

**Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau
Meeting Minutes
Monday February 10, 2014 at 3pm
Rocky Mountain Lodge**

Welcome

Erica Coffman, Chair of the WCVB, opened the meeting at 3:05 pm.

Introductions

Board Members: Erica Coffman, Rhonda Fitzgerald, Zak Anderson, Nick Polumbus, Luke Walrath, Bruce Haller. **Excused Absence:** Barb Brant, Scott Ringer, Jake Cook

Note: Quorum met with six of nine members present.

Staff & Agencies: Dylan Boyle, Jen Frandsen (Old Town Creative), Lisa Jones (LJ Communications)

Public Attendees: Dan Hansen, Jennifer Fischer

Public Comment

Lisa Jones reminded everyone that the Montana Superhost Customer Service Training Program will be held in Whitefish again this spring. The WCVB gets one session free from the state and has typically paid for an additional session (\$350) because of the high popularity of the program. Both sessions are free and open to the public and are geared toward front line employees and managers.

Approval of Minutes

Zak made a motion to approve the minutes from January 13th, 2014. Luke seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Financial Report

At the January 13th meeting, Rhonda recommended that the WCVB Board increase marketing funds for FY14 as a result of increased TPA and membership collections. A motion to move \$25,000 to Consumer Advertising was approved.

The Marketing Committee was then tasked with recommending to the Board how the funds from this motion would be divided. On February 6th, the Marketing Committee met and made the following recommendations to the board:

- 1) Transfer the new \$25,000 from Consumer Advertising to the following line items located under Consumer Advertising:
 - a. \$21,500 to Consumer Advertising-Media Placement (Buy)
 - b. \$2,500 to Consumer Advertising-Creative Ad Production
 - c. \$1,000 to Consumer Advertising-Photography & Video Rights

MOTION: Rhonda made a motion to transfer \$25,000 from Consumer Advertising to the line items as recommended by the Marketing Committee. Bruce seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Director Report

Dylan reported that the WCVB FY13 Audit was approved by the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) at the February 3-4 TAC Meeting in Missoula. In addition, he has submitted the Quarterly Report (2nd Quarter) to the Montana Office of Tourism.

He also reported that three board terms expire on May 31, 2014: Barb, Luke, and Bruce. He asked that these board members start thinking about whether or not they would like to reapply for another term. The deadline for applications to the City is April 23rd.

Upcoming Meetings

February 11: Glacier Country Marketing Meeting (Missoula)

February 20: Meeting with Intern (Lisa Hartenstein)

March 6-7: Region and CVB Meeting (Helena)

March 11: Glacier Country Meeting (Hamilton)

April 13-15: Governors Conference on Tourism and Recreation (Billings)

PR Report

PR will be focusing efforts on updating on-line media kit, content and press trips for the remainder of the Q3 and Q4. LJ provided an update on PR efforts since January 1st with report on hosting regional press trips in January taking advantage of short result turn around and focus on getting the word out on great snow conditions. She shared clips resulting from these trips in Explore Big Sky and Out There. She passed out bios of (14) journalists hosted in February and explained (3) on the ground itineraries, partnerships with MTOT, WMR and GC and great assistance from Winter Carnival Chair Paul Johannsen. LJ mentioned journalist's experiences on mountain, in town and in Glacier Park and thanked members for their hosting support. Note, WCVB coordinated a similar trip in 2009 and those results are still coming in citing USA Today Go Escape reach of 8.5 million, noting how long results can take.

