



PPCVB Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 30, 2021, 3:00 PM

Village Hall – Executive Training Room, 9915-39TH AVE., PLEASANT PRAIRIE, WI 53158

Attended: Mike Pollocoff, Nathan Thiel, Steve Kumorkiewicz, Charlie Breit, Ralph Belliveau, Carol Willke, Kyle Highberg, Craig Anderson, Sarah Howard
Absent: None

1. Call to Order

– Meeting was called to order by Mike Pollocoff at 3:01 PM

2. Approve Meeting Minutes from November 10, 2020

– Steve Kumorkiewicz called for a motion to approve the 11/10/2020 meeting minutes and Charlie Breit 2nd the motion

3. Receive the 2018-2020 Annual Report

- Mike Pollocoff, leading the discussion on the 2018-2020 Annual Report noted

4. Executive Director's Report – Michelle Williamson

- Destination Marketing thought leader Maura Gast famously uttered these words a decade ago, as she concluded her year as Chair of the DMO sector's trade association, today known as Destinations International: "
 - o If you build a place where people want to visit, you will have built a place where people want to live. If you build a place where people want to live, you will have built a place where people have to work. If you build a place where people want to work, you will have built a place where business wants to be. And, if you have built a place where business wants to be, you will have built a place where people want to visit. It all starts with a Visit...and that Visit starts with the DMO."
- 2020 has been a challenging year with the worldwide impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and police/racial tensions in neighboring Kenosha. The ability of Pleasant Prairie to survive the economic impacts of both is a testament to both the resiliency of the community, and the groundwork that's been laid for Village success.
- In 2020 we worked diligently to let the community and visitors know that our restaurants were still open. This week is the 2nd annual Prairie Egg Hunt that was created to fill a void in 2020 for families in a safe, fun, but engaging way, to raise awareness of dining and business options.
- In January we began meeting with the RecPlex Event Committee to begin bringing together event efforts already being put forth by the RecPlex and to with event promotion, hotel needs, and event support grants.
- In February, we considered our first RecPlex event support grant. Ultimately the organization chose to go to a different location due to event requests that the RecPlex could not accommodate.
- On March 10th, we met with RecPlex and the DoubleTree/Fairfield staff, to discuss opportunities for collecting additional room data and to talk about current and future tracking of RecPlex Event Rooms.
- We've been working with hotels to both refer new business potentials and track past business to become more up to speed on future needs.

Executive Director's Report – Cont'd

- We've received several event requests to be held at the RecPlex that have come through our website, and referral traffic from both free sports info listings and paid advertising.
 - o Viable opportunities remain on the table for two events that may consider this summer and/or 2022.
 - o As we enhance RecPlex information on our site this year, we look forward to additional RFPs.
 - Swimming, through the team Unify site has referred the most website users to our site yielding 151 new website users
 - We've had 421 total hotel page views with our top three performing hotels also yielding the most listing views
 - Stats from spreadsheet for President's Day weekend and # of stays.
- We are considering an engagement with a fairly new online sports engagement organization that's offering both a free version, which we currently participate in, and two higher levels. They offer virtual rights holder trade shows. Craig and I will be talking further about event date opportunities, rights holder events that they are offering and how we can work together to find those events that benefit the RecPlex and that will supplement times when hotel availability is higher.
- Retail is beginning to get back to normal though the volume is still down due to in-store capacity limits.
- At upcoming meetings we'll discuss looking at the organizational structure of the PPCVB. Now that we've been through a cycle we'll also look at, board member terms to ensure we've got staggering terms, and begin considering our future home office location.

5. Financial Review – Michelle Williamson

- EOY 2021 total hotel/motel/short-term tax income 39% behind 2019 (and 26% behind 2018), for a total hotel/motel/short-term stay revenue of \$442,072.
- We're looking into financial options to make up for some of the lost revenue from 2020. So far, we've applied for and received PPP1 loan money. On March 25th the Feds extended the PPP2 deadline through May 31st and we're looking into the application process for it as well. After April 15, A&O will help us begin the process of the Employee Retention Credit for which we should also be eligible.
- Though we haven't received any revenue yet for 2021, the STR reports are promising. January Occupancy was only down 3.6% from 2020 and while February was down 26.2%. The reports are showing an increase in occupancy over last year for the three already reported weeks in March. Spectators haven't been allowed to attend all events so that too is affecting some of the hotel pick up at this point. The Revenue Per Available Room continues to be down from 2019.
- We will begin looking at our accounts again and consider moving the lowest yielding account to something that will be more beneficial to the organization.
- Finally, the finance committee will meet next week to discuss the 2021 budget and budget goals and we'll bring that back to the next meeting for consideration.

6. Director of Marketing & Communications Report – Sarah Howard

- An independent SEO Audit was completed for the period between – Nov 2020-January 2021, the results of which were received March 1st and were then reviewed by the marketing committee. Overall results:
 - o We've made great progress establishing brand presence and untapped potential for the PPCVB to gain organic market share.
 - o Site health was 79% goal is mid-80s.

Director of Marketing & Communications Report Cont'd

- There are items out of our control such as meta-data on photos. The report was thorough and detailed.
- Having received the results and amended a sample page, we jumped to first page results in 24 hrs from 2nd page results prior to the changes.
- We will engage with the independent contractor that performed the audit to complete work that should enhance the site and raise our performance.
- The PPCVB will begin working with new content bloggers from the local area in the near future.
- We will engage in our first photo shoot in April to enhance our photography collateral.
- In a review of PPCVB social media we have 1,182 Facebook 'Likes' and 1,269 followers and 367 Instagram followers. We have begun to engage in geotargeted ads.
- We were conservative in 2020 with advertising due to the pandemic and then area riots. For 2021 we have engaged with several new advertising opportunities including Close publications, USA today, Midwest Magazine, and SPG magazine. USA Today – Go Escape Midwest publication will be available next to USA Today and digitally and will include an ad for Pleasant Prairie. The publications print circulation is 100,000 and 10 million online. We'll also have an ad appear again in Experience WI Chicago Tribune Insert
- Mike Pollocoff inquired about community videos that he thought were done by Travel Wisconsin. Nathan noted that the community of Mauston had participated in the past. Sarah Howard noted that it is a paid opportunity not through Travel WI, but rather through a company.
- Our new mini guide is in the final stages of development and will be completed in the next month and made available online and we'll have a quantity printed for mailing, hotels, and event packets.
- Ralph Belliveau noted that the SEO audit brought up things that the website provider couldn't do. Seo engagement means we'll pay him, and he'll have to show us results. And we'll need to make note of the limitations of Simpleview such as no alt text capabilities for listings/events.

7. New Business - none

8. Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Craig Anderson and 2nd by Steve Kumorkiewicz.
- The Meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM