Mission to Sun Valley and Ciara Wolfe and staff from the Big Sky Community Organization will be headed there month end September for meetings with peers.

Programming and Events Report

- World Tourism Day is September 27th and the VBS staff as well as other community organizations will be invited to hike Dudley Creek to celebrate.

OTHER NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- The Big Sky Chamber is drafting a Letter of Support to be co-signed by a myriad of community organizations including VBS expressing our desire for the Resort Tax Board to initiate a community-wide visioning / strategic planning effort on behalf of the Big Sky community. This letter will be presented at the upcoming Resort Tax Board meeting. Julie made a motion to write a letter of support with Mike seconding the motion. Ryan asked that the letter be shared with the board prior to being sent. The motion passed unanimously.

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- The Big Sky Chamber is looking to fund an economic profile. They also recently endorsed the I-185 medicare expansion bill that is up for vote.

ADJOURN

- A motion to adjourn was made by Steven and seconded by Ennion. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion was passed.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:41 am.

Filename: VBS_MINUTES 09.18.18.docx
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Keywords:
Comments:
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As of Last Complete Printing
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Number of Words: 1,483
Number of Characters: 7,592 (approx.)