



## Mammoth Lakes Tourism Monthly Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

1:00-3:00pm Suite Z

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zxanpoyiv7mwd9t/AAB-aHpEDShkXC2UnH79\\_hRJa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zxanpoyiv7mwd9t/AAB-aHpEDShkXC2UnH79_hRJa?dl=0)

### Meeting Agenda

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – John Morris, Board Chair, 1:03 pm
2. **Roll Call – Present:** John Morris, Kirk Schaubmayer, Brent Truax, Michael Ledesma, Sean Turner, Eric Clark (for Erik Forsell), John Urdi  
**Absent:** Colin Fernie, Paul Rudder, Scott McGuire
3. **Board Member Comments/Reports/Agenda Additions**
  - Sean Turner – what’s the status of the Events Coordinator position for the Town?
    - John Urdi – on hold right now
    - Sean – position should be housed with/managed by MLT
    - John – MLT board should develop a sub-committee to focus on this position
  - John Urdi – Form 700s were mailed to all board members – turn in by April 3
  - Brent Truax – Mammoth Lakes Recreation update
    - MLR board beginning national search for an Executive Director
    - Rich Boccia moving out of position because restructuring with a focus on big fundraising
  - Brent Truax – Trails End Park received the District 7 Award for best park (2<sup>nd</sup> largest skateboard park in the country)
    - Stu Brown sitting on district Parks & Rec board, Betsy Truax sitting on state P&R board
  - Sean Turner – need better communication with US Forest Service for visitors/local groups
    - Lara Kaylor – USFS is scheduling a local partners meeting to discuss potential opening dates
    - Eric Clark – USFS doesn’t often know when they’ll be able to open roads or finish their work
4. **Public Comment** – Please limit to three minutes or less
  - Lindsay Barksdale – Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation Executive Director
    - MCMCF puts on Mammoth Invitational, Wine Walk, Gran Fondo, Kamikaze – events listed online and in MLT materials, but what else can MLT do to help promote?
    - Sean Turner – should ML be doing more for events? Supporting individual ones?
    - John Urdi – MLT team will present what is currently done for events at April meeting
    - Whitney Lennon – will research peer resorts to see what other CVBs/tourism departments are doing for individual events – will address at May board meeting
5. **Minutes** – Approval of past meeting minutes  
  
Sean Turner motions, Brent Truax seconds, passes unanimously.
6. **MLT Team Presentation Schedule** – 30 minutes including Q&A time
  1. **Marketing Update** – Whitney Lennon & Meghan Miranda
    - Paid media recap will be presented at April or May board meeting
    - Website reporting highlights
      - January saw major traffic to VisitMammoth.com – total visits up 83% month over month and 80% year over year – people are excited about content
      - Major increase in unique visitors – new people are getting excited and looking for info
      - Winter campaigns – paid promotional items driving traffic to site up 522% over last year
      - Increase in referral traffic from LA Times and Visit California

