

**Oxnard Convention & Visitors Bureau
General Board Minutes
Wednesday, April 24, 2024
Homewood Suites**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Steve Buenger called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Board members present: Millicent Bennett, Kristina Brewer, Steve Buenger, Joe Cabral, Hugo Centeno, Jr, Tony Dybeku, Ashley Golden, Dolores Licon, Nancy Lindholm, Bryan MacDonald, Stacy Miller, David Neel, Mark Spellman and Michael Tripp

Board members absent: Juliana Finberg, Adam Gonzalez and Hutton John

Also in attendance: Julie Buffo, President/CEO; Brittney Hendricks, Michelle Flippo and Daniel Cabrera, Visit Oxnard staff members, Elizabeth Maxim-Melgoza, PR Director for Visit Oxnard

Public in attendance: Brian Tucker with Ventura County Coast

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Approval of Minutes: The February 28, 2024, Board meeting minutes were reviewed and considered for approval. Michael Tripp made the motion to approve the minutes once a change is made in the financial report minutes from \$81.8 to \$81.8K. Stacy Miller seconded the motion. Yes 13, No 0, Abstain 0. (Tony Dybeku had not joined the meeting yet)
2. Treasurer's Report: David Neel gave the Treasurer's Report for February and March. Total Revenues were \$64K for the month of February with Total Brand Management at \$42.8K and Total Office and Admin at \$18K. Year to Date Revenues were \$701K. Total Brand Management was at \$540.5K and Total Office & Admin at \$174K. Total cash on hand at the end of the month was \$449K. Total Revenues for the month of March were \$63.9K. Total Brand Management was \$38.6K and Office and Admin was at \$17.7K. Year To Date Revenues are at \$765K, with Brand Management at \$579K and Office and Admin at \$192K. At the end of March there was \$443.4K in the bank. Kristina Brewer made the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Stacy Miller seconded the motion. Yes 14, No 0, Abstain 0. There are still \$12K in ARPA funds that will be used for promoting filming in the City of Oxnard's.
3. Nominating Committee Discussion: Julie spoke with Glenda Rivera; the new General Manager for Zachari Dunes on Mandalay Beach and she would be the replacement on our Board for Ben Ly. Nancy Lindholm made the motion to approve Glenda Rivera's addition to the General Board. Mark Spellman seconded the motion. Yes 14 No 0, Abstain 0
4. FY 24-25 Board Meeting Schedule Discussion: Julie highlighted the proposed FY24-25 Board meeting schedule with a few edits from our typical schedule. Mark made the motion to accept the meeting schedule. Kristina seconded the motion. Yes 14, No 0, Abstain 0

INFORMATIONAL ITEM:

President/CEO Report: On February 29th, Brittney, Julie, and several Board members attended the WVCBA's Knowledge and Networking lunch with guest speaker, City Manager Alex Ngyuen, where he spoke on the topic of defiltering the homeless crisis.

Julie, Daniel and Brittney attended Visit California's Outlook Forum where Visit California's new platform, The Ultimate Playground, was introduced. Sessions included a closer look at Visit California's strategy, several sessions on AI, sustainable travel and international travel. Visit California is still pushing family travel through their Kidifornia campaign and California road tripping with their Road Trip Republic campaign. They are also collaborating on a docufilm in partnership with Disney+ around the life and career of the Beach Boys.

In March, Julie was interviewed by Mary Verdin, owner of Verdin Marketing, for her blog on District Marketing Mojo, where they highlight a different leader in the travel and tourism industry each month.

IPW will be held in Los Angeles next month. In conjunction with Ventura County Coast, Visit Oxnard will be hosting a post familiarization tour for 20 international IPW attendees. Visit Oxnard will be hosting the group on the Scarlett Belle and Julie invited the Board to attend.

'Olol'koy Beach Park is up again for USA Today's 10Best for best beach in California. Julie will send out a link for everyone to vote daily.

Michelle reported on Connect Spring Marketplace in Las Vegas, a meeting planner show she attended on behalf of Ventura County Coast. The two teams representing VCC were able to conduct 68 one-on-one appointments with association and corporate planners. She will be attending IPW next week representing VCC and then going to Snowmass, CO, in June to represent Visit Oxnard at Destination West.

Brittney and Michelle attended the WVCBA's Women's Business Conference at California State University Channel Islands.

Brittney attended the E-tourism Summit along with staff from VCC, Visit Ventura and Visit Camarillo. The event is a gathering of DMO leaders to discuss challenges and new trends in our industry.

