Mammoth Lakes Tourism Monthly Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 5, 2017
1:00-3:30 pm Suite Z

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zxanpoyiv7mwd9t/AAB-ahpEDShkXC2UnH79_hRJa?dl=0

Meeting Agenda

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – John Morris, Board Chair, 1:02 pm

2. **Roll Call – Present:** John Morris, Kirk Schaubmayer, Brent Truax, Michael Ledesma, Colin Fernie, Sean Turner, Erik Forsell (by phone), Scott McGuire, John Urdi
   **Absent:** Paul Rudder

3. **Board Member Comments/Reports/Agenda Additions**
   - John Urdi – Form 700s are due to Jamie Gray ASAP
     - Board members joining the board or leaving the board must also fill out forms
   - John Morris – Lodging Association met last week
     - Christine from Visit California presented on what resources VCA has to offer local lodging partners – free access to maps, visitor guides, magazines, etc.
   - Scott McGuire – ski patrollers are having their first official reunion May 4-6
     - Expecting 250 people total (including families of ski patrollers)
     - MMSA has been generous in working with them and donating to the reunion
     - Group is looking for businesses to offer lodging/restaurant discounts that weekend

4. **Public Comment** – Please limit to three minutes or less
   - Rich Boccia – Mammoth Lakes Recreation
     - Kudos to MLT for receiving Best Small DMO award
     - Town Council approved MLR’s priority phase projects
     - MLR started looking at its budget in February, town finance manager involved
     - Looking at marketing for special events – who owns this, who controls programming for the arts & culture center, etc. – all in discussion phase
     - Mammoth Track Club paid off their loan – congrats!

5. **Minutes** – Approval of past meeting minutes

   Michael Ledesma moves to approve the minutes, Scott McGuire seconds, passes unanimously. Erik Forsell and Colin Fernie abstain – absent during last meeting.

6. **MLT Team Presentation Schedule** – 30 minutes including Q&A time
   1. **April 5th** – Owned Channels (Paid Media presentation postponed) – Meghan Miranda & Josh Wray
      - Email marketing – Meghan Miranda
        - Monthly emails have a 16.9% average open rate – list size is 29,251
          - Talking to a larger audience, slightly less engaged
          - Categories – active outdoor, snowsports, active outdoor without kids
          - Goals: seasonal messaging, drive website visits, promote upcoming events, inspire trip planning
        - Promotional emails – sent once or twice a month depending on current promotions
          - Sending to affinity groups – fishing vs. fall colors etc.
          - Talking to fans or the Mammoth Family (Mamm Fam)
      - Website – Meghan Miranda
        - Listings are maintained for local businesses and events
Visitors use listings when they’re in town – trying new places or learning about events

Listings are updated through an internal audit and annual fact checking – business owners have data engine logins to update their information

Every business is represented, professional images are shot for many of them, serves as a mini website for businesses that don’t have their own website/resources

Future goals – integrate user generated content (UGC) and get event information as early as possible to promote them most effectively

- Blog – Meghan Miranda
  - Timely information with local voices – Betsy Truax, Jason Abplanalp, Mike McKenna, Monica Prelle
  - Focus is on seasonality, special interests, local perspective and inspiration

- Facebook – Josh Wray
  - Audience is outdoor active and snowsporter with kids
  - 2-3 posts per day, focus is inspiration and driving traffic to the website
  - Facebook Live program launched a few months ago – led by Kalyn Lepre – local tools/tips, event videos highlighting Bluesapalooza, Mammoth Margarita Festival, etc.
  - Paid campaigns produced by MeringCarson
  - Goal to get our partners/followers to share their experiences

- Instagram – Josh Wray
  - Audience is outdoor active, snowsporter without kids, millennials
  - Shift toward spring/early summer messaging now
  - Inspiration, advocacy/experience sharing, leveraging partnerships (re-posting shots)
  - Instagram stories are useful for showing trail conditions, etc.
  - Instagram takeovers have been successful – Miles Weaver (Sharpshooter/freelance photographer), Tyler Wallasch (professional athlete)
  - Instameets have been successful too – good to get influencers here in person, ESIA did a presentation on leave no trace
    - Convict Lake Instameet had 80 attendees, Minaret Vista Instameet (planned quickly) had over 40 attendees, Silver Lake Instameet had 100 attendees
  - Mix of paid influencers (lodging paid for but no stipend) and people just happy to take over the channel
  - Erik Forsell – don’t forget winter activities keep happening

- Twitter – Josh Wray
  - A bit more difficult channel, smaller following, trying to do 5-10 scheduled posts per day
  - Targeted at active outdoor with kids, media, extreme sports, MLT’s partners
  - Twitter Chats have been successful – aim to do more with Crib channels too

- YouTube – Josh Wray
  - Another chance to drive people to the website
  - Inspirational, active outdoor with kids/pets, athletes, extreme sports

- Scott McGuire – MLT board needs to encourage colleagues to learn about and use social media

- Meghan Miranda – MLT is happy to help business community get up to speed – Power Lunch presentation, social media tips/sessions, etc.

7. Department Updates – A brief recap of past, current and future efforts of each department
   1. Sales/International – Michael Vanderhurst
      a. Global Ready China seminar very successful, 85 attendees, 4 MLT board members, several GMs from MMSA – forwarded presentation materials to board members
      b. Scandinavia – CA is a strong destination for them, no issues with current political climate, mostly summer/fall market
      c. Germany – has major issues with political climate, numbers down, heading to Canada instead, affordable lift means Germans keep coming here even with exchange rates
      d. Potential growth in South Korea for winter visits – tack a ski vacation onto your business trip
      e. YARTS 2016 report – Mammoth Lakes is the biggest/most used portal for YARTS, riders from Denmark, Switzerland, Taiwan and Turkey
      f. Tioga pass closed later this year
i. Brent Truax – guests are reluctant to book in May
ii. International visits will be down but people will still come – they’ll go the long way around because their itineraries are set
iii. John Urdi – probably not a record month in June, but will replace these activities by promoting other ones

2. Communications/PR – Lara Kaylor
   - New York Times published article about Tom Painter and snow depth studies – interactive maps/graphics – highlighted Mammoth outside of just skiing
     o Tried to put ad value on the article, difficult to calculate, but probably $500,000 based on estimates from a digital ad agency re: cost per clicks
   - Meeting with USFS will be scheduled soon to discuss passes opening
   - The Crib reopened on March 15 with a kickoff party
     o Instagram channel doing well – most athletes are millennials

3. Marketing Update – Whitney Lennon
   - Starting spring campaign on April 10
   - Seasonal messaging – discover summer’s biggest secret (Devil’s Postpile/Rainbow Falls), family messaging – make your summer one for the storybooks, flight messaging – easy flights to the hard to believe, and year-round message through rich content
   - Brand video will be playing on BrightRoll and Hulu – 30 second one covers all seasons, 15 second one covers all 4 but is weighted toward current season
   - Billboards throughout LA and southern CA – “your unreal summer awaits”
   - Stories campaign – one-up winter & elevate your summer at 8000 feet

4. Chamber of Commerce Update – John Urdi
   - Executed plan from last board meeting – Jessica Kennedy is now assistant director
   - Ken Brengle starting April 24 as executive director
   - Brought on backfill for Jessica’s position of office manager – Emily Summers – formerly manager at The Village Lodge (starting April 24)

5. Air Update – John Urdi
   - SFO and Burbank service ended, SFO ending after Easter, LAX second flight ends Friday before Easter
   - Two week period this spring of only 4-day service, but 7 day flight schedule starts April 28
   - Cancellation rate for the year is around 20%
     o Tough year for air service – 92 cancellations vs. 67 last year – 83% were due to weather
     o Diverting to Bishop helped a lot but not every time – sometimes bad conditions there
   - Subsidy will be just shy of $1 million
   - Working with the town to finalize an RFP/RFQ for a comprehensive air study
   - Study last fall showed people are using air service more