LJ reviewed efforts on sponsored athlete Maggie Voisin – Noting December speculation and PR preparation planning if she goes to the Olympics, her success along the way (podiums at Olympic qualifiers and XGames) breeding more publicity in media such as Powder, Freeskier, Denver Post and USA today, along with many local and regional coverage. Efforts included providing news release updates, social media posts and coordinating media interviews. Coordinated b-roll project with \$2K from PR expense budget to hire (3) videographers, (1) still photographer, collected photos and videos of early years, connected with USSA PR folks. Finalized b-roll project and media package on Friday January 24th and sent to NBC contacts Carolyn Manno and Tom Brokaw and received replies the next morning from both, and have been in touch ever since building the Maggie story, sent personal info on Whitefish community raising money to send her parents to Sochi, youngest US winter Olympian in 40 years, coordinated parent interview, provided parent seats for events so camera could flash to them, was in touch with Carolyn Manno every other day on needs leading up to the unfortunate injury.

Additional efforts included a coat embroidered with Whitefish Montana logo that her Dad was going to wear for the interview and events, permit requested and banner created and hung downtown over Winter Carnival leading up to slopestyle competition, enews partnership with USSA, good luck flowers sent to Maggie before Olympic departure and social media postings. Maggie was on Today Show twice, Yahoo Sports and participated in many other media interviews. Other sponsors that picked her up included Kellogg's and VISA, in addition to WCVB, Monster Energy Drinks, Armada skis and Oakley. Carolyn plans to show Maggie watching her team compete on tonight's broadcast. Maggie is a great spokesperson, sportswoman and ambassador for Whitefish and the sport of skiing. LJ recommends continuing sponsorship and publicity support in the future.

Coming up, PR will focus on updating on-line media kit and content needs. MTOT has also asked WCVB to assist with a press trip Feb. 26 – 28 with Canada's "Skier" magazine, WMR press trip with Calgary Sun in late March, and spring efforts with Chicago Magazine and a freelancer from Chicago, as well as A-lister Jayme Moye for a biking trip in early June.

Marketing Committee

Final results from the winter campaign, along with a full website report, will be available at the next meeting. The following opportunities are now ready to launch for our late winter and spring campaign: National Geographic.com, Trip Advisor Add-On, Seattle PI, National Geographic Traveler Magazine (May), Backpacker Magazine (May), iExplore Warm Season, and Montana Headwall.

New Business

FY15 Marketing Plan

Starting on February 11th, the FY15 Marketing Plan process will begin with suggested edits and areas of focus for the new plan requested from the Board. From here a rigorous timeline has been created in which Dylan and Old Town Creative will work collaboratively on a new plan, with two meetings of the Marketing Committee, and will have a copy of the FY15 Marketing Plan for comments and an ask for approval at the next Board Meeting. It will then be presented to City Council on April 7th and is due to MTOT on May 1st.

Old Business

Promo Videos: At the January 13th meeting, a motion was passed to put \$6,000 into a starter budget for the winter video. These funds were to be reallocated from the existing budget.

The Marketing Committee was then tasked with recommending to the Board how the funds from this motion would be divided. On February 6th, the Marketing Committee met and made the following recommendations to the board:

- 1) Move the following \$6,000 to Photography & Video Rights for the starter budget for the winter video:
 - a. \$2,500 from Meetings & Conventions-Meetings & PR Development
 - b. \$2,500 from Meetings & Conventions-DMAI/eMint
 - c. \$1,000 from Meetings & Conventions-Advertising

MOTION: Bruce made a motion to transfer \$6,000 to Photography & Video Rights from the three line items located under Meetings & Conventions as recommended by the Marketing Committee. Luke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously

AERO

AERO had its first fundraising event at the Lodge at Whitefish Lake on Thursday, January 30th. The included an address by Meg O’Leary (Department of Commerce) and a presentation by the Sixel Consulting Group. As talked about at the January WCVB Board Meeting, the WCVB announced a commitment of \$10,000 to the AERO fund. In all, the event raised approximately \$80,000. The necessary goal is \$150,000 in order to match the \$100,000 grant.

Other

Rhonda moved and Zak seconded a motion to adjourn at 4:30 pm.

The next meeting will be at 3:00 p.m. on March 31st at the Rocky Mountain Lodge.

Signature: 

Date: 3/31/14