



Visit Big Bear/Tourism Business Improvement District

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

February 27, 2020

A Board Meeting of the Governing Board of Visit Big Bear/Tourism Business Improvement District was called to order by President Bob Pool at 8:04 am, on Thursday, February 27, 2020, at the Visit Big Bear Office, 40824 Big Bear Blvd, Big Bear Lake, CA, 92315.

OPEN SESSION

Flag Salute: Loren Hafen led the Pledge.

Board Members Present: Bob Pool, President; Nick Lanza, 1st Vice President; Loren Hafen, 2nd Vice President; Jo Ann Cecil, Treasurer; Danielle Goldsmith, Director; and Oliver Deubel, Secretary.

Board Members Absent: Clayton Shoemaker, Director

Others Present: Darien Schaefer, Monique Rangel, Eddie Kirsch, Will Weisfeld, Matthew McCabe, Sara Schacht, Mason Perry, Will Rahill, Stephen Box, Bynette Mote, and Brandon Rath.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:

Bob Pool discussed the practice of filling out cards for public communications at Board Meetings to keep the meetings organized and running on time. He also advised the other board members to begin considering replacements for the Board President position as his term is ending soon. He will also attend the Annual Meeting.

1. FUTURE MEETINGS:

- Board Committee Meetings are scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2020.
- Regular Board Meeting will be held at 8 am, on Thursday, March 19, 2020.

Motion by Goldsmith, seconded by Cecil to approve the March meeting dates.

The dates were approved by the following vote:

AYES: Pool, Lanza, Hafen, Deubel, Cecil, Goldsmith
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Shoemaker

2. CEO'S REPORT

Darien Schaefer discussed the date the Annual Meeting which will be held Thursday, May 28, 2020. Elections for open board positions will be held at that time to decide the Traditional Lodging, Vacation Rental, and At Large positions. Danielle Goldsmith and JoAnn Cecil plan to re-run for their At Large and Vacation Rental positions. The rules and process for applying to run for a board position were discussed and info will be distributed through mailers and emails. The Ad Hoc Nominating Committee will include Hafen, Shoemaker, Lanza, and Deubel.

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Issues were brought up and discussed about members not receiving emails. VBB uses iDSS for email communications. The list provided by Ascent360 was found to be incomplete and a new list is being provided to update the mailing list.

Discussion on how rentals by owner could be best notified about TBID benefits and being listed on BigBear.com.

Staff is focused on timeline for the Annual Meeting and elections as well as working with CIVITAS on the TBID renewal.

Schaefer also presented a statement from Visit California about Coronavirus and the state of emergency status claimed by California and larger markets in the state.

3. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

3.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Hafen, seconded by Lanza, to postpone approval of Meeting Minutes from Board's Special Meeting held on January 29, 2020 until next meeting.

Minutes were approved by the following vote:

AYES:	Pool, Lanza, Hafen, Deubel, Cecil, Goldsmith
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Shoemaker

3.2 EVENTS:

Will Weisfeld led a discussion on the Super Girl Snow Pro event sharing his experience and visibility of the event. General opinion of the impact of the event was nominal.

Weisfeld introduced the TBID event application for the 16th Annual Carp Round Up from the BBMWD. \$5,000 was rewarded for in-house marketing. Hafen expressed that support for this event/BBMWD should not be from TBID Event funding but should be part of a greater campaign focused on stewardship and keeping Big Bear clean.

Motion by Deubel, second by Hafen, to approve the \$5,000 for in-house marketing of the Carp Round Up.

The Motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES:	Pool, Goldsmith, Hafen, Deubel, Cecil
NOES:	Lanza
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Shoemaker

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Weisfeld announced that the Spartan race is due to sign their final contract this week. Schaefer expressed the need to get the Goldmine Music Fest event in front of the City in March. Mason Perry explained that Goldmine's plan was to wait until the Fire Tax election was over to avoid conflict. The event is still working to secure sponsors and talent.

A brief update on the Big Bear Film Summit revealed that Gabriel Horn and Michael Hanson are working ahead of schedule and demonstrating success in key aspects of the event.

3.3 BUDGET, STAFFING and OPERATIONS:

Schaefer discussed the budget review for 2020/2021 and the financial report for 2020 thus far. The budget report revealed that VBB is experiencing its best fiscal year to date as well as its best 3rd and 4th quarters to date from TBID receipts. Schaefer also presented the State of Financial Position and Statement of Activity reports as of February 26, 2020.

Rangel introduced new partners The Fitness Source, Big Bear Now, Mountain Bar & Grill, and Pine Knot Marine Center.

Motion by Hafen, second by Cecil, to approve new partners.

The Motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES:	Pool, Lanza, Hafen, Deubel, Cecil, Goldsmith
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Shoemaker

Partners that have left are Big Bear Cabin Check, Big Bear Charter Fishing, Oakside Restaurant, Peppercorn Grille, and Nottingham's Tavern. Reasons vary. Suspended partnerships include Ben & Jerry's, Captain John's Marina & Fawn Harbor and associated partnerships, and the Big Bear Queen.

A discussion covered new ways in which businesses can invest in VBB. Partnerships are no longer the only investment option now with new advertising opportunities on the website. Goldsmith suggested reaching out to Village businesses to invest in the new visitor magazine and advertising opportunities.

Hafen discussed a TBID renewal update and work with CIVITAS. He also highlighted the aspects of community outreach and stewardship support that will help drive support for TBID renewal. A Phase 2 discussion on the Visitor Center covered plans for the parking lot and on-site storage. Preliminary budget estimate for the project is \$145,000. Cecil suggested adding Laguna Grill and Pine Knot into the parking lot plans to avoid drainage or other issues.

3.4 MARKETING and PR:

Kirsch gave an overview of the LA Travel & Adventure Show that was attended by VBB on February 14-16. Show attendance was down this year by 10%. It is suspected that the coronavirus epidemic had an

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impact on attendance numbers however the show was a success for VBB. We received the Best in Show Award for Audience Engagement. Kirsch explained the lodging special that was offered over the show weekend. VBB had the opportunity to speak face to face with many potential visitors. Kirsch also discussed the Fred Hall Fishing Show that VBB will attend March 3 - 8.

Kirsch reviewed the Creative RFP including plans to add new images/video to the VBB library for use in brand awareness and to refresh existing campaigns. Deubel talked about possible connections for the RFP project.

A discussion on website traffic numbers covered the possible issue of broken links, which there are very few. While overall website traffic is down, the report from Tempest showed a 429% increase in traffic to the Things To Do pages and a 27% increase in traffic to the homepage of BigBear.com. BigBear.com content and images are also showing up more in Google searches showing a positive SEO.

3.5 REFERRAL:

Stephen Box made a statement that he experienced issues with getting his properties added to the Inntopia booking engine as well as difficulty using the booking engine as a customer. Staff will investigate his issues and address as appropriate.

A discussion on whether booking engine efforts should continue was raised. Pool explained that the TBID MDP was being honored by VBB by offering commission free referrals to lodging partners as well as the opportunity to book room nights through Inntopia. Pool recapped his meeting with Inntopia on the issues with the system.

Rangel reviewed the E-Commerce Report for January 2020 noting lower booking revenue than the previous year. This is a direct reflection of the lower website traffic in general but that lodging conversions are up 17% from last year.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board at this session, President Bob Pool adjourned the meeting at 10:31 am.



Darien Schaefer, Board Secretary