**Mat-Su CVB**

**Board Meeting MINUTES**

**April 6, 2022**

**Mat-Su CVB Office**

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| **Board Members Present**  Mark Fleenor (T)  Roberta Warner (T)  Israel Mahay (T)  Travis Taylor (T)  Mark Austin  Cole Chambers (T)  Heather Dudick (T)  Wes Hoskins (T)  Rick Peterson (T)  Fernando Salvador (T) |  | **Staff Present**  Bonnie Quill  Neil Campbell  Casey Ressler  Justin Saunders |

Mark Fleenor called the meeting to order at 9:33 am. The roll was called.

**AGENDA**

Travis moved to approve the agenda. Cole seconded. The motion carried without opposition.

**MINUTES**

Heather moved to approve the February 25, 2022 board meeting minutes. Israel seconded the motion, which passed without opposition.

**STANDING REPORTS**

**CHAIR’S REPORT**

Mark Fleenor reported that he had had a good discussion with Assembly member Jesse Sumner regarding support for the grant agreement. Sumner expressed his support for the Mat-Su CVB and was in support of a three-year grant agreement, with no changes or amendments to the agreement currently in place. Bonnie added that it was good to make a personal connection, as Mark had done, noting that this topic will be addressed further when discussion of the advocacy plan was taken up. Mark suggested that when others contact Assembly members, asking for only five minutes of their time seemed to work in getting a meeting.

**ATIA REPORT**

Bonnie reported that since the ATIA retreat, a committee has been heavily involved in the advertising and PR RFP process, required by the EDA grant, meeting four times for advertising and three times for PR. Miles Media, an outside ad agency, was selected to handle advertising, while Thompson and Company was selected to handle PR. The next ATIA meetings will occur in June. Casey finished the report by informing the board that 60,000 leads for a mass mailing of the Mat-Su CVB 2022 visitor guide was requested and it was hoped that they would be available next week or the next.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Travis stated that spending and income were on track and that work on securing a new three-year grant agreement was still underway. He finished by noting that a retroactive $28,000 employee retention credit was received recently and that a $100,000 grant dedicated to developing a strategic tourism master plan was awarded to the Mat-Su CVB by the Alaska Community Forum.

**PRESIDENTS’S REPORT**

Bonnie reported that a $100,000 check for the sustainable tourism master plan grant, awarded on March 11, was received and deposited. The grant needs to be spent by June 30, 2022. She stated that the Destinations International CEO conference she recently attended was very inspiring and useful. There, she learned that the Mat-Su CVB is in line with the industry, especially for small DMOs. The trend now is to help and improve the destination rather that focusing on heads in beds.

Bonnie stated that the executive committee met on March 24th to approve the draft budget, which was then sent on to the borough administration. It is a status quo budget that adds two new trade shows and a budget for branding. She added that the contract for the sustainable tourism master plan was awarded to McKinley and Huddle. In conclusion, Bonnie noted that the Gateway VIC property is free of snow and that she is hoping that the cultural resources survey can begin soon.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**FY2023 ADVOCACY PLAN**

Bonnie referred everyone to the advocacy plan, sent out yesterday, which was based on revisions discussed at the planning retreat. She reviewed what has already been done and what is still pending. Board member contact assignments were made. A page of talking points was provided by Bonnie. She reminded everyone that these meetings need to be completed by April 26th in time for the upcoming public hearings.

Bonnie reported on the efforts being undertaken by staff to promote support for the CVB in the face of the budget planning meetings. These include an agency report to the Assembly, promotion of the animated video, using a multi-media advertising campaign, developed to explain the importance of tourism to the borough and the role the CVB plays within the industry, garnering support of local chambers, and identifying about ten members willing to submit testimony to the Assembly in support of funding the Mat-Su CVB. A draft statement for use in providing testimony will be distributed to these members and board members as well. Bonnie stated that the plan is on track and a follow up with members will occur in the coming weeks. She finished by noting that a three-year grant agreement would be a huge win for the Mat-Su CVB.

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN**

Bonnie reported that a $100,000 grant from the Alaska Community Foundation to develop a sustainable tourism master plan for the borough was awarded on March 11th. She released an RFP for the work the following Monday. The contract was awarded to McKinley Research and Huddle. The executive committee approved the project management team which consists of Kim Solien, from the borough, Wes Hoskins and Mark Austin, both of whom have experience in such matters, and Bonnie herself. A kick-off meeting was held last Thursday.

The project will consist primarily of a resident stakeholder survey, four community meetings in late April and early May, and focus groups with stakeholders. A destination assessment with a competitive analysis will follow.

On another note, Bonnie announced that an in-person summer open house will be held at the Musk Ox Farm. The event will serve as a kick-off to the season and will highlight the recent additions and improvements to the Farm. The MTA luggage tag raffle winner will be drawn at the event, which will begin at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, May 4th.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING**

If needed, a board meeting will be scheduled in June. Otherwise, the next board meeting will be in August, the date to be determined at a later time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

After some brief board member announcements, Mark Austin moved to adjourn the meeting. He was seconded by everyone else. The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 am.

Respectfully submitted, Attest,

Neil Campbell, Recording Secretary Israel Mahay, Secretary

Date Date