- Goals for website – quantity (visits/page views) and quality (bounce rate/time on site)
  - Goal is to get bounce rate lower – more organic traffic will help that (more engaged visitor)
  - Most visited pages in January/February 2017: Fly to Mammoth, home page, Winter Activities, No Small Adventure (linked to paid campaign), Hotels/Lodging, Skiing/Snowboarding
    - Aggressive campaign to Fly to Mammoth page with SF flight marketing
    - Social media drives traffic to events page, winter driving tips, etc.
- Email marketing
  - Monthly email plus promotional emails (flight sales, trade shows, etc.)
  - Current email list is around 30k but segmented into groups – goal is engagement
  - Typical open rate for travel industry is 19%, MLT's at 24.1% average
    - Click rate is 2.5%, compared to 1.3% average
  - Email topics: National Plan for Vacation Day, info about flying to MMH, mid-week deals, links to upcoming events
  - Demographics: open rate and click rate skew toward males (60%), age 25-34 has the highest open rate for MLT's lists, older demographics tend to click more
- Social media
  - January 2017 was biggest month to date – thanks to snow! New FB fans up 262%
  - Over 26,000 clicks to the website from social – good number for VisitMammoth.com
  - Pro skier Tyler Wallasch worked with Josh Wray as an influencer
  - YouTube is going well – 17,441 minutes watched on MLT's YouTube channel in January – videos now integrated/embedded in website – this adds into view count
  - February Facebook and Instagram still strong with snow message, more work with User Generated Content (reaching out to people who've posted photos and reposting) and Instagram takeovers – Miles Weaver Photography
    - Also released "The One That Got Away" Tim Alpers fishing video – no paid campaign behind it, but lots of engagement from owned/earned channels
- Barberstock photo library
  - MLT team still working on growing the database of images for free use
  - 88 active users in January, mostly local biz owners downloading images for marketing materials
- Travel/Adventure Shows – Bay Area, Los Angeles, San Diego
  - Thanks to Mammoth Reservations for their donation of a 7-night stay in ML
  - Face-to-face contact with travel/adventure-minded people in three cities
- Fred Hall Outdoor Experience – Long Beach and San Diego
  - ML's big fish, promote US 395 corridor, MLT is an event sponsor, gave away 7-day/8-night trip
- CalTravel Rally Day
  - Josh Wray, Meghan Miranda & Whitney Lennon met with Senator Tom Berryhill and Assemblyman Frank Bigelow – JW and MM led conversation with Bigelow about importance of tourism and legislative initiatives that support it
- CA Welcome Center Annual Meeting
  - Whitney passing chair on after 4 years; made 3 year strategic plan – mission statement/defined success, working on group retail buying program for the 17 centers, redefined leadership roles
- MLT's Owned Assets
  - Virtual reality/360 degree video – winter portion of video filmed in early March, perfect weather for the heavy lift drone (first time a camera like this has been used at this altitude) – cutting edge technology for filming, sound design, film techniques, etc.
  - Digital asset management – making sure our assets include Town of Mammoth Lakes
    - Josh Wray working on 3 tiers of access groups – one for TOML, community use, etc., one for contracted/hired out photos, one for prohibited use (campaign specific images, etc.)
  - Website is mobile friendly and searchable in many languages
- Plans going forward
  - Refreshing MLT Industry Insider website – more seamless viewing, make it match VisitMammoth.com website look – working to answer "what is MLT doing for me" question
  - Launching VisitMammoth.com usability study on Monday – group of 12 people
  - Starting annual round of fact checking this month

- Working to integrate the Crib's channels/website into VisitMammoth.com
- Pilot program to book/find flights through VM.com, pilot program to test it out
- Planning session in end of March with Miles and MeringCarson in ML
- Next wave of website updates: wedding section to include a larger database of info
- April presentation will look at winter campaign, strategies and KPIs of owned channels

## 7. Department Updates – A brief recap of past, current and future efforts of each department

### 1. Sales/International – John Urdi in Michael Vanderhurst's absence

- MV is meeting with agencies in Scandinavia, then going to ITB Berlin
- Global Ready China Seminar March 29 – MLT co-hosting with Mono County & ML Chamber – goal is to get businesses ready for the growing Chinese market – free for Chamber members
- MLT has hired representation in China and Korea
- John Urdi was in Italy speaking at a conference about the economic impact of biking – ML and the SF Bay Area were recently featured in 9-page article in the biggest bike magazine in Italy

### 2. Communications/PR – Lara Kaylor

- Focusing more on local community PR – talking to business owners, finding out what's new with them and how MLT can help them
- Considering starting monthly or quarterly coffee meetings open-house style so people can come in and share their opinions/concerns
- Re-vamping MLT Industry Insider website – make tools easier to find and use
- Working with Jessica Kennedy with the ML Chamber of Commerce to better convey benefits of TBID vs. Chamber and what each organization can do for you
- Crib is reopening with a kickoff party on March 15
- NY Times came to ML to do a story on Tom Painter's snow depth measurements in the Eastern Sierra – graphics team working on spread for it too:  
[https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/22/us/california-measuring-snowpack.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/22/us/california-measuring-snowpack.html?_r=0)
- MLT recently won Best DMO for cities of under 25,000 population