8. Financial Reports – An update regarding the financial health of the organization – John Urdi
   1. TOT & TBID – review previous months results
      - TOT for February was $2.145 million
      - $15.7 million last year, at least $16.5 million this year even with a weak May and June
      - March and April numbers looking good – will have March numbers in early May
      - $2.625 million going to the town’s General Fund, probably $4 million for the whole year
      - Exceeded TOT budget as of Feb. - $12.83 million – 10% ahead of YE budget with 4 months to go
      - TBID pacing ahead of budget
   2. Cash Flow and CDARS info – discussion of current bank balances and reserve account activity
      - Measure A checking $1.502 million, Measure A savings $5,009
      - TBID checking $1.77 million, TBID savings $5,004
      - CDs – reserve/funding set aside for event venue, etc. - $2.5 million
   3. P&L Reports – emailed
   4. Annual Financial Audit Questions
      - Board members were emailed a copy
      - Brent Truax – MLT should continue exploring a corporate credit card
• Numbers look good, work on expense report process, etc.
• Taxes are complete – Brent Truax will sign them

9. MMSA Update – Erik Forsell
• Finished spring pass sale – up 20% over LY – sold 3 passes a minute/11,000 passes total on last day
• Start skiing on April 1 with your pass for next year instead of April 16/23 in previous years
• Just went to international market with $399 season pass – cheaper than Epic’s Tahoe pass – most come for just one week so won’t lose ticket yield but increases international visits
• Kids 12 and under ski free
• Bike park will open June 24 – maybe just Downtown and around Chair 11 at first
• April occupancy numbers are strong
• More unique visitors than last year, but days per skier going down – more opportunity for other activities around town
• June Mountain is closing Sunday
• NBC is doing a shoot April 19-22 for pre-roll Olympic coverage – Shaun White, Chloe Kim, etc.
• Good response/feedback from the rainbow Mammoth Lakes sticker – seeing it everywhere

10. New Business
1. Event venue update – Paul Rudder
• Event manager and funding discussion set for May board meeting
• Per the board’s direction, John Morris, John Urdi & Paul Rudder have been working on an agreement with Dirk Winters to give $300k for infrastructure and commit to 10 years of the Woods Site hosting public events
• Agreement reached, money going into escrow, ensures the town has an outdoor events site for the next 10 years; lots of interest now to work on the 2nd parcel now that the first parcel is done
• John Urdi will send final agreement to board members
• Paul Rudder – China Ready Seminar was terrific, helpful to local businesses, represented MLT well
• Lara Kaylor will work with John Urdi and John Morris to put out a press release
2. Upcoming board seats - Sean Turner (retail), Michael Ledesma (restaurant), Paul Rudder (at-large)
• Send out info soon letting people know about open seats – Lara Kaylor will work on a press release
• Panel to meet end of May to start approving board seats in June to start in July
3. MLR discussion – Brent Truax
• Brent Truax and Scott McGuire are part of search group for MLR’s next director – goal is someone with fundraising experience
• Brent will finish work with search committee but wants to focus on MLT and Chamber boards so looking for someone to take the MLT seat on the MLR board
• Town council discussing special events strategy/position

11. Key Takeaways
1. FY 2016-17 TOT currently $3,698,331 ahead of budget which is +41% means +$2,625,815 to TOML
2. February preliminary is at $2,451,868 up from the previous record by $213,278 which is +9.5%
3. FY 2016-17 TOT currently $1,350,075 ahead of previous RECORD July – February (LY) which is 12%
4. As of February we have exceed the year end TOT budget of $11,650,000 by $1,173,331 with 4 months left to the fiscal year (+10%)

Future Meeting Dates: Next scheduled Board Meeting is Tuesday, May 9th from 1-3:30 pm in Suite Z