Zachari Dunes on Mandalay Beach hosted a soiree with luxury wedding planners in attendance. Visit Oxnard participated with an activation with Black Matte Candle Co., an Oxnard based business, for a live candle pouring.

Brittney presented the new winter seasonal landing page. She presented the quarterly business review from Visit Oxnard's marketing agency, Madden Media. She showed some of the creative from the new ad campaign. She highlighted the parent-focused sponsored content article that ran on Mommy Poppins in both Southern California and the Bay Area. She also showed the branded article that was placed with Southern California News Group that includes the Orange County Register, Dailynews.com, DailyBreeze.com, SVGTribune.com and many more. The writer of the article came to Oxnard on a one-day press trip. We ran a full-page ad in the spring edition of Southern California Life Magazine. A full-page ad ran in Smart Meetings that goes out to qualified meeting planners.

She gave web traffic overviews for February and March.

Elizabeth secured some earned editorial on whale watching on LATimes.com and in their e-newsletter, which included coverage of Channel Islands Whale Watching and the Celebration of the Whales Festival. It links back to Visit Oxnard's page on whale watching. We were featured on KTLA for a spring break travel feature. Spectrum News SoCal also featured Oxnard and whale watching, including interviews with Michael Tripp, Doug Riffenburgh with the Channel Islands Maritime Museum and Holly Lohuis with the Santa Barbara Whale Heritage Area. PureWow included Oxnard in its story on the 19 most charming Beach towns in Southern California, with syndication on AOL. Working with Visit California the Toronto Star did a feature on Oxnard in tandem with Visit Visalia and Yosemite National Park. Elizabeth is in talks with editors from Los Angeles and LA Weekly who are interested in doing a story on Oxnard.

Daniel presented the top social posts for February and a reel on the wreckage of the La Jenelle, which is the 2nd highest viewed reel ever for Visit Oxnard. He also showed the top social media posts for March. He highlighted the current California Now travel stories, one about Valentines Day and one on sports in Oxnard. He is still working on the Film Oxnard website.

Julie presented the March STR report. Occupancy for the month of March was 10 percent down from last year mainly because of bad weather. Average Daily Rate was \$181.84, the highest in the county. Revenue Per Available Room was \$117.16, highest in Ventura County.

Board Comments:

Bryan MacDonald w/Oxnard City Council - X Games will be expanding their footprint at the fairgrounds and Lossan and Metrolink are working to provide rail service in and out of the fairgrounds. There is currently a program where a ticket purchased from Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner or Metrolink can be used on either rail service.

Tony Dybeku w/Waterside and Honeycup – they surpassed their plans for Easter, and most reservations were from visitors. They are getting ready for Mother's Day. Honeycup will be opening a store in Calabasas and is bringing in a chef from Europe to create specialty pastries and gelatos.

Hugo w/Churro Champ – has onboarded 14 employees total. Has executed 115 jobs to date. He should be back in the ring in August.

Michael Tripp w/Channel Islands Harbor – Celebration of the Whales was well attended. Karl's should go to the Board of Supervisor's next month.

David Neel w/Murphy Auto Museum – sent out a press release informing the public that the museum will be closing on July 7th.

Mark Spellman w/Lazer Media – Lazer Media worked with the Conejo Valley School District for a party with several area schools. They will be partnering with Oxnard College for their family day. Talking with Axel w/Karl's about participating in the California Strawberry Festival.

Kristina Brewer w/Gold Coast Property Management – Summer reservations have exceeded last year, and they already have bookings for Thanksgiving.

Ashley Golden w/City of Oxnard – has been deep in budgeting for the City. There will be a surplus that the City Manager will report on once it is finalized.

Millicent Bennett w/Residence Inn – getting ready for training camp, and the first planning meeting with the Cowboys staff will be in May. Currently under renovation with 100 rooms completed and 70 rooms currently closed. They are looking at completion in December.

Brian Tucker w/Ventura County Coast – IPW in LA starts in May. VCC will participate with an onsite booth, media marketplace experience and a California Plaza activation which will have a California dive bar theme. Their tradeshow committee met, and they are looking at new events for the upcoming year.

Stacy Miller w/Stacy Miller Public Relations – played video of a comedienne talking about Oxnard.

Nancy Lindholm/West Ventura County Business Alliance – The State of the City Address is June 14th.

Steve adjourned the meeting at 10:21 am without objection.