

VISIT BIG SKY

July 19th, 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, Krista Traxler, Julie Grimm-Lisk

Call-In: Tim Drain

Absent: Ennion Williams, Dan Martin

Staff Present: Candace Carr Strauss, Emilie McGee, Lori Wetzler, Caitlin Lundin, Kathryn Cody, James Calderhead, Nicole Hom (the last three present just for staff introductions)

- Staff Update - Emilie McGee was introduced as the new Marketing Manager for VBS. She grew up in Bozeman and is very much a part of the community there. She is a recent graduate of Montana State University and has hit the ground running with the website launch and various other projects. Nicole Hom is the new Graphic Designer that will be working remotely and is part of a shared contract with the Big Sky Chamber, Big Sky Town Center and the Big Sky Community Organization. The summer Visitor Information Center staff was also present for introductions – James Calderhead and Kathryn Cody. They are both doing a great job with the high levels of visitors coming to us for information.

Public: Justin Bain, Ryan Kunz, Annie Pinkert

Call to Order: 8:44 am

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of May Minutes

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

Finance Committee Report / Approval of Financials

- Reported that approximately \$60,000 was not requested from Resort Tax for FY18 as a result of an epic snow / winter season. Motion to approve the May financials was made by Tim and seconded by Krista. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.
- FY19 Resort Tax allocation was \$640,000 versus the \$715,000 requested so an Amended FY19 budget needed approval. A motion to approve was made by Steven and seconded by Julie. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

VBS 1st Annual Marketing Outlook Luncheon & Members' Meeting

- Huge thank you to Ryan Kunz and the team from Lone Mountain Ranch for helping VBS host our first ever Annual Marketing Outlook Luncheon and Members' Meeting. It was held during the National Travel and Tourism Week and had guest speaker Dax Sheiffer to share the economic impact of tourism on our destination and the state. The event will be held at Horn & Cattle again next year during National Travel and Tourism week on Thursday, May 9th, 2019 so mark your calendars.

VBS Board Operations and Admin

- The business of making two appointments for VBS Board vacant seats due to changes in employment along with the appointment to fill two new board seats per the by-law amendment in May allowing up to 11 members was conducted. The Nominating Committee discussed the candidates

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qualifications and made the following recommendations to the VBS Board which they then moved to approve. New members seeking appointment included Ryan Kunz, Justin Bain and Kate Tomlinson. It was recommended that staff reach out to Kate to have her join perhaps the Events committee to get more familiar with the organization if she is seeking future board service.

- APPOINT TO COMPLETE TERM for Chelsi Moi – Annie Pinkert, Big Sky Resort and for Crystal Snook – Mike Parker, Big Sky Real Estate Company. Motion to appoint to the VBS Board was made by Krista and seconded by Steven. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.
- NEW – Ryan Kunz: Motion to appoint to the VBS Board was made by Steven and seconded by Krista. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.
- NEW – Justin Bain: Motion to appoint to the VBS Board was made by Mike and seconded by Ryan Kunz. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion passed.
- Four board committees will be constituted to help supplement the work for VBS; Development of the Destination, Promotion of the Destination and Leader of the Tourism Collective. Julie Grimm-Lisk will spearhead the Development of the Destination Committee tasked with minding the gap to create remarkable experiences. Krista Traxler and Ryan Kunz will lead committees focused on Promotion of the Destination with Krista taking the lead on Marketing and Ryan spearheading Events, both supporting existing events as well as exploring producing/partnering on new events. Mike Parker will oversee the Leader of the Tourism Collective Committee which will work to position VBS as the leading DMO in the state and research additional private funding sources to provide for financial sustainability in the future.

Big Sky Gateway Foundation

- A discussion was had with a non-profit attorney regarding the relationship between VBS and The Big Sky Gateway Foundation. Currently they are two separate organizations, however we are exploring if it is possible to transition the 501(c)(3) to become a supporting organization of VBS to allow it to seek philanthropic support it serves the greater good. An engagement letter will be brought to the next board meeting for action.

NEW BUSINESS

DEVELOP the Destination

Expansion of Host Week to Destination-wide Hospitality Program

- Host week this year was a overwhelmingly successful from a participation standpoint. However, there were some issues to dissect with the suppliers. Staff will take a deep dive into the program for our front line workers and our businesses prior to next year's Host Week. The West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce, who we partner with on this project, has a training day where both the local businesses and employees come together to learn about the destination. Attending this event means that you receive a Host Week book and this is a great way to get their destination on the same page from a messaging standpoint. We hope to be able to work with them going forward so that we can implement a similar event next year as we help to improve customer service delivery in Big Sky.

PROMOTE the Destination

Air Development Marketing Committee

- The Air Development Marketing Committee has not been able to meet so there is no update.

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Summer Consumer Marketing Campaign

- Destination Think! is handling the campaign which focuses on the niche hiking consumer. Initial reports overall are positive. Analytics will be provided following its completion.
- Social Media Influencers will be in market the last week of July/first week of August to assist in building content and traction. TEAM Big Sky will take Hike 365 and Field and Forest on three hikes in Big Sky and have set up FAM tours for them as well. Thanks to all of our local partners who are assisting us in showcasing the Big Sky destination.

Trade Marketing

- VBS will be participating in a one day Smart Meetings conference in Austin, TX on September 20th to target the MICE market and help to build out our meetings and conventions business.
- Also for the first time, VBS will be attending IMEX in October with fellow Region/CVB representatives from throughout Montana to help promote Big Sky in these markets.

LEAD the Destination

- VBS' DestiMetrics 3-year contract is up for renewal in October. The participating lodging partners will be meeting to review the renewal and consider additional product offerings. We have not seen DOR/ADR reports for the past three months due to Big Sky Resort's inability to contribute their data as a result of new debt issuance. Privacy/confidentiality of the data is the issue. DestiMetrics is working to get the amended language to the Non-Disclosure Agreements to satisfy Boyne.
- MLHA Annual Tourism Conference and Trade Show is happening in October 22-24 in Butte. Ryan Kunz sits on that board and will be conduit for VBS to what is happening on the state level with respect to lodging. Legislative Session kicks off in January and the informed suspicion is that a run will be made at raising the Montana Lodging Tax to benefit the General Fund.

STAFF REPORTS

CEO Report

- All reporting was done previously and nothing further needed to be discussed.

OTHER NON-AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

- A motion to adjourn was made by Krista and seconded by Ryan. With no further discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion was passed.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:42 am.