### 3. Chamber Update & Discussion – Brent Truax

- John Urdi – search for Executive Director has been narrowed down to 3 candidates – bringing them to ML to visit and interview in person
- At Feb. board meeting, Chamber board decided they'd like to expand staff to include a true champion for the business community
  - How can the Chamber help people who are starting businesses? How can they make the town permit/license process easier?
  - A second full-time position with the Chamber would help grow the Chamber, improve business environment/climate, encourage new businesses to come to town, and help guide new businesses through processes as the business advocate
  - Current Chamber staff is 1.5 full time positions – want to move to 2 full time while backfilling the office manager position for MLT
- At workshop with Town Council, express need was seen for a strategic development/economic development agency to welcome businesses – fits well with Chamber model and mission
- MLT board funds Chamber through staff salaries/benefits and \$25k annual operating budget
  - Make half position full time for 2 total full time staff – funded by MLT
  - Change would be an increase of \$50-60k in the financial commitment from MLT
  - Once new director starts, MLT and MLCC can discuss adjusting \$25k operating budget
- Sean Turner – if anything, MLT should support the Chamber more – need focus on welcoming people to town, really improving business community, etc.
- This change would make Chamber staffed with a strong executive director while Jessica Kennedy (as Assistant Director) would be focused on streamlining businesses starting and operating with town and local partners – combination of positions would push Chamber to the next level
- Sean Turner motions to fund two full-time Chamber staff positions from the MLT budget while backfilling the MLT office manager position. John Morris seconds, passes unanimously.

### 4. Air Update – John Urdi

- High cancellation rate for January/February, 83% of cancellations were weather-related
- Suggestion to go back to 7-day-a-week service in the spring and fall – better messaging
- Emplanement numbers are flat – product isn't living up to what people want
- Going to 7-day schedule in the spring is very little risk – just April 18 to June 1 – only 18 additional flights that would be a risk for subsidy
  - Discuss fall schedule in the coming months – 7 days for that season too?
- Brent Truax motions to move to a 7-day-a-week air service schedule from April 18 to June 1 to supplement current 4-day service. John Morris seconds, passes unanimously.

**8. Financial Reports** – An update regarding the financial health of the organization – John Urdi

1. TOT & TBID – review previous months results
  - \$1.1 million ahead of last year's record
    - Town keeps 70% of that – about \$2 million added to general fund
  - January – significant snowfall, still great occupancy and numbers
  - True up checks from town should come every quarter, but it's delayed
  - Will put more money into the CDARS accounts to make sure it's protected
  - John Morris – keeping money within MLT is the smartest plan and generates much more money on top of what MLT has – MLT's expenditures have great ROI and return money to the local community
  - Just \$1.3 million away from hitting budget for the whole year – April/May/June income is all on top of budget expectations – year will probably be \$16.5-17 million overall
2. Cash Flow and CDARS info – discussion of current bank balances and reserve account activity
  - Measure A checking \$1.72 million, Measure A savings \$5,738
  - TBID checking \$960k, TBID savings \$5,004
  - CDs – reserve/funding set aside for event venue, etc. - \$2.5 million
3. P&L Reports – emailed

**9. MMSA Update** – Eric Clark

- MMSA open til July 4<sup>th</sup>; 2017-18 season passes now on sale

**10. New Business**

1. Event venue update – tabled

**11. Key Takeaways**

1. FY 2016-17 TOT currently \$2,615,051 ahead of budget which is +45.7%
2. January preliminary is at \$2,622,760 up from the previous record by \$250,934 which is +10.6%
3. January 2017 has set a new ALL-TIME record for highest ever TOT month (beating January LY)
4. FY 2016-17 TOT currently \$1,105,384 ahead of previous RECORD July – January (LY) which is 12%
5. FY 2016-17 TOT currently \$2,615,051 ahead of budget at +34% (+\$1,856,686 to TOML general fund)

**Future Meeting Dates:** Next scheduled Board Meeting is Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm in Suite Z