



Mammoth Lakes Tourism Monthly Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 9, 2016

Call in # (310) 372-7549 - Participant Code 934985 - Host Code 3838

1:00 – 3:00pm MLT Conference Room

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Meeting Agenda

1. **Call Meeting to Order at 1:05 pm** – John Morris, Board Chair
2. **Roll Call** – Erik Forsell, Scott McGuire, John Morris, Colin Fernie, Sean Turner, Brent Truax, Paul Rudder, Kirk Schaubmayer
Absent: Michael Ledesma
3. **Board Member Comments/Reports/Agenda Additions**
 - John Morris – mailer to second homeowners
 - Postcard being designed and paid for by the town to send to second homeowners encouraging them to rent their homes to employees
 - Effort is in conjunction with the town and Mammoth Lakes Housing
 - John Morris – update on events coordinator position
 - Brent Truax, Stu Brown and John Morris were on the interview panel for the position – Brent and John were on the same page, very disappointed with how the process turned out
4. **Public Comment** – Please limit to three minutes or less
 - Rich Boccia – Mammoth Lakes Recreation update
 - MLR continuing to look at recreation as a way to enhance economic development, create a balanced lifestyle and serve as stewards for the environment
 - Priority phase projects
 - Multi-use facility – going through conceptual design, looking at funding programs, determining cost of the project
 - Mammoth arts and culture center – starting design work, executive committee is hiring an outside consultant for design, raising money, looking at scope of work
 - Outdoor performing arts center – looking at Bell Shaped Parcel wetlands study
 - Developmental phase projects – working with groups about a pool, creating task force for human performance optimization involvement, trying to create a common message about what Mammoth is
 - MLR is willing to pull an events coordinator/director under its umbrella
 - Upcoming events: Veterans Day celebration and Thanksgiving Turkey Trot
5. **Minutes** – Approval of past meeting minutes

Kirk Schaubmayer motions to approve October meeting minutes, Scott McGuire seconds, passes unanimously (Brent Truax and Colin Fernie abstain)
6. **MLT Team Presentation Schedule** – 30 minutes including Q&A time
 1. November 9th Air Service & Air Quantitative Study (John Urdi / Whitney Lennon)
 - John Urdi - current update
 - Dropped Denver flight with United - not worth the continued investment
 - Maintaining schedules in LA and San Francisco (7 days a week plus a second flight to LA Thurs/Fri/Sun/Mon) – departing a bit earlier from San Diego, not ideal but no way to change
 - Burbank added with Jet Suite X (Thurs/Fri/Sun/Mon) – goes through general aviation since it's a scheduled charter (no TSA) – first class experience, early booking is about \$250-300 round trip
 - Working on a locals discount on outbound flights Thurs/Fri and inbound flights Sun/Mon

- Working with Alaska Airlines on a locals discount to replace air packs – looking at a 20% discount, code will be good for up to 7 people, booking early will get a better rate
- Talking to United Airlines about locals discount – no system in place yet but working on it
- Scott McGuire – are air packs used mostly by locals?
 - John Urdi – 37% are local, looking at turnover rate to see if people buy year after year
- Whitney Lennon/SMARI – air service research done in Oct. 2016
 - Research is an update of a 2014 study – 2014 study just looked at past year, this study looks at past two years – talked to 4,340 people
 - 87% of visitors drove, 13% flew – of the ones who flew, only 24% exclusively flew
 - Main motivator for flying is saving travel time
 - 64% of fliers flew directly to ML in 2014, now 85% of fliers fly directly (not connecting)
 - 75% of fliers are extremely or very satisfied with the experience
 - Reasons not satisfied: flights delayed, canceled, bags lost, etc.
 - Prior experience flying to Mammoth is a driver of future usage (satisfied people fly again)
 - Net promoter score for flight service to ML is lower now than in 2014 (27 in 2016, 38 in 2014)
 - Many issues with satisfaction are out of ML's control (weather, airline customer service, airport experience, reliability)
 - Larger flight schedule now than in 2013 – reaching more people, but it means more possibility for flights to be cancelled
 - SMARI will find industry average to compare to
 - Similar barriers to flying as there were in 2014: expense, ease/convenience of driving, difficult to fly with dogs/children/bulky ski gear/large groups, cancellations
 - John Urdi – RNP procedure will start Nov. 28 and will reduce some weather cancellations
 - Air visitors spent 31% more than drivers, down from 63% more in 2014
 - Adjusted for party size, air visitors still spend more per person than drivers
 - Flight availability can motivate more visitation, but lack of availability isn't necessarily a deterrent – very few fliers say they would visit less/not at all without air service
 - 46% of drivers would visit more often with increased flight availability
 - John Urdi/Erik Forsell – Surf Air has a plan with MMSA, need to sell 19 memberships, 3-month commitment instead of typical year commitment, 4 memberships have been confirmed so far
 - Erik Forsell – MMSA is pitching the broader air message of many ways to get here

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

1. Sales and International – John Urdi in Michael Vanderhurst's absence
 - a. Michael is in China and South Korea to figure out agency representation
 - b. Also going to London for World Travel Market (largest travel trade show in the world)
 - c. Also spending time in Germany/Belgium and looking for representation in Scandinavia
 - d. MLT just got scorecard for Italian FAM trip – ML ranked higher than any of their other destinations (they even had to drive the long way around from Yosemite)
 - e. MLT tries to team up for international representation with the agencies Visit CA uses
2. Marketing – Whitney Lennon
 - a. Winter campaign launched recently, goes through December and picks back up in Jan/Feb
 - i. Campaign is based on US Travel's Project Time Off campaign
 - ii. John Urdi – US Travel playing on the unused vacation days in the US – idea for MLT is to drive the mid-week winter and shoulder season business (take an extra day, refresh yourself, get out of the concrete jungle and get here) – aligns well with MLT goals
 - iii. Visit CA is also pulling this message into its advertising; so far only products have done campaigns like this (credit cards, hotels, etc.) – destinations haven't done it yet
 - iv. Getting attention from US Travel on a national level, good partnership
 - v. "Any day of the week can be your next big adventure," "where wonder is bigger than the weekend"
 - vi. Includes rich media units (calendar of work week – "meeting the unbelievable")
 - vii. Social presence includes paid strategy and organic posts from MLT team

1. Play on humble brag, fear of missing out, #PTOMG
 2. Includes user generated content – encourages people to share their moments
 3. Working on a stronger social influencer program – getting multiple influencers together for a trip together
3. Communications – Lara Kaylor
- a. Pitching story to media about NASA/JPL snow observatory in the Eastern Sierra – lots of interest from regular magazines, but also from NY Times, LA Times, etc.
 - i. Working with Tom Painter (local scientist on the project) to get positive coverage
 - ii. John Urdi – NASA/JPL are doing snow measurements – they’re 92% accurate, previous technology was only 30% accurate
 - b. Lining up winter media visits
 - c. Going to Chicago in mid-November for Visit CA’s media boot camp (concentrated between media and PR people to immerse them in CA culture)
 - d. Crib is closed for the season – looking at content plan for Crib channels during the off season
8. **Financial Reports** – An update regarding the financial health of the organization
1. TOT & TBID – review previous months results
 - September was \$950k preliminarily, now \$967k, not sure if it’ll make \$1 million, but 24% increase over last year
 - October numbers aren’t due until Nov. 21, but probably 25-30% increase over last year
 - TBID continues to be ahead – challenges with town finance department to get correct numbers
 2. Cash Flow and CDARS info – discussion of current bank balances and reserve account activity
 - \$1,054,072 in Measure A checking, \$5,008 in Measure A savings
 - \$747,130 in TBID checking, \$5,004 in TBID savings
 - CDARS at \$2,500,018 in accounts, extra \$500k going to San Francisco air marketing
 3. P&L Reports – sent via email yesterday, town still not getting MLT TBID money on time
 4. TBID Renewal
 - Getting very close to petition
 - Put cannabis in TBID going forward as retail
 - Currently working on appeals process
 - Management District Plan will go to town manager for review, then becomes final document, then goes out to petition process – probably open for a few months
 - Last TBID was based on business’s total income, now based on what they’ve contributed to the TBID
 - Goal is to get a supermajority of support – 66% or 70%
 - MeringCarson working on an informational TBID mailer to send out to entire community
9. **MMSA Update – Erik Forsell**
- Lots of interest in covering opening day, beer toast will be done at the top of the mountain and livestreamed, giving away first 100 tickets free, \$50 tickets for the day
 - Doubled college pass sales – 3000 total – many people had never been to Mammoth but wanted to join their friends and take advantage of the low rate
 - Went to NY for a Mountain Collective meeting – sales for that are up, big media event in NY, curious to see what Vail buying Whistler does for MMSA
 - MMSA re-doing ticket office, putting new face on Tusks, spending some capital from last year on maintenance so guests feel like there’s some change
10. **New Business**
1. Visitor Guide business inclusion discussion
 - MLT inherited a handful of businesses from the previous administration that get included in the visitor guide even though they’re not in ML and don’t pay TBID
 - Businesses outside ML cannot opt in and pay TBID even if they want to
 - Possibility for “pay to play” – example: advertise in the VG and it comes with a free listing
 - Scott McGuire motions for MLT to explore a pay to play model for businesses outside of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Sean Turner seconds, passes unanimously.

2. Athlete Sponsorships – John Urdi
 - Margulies family asked if MLT would be interested in sponsoring their daughter Carly for US Ski Team – would this open a can of worms? Does MLT create a program for local athletes?
 - Erik Forsell – could get political, better to avoid it; MMSA can sponsor some people
 - Brent Truax – MLT could benefit from athletes without directly sponsoring them
 - Erik Forsell – MLT would be better off with PR for the whole town rather than just athletes
3. Event position revisit with MLR
 - John Urdi – MLR could house the events position, Rich Boccia would supervise
4. Town Council workshop w/MLT BOD and deliverables discussion – January 4th Council meeting
 - Discussion set for Jan. 4, originally 2 hours but moved to 1 hour, 5-6 pm

11. Key Takeaways

1. FYE 2016-17 TOT currently \$1,059,548 ahead of budget which is 33.6%
2. August exceeded budget by 17.7% which was \$229,796 and the previous record by \$205,892 or 15.6%
3. September preliminary is at \$967,085 up \$185,055 and 23.7% to the previous record (last September)

Meeting adjourned at 3:08 pm

Future Meeting Dates: Next scheduled Board Meeting is Wednesday, December 7th – 1-3pm in Suite Z