

Mammoth Lakes Tourism

DMO Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 5, 2011
2-4 PM
Tourism Conference Room

1. Call Meeting to Order – Teri Stehlik called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm.
2. Roll Call –Matthew Lehman, John Morris, Howard Pickett, Michael Raimondo, Teri Stehlik, Brent Truax and Cheryl Witherill. John Urdi was also in attendance.
3. Approval of Minutes from September 7th, 2011. Howard made a motion to approve the minutes from Sept 7th, 2011 as amended. Seconded by Mammoth. Approved 4-0. Brent, John M. and Michael abstained.
4. Financial Report
 - a. P&L –sent out prior to meeting.
 - b. Bank Balance-approximately \$807k. Town cutting a check for July, Aug, Sept and October this week, approx. \$559k. Initially there was to be a positive true up for May and June, it was offset by building payment which offset the balance. Reserve is approximately \$1.1 Million. It has been discussed to put \$75k into an account with low risk to protect these funds. We have to find home for \$750k so we are covered with FDIC no additional detail
 - c. Credit Card: John has applied for a Capital One card to give him some flexibility with a higher credit line.
5. New Business
 - a. Welcome to Brent Truax who is replacing Eric Wasserman as the Chamber representative.
 - b. Research Reporting: John U. met with Marianna (Finance) on her request to discuss defense of our operating budget and forecasting of TOT. They are being very conservative with their 5 year plan. They are reporting no growth for next year, and small increments in the following four years. They also discussed research to “defend” our operating budget. John talked about some of the US Travel detail that he has available. The case study for Colorado is very interesting and can be very helpful. Also working on a ROI study to show what we are putting in and what we are getting out of each dollar. American Express study is approx. one week

out. John U. expanded this to Bishop zip codes as well to show partnerships with Mono County. This study includes all of Mono County. It could be that we do an additional study for the winter season as well as summer. We will receive quarterly reports on domestic usage. We will get the same reports for the international traveler. There are not a lot of Amex users internationally so there is a matrix in place for comparison by Amex that will still be useful information.

- c. High Altitude Track Project: Meb and Dena placed 1st in San Jose. Rick Woods came in 2nd for his age group. John was in UK last week. They are very interested in writing about Mammoth and our “small town” ability. John is interested in working on “camps” in Mammoth with a local talent for promotion. Running group packages is another area of growth for Mammoth. Competitive Magazine could be a camp sponsor. We need a promoter and someone willing to run the camps. MLT needs to decide on their level of support with the “Track Project” next spring. As of now, they are short approximately \$300k for this project. There has been additional discussion on the “Sage Grouse” issue, John is not sure this will be a problem. John supports this project and feels it will benefit the town tremendously. The concept would be to loan the project \$300k, knowing that as they bring in the money, we would get repaid the \$250k as money comes in from sponsorships, etc. The Board discussed the issue of the event coalition and how they would react if we are putting money into another entity and funding; treated as any other request and evaluated by request details. John has been talking to Terrance about the track and its role in town. The Board asked if we should get the opinion of an attorney on the option, Jim Reed initially thought this would not be a challenge.
- d. Geothermal Plant Support: There was an event at Teri Plum’s house a few weeks back. It was an opportunity to show off where things are going. This event was to convince ORMAT to step up to the plate and get involved. John U. wrote the marketing plan for the Geothermal Plant a few months back. The staffing component is an issue that may be beneficial for the town and MLT’s involvement. We want to see the VB built but need to be careful of how involved we become. The VB is privately funded. The staff would be similar to having ambassadors’ at the airport to enhance the experience and push people into town.
- e. Branding Update: Continued efforts are made with branding efforts moving into the winter season. There could be some expansion ideas by adding “visit” to the logo for tourism. Licensing has been turned over to the town for trademarking. John will give us an update.
- f. Air Update: September, as of the 26th of August, was up 36% with a projection of 50% over last year’s numbers. There was a flight this past

Monday that turned around due to a flight inspection issue. The challenge is that there is a lot of negativity around the airport. MLT needs to be removed from this. John is trying to stay out of the operations side of things as much as possible. It was discussed that the airport commission needs to take a bigger stance on the operations. They should be reporting to Council. John discussed a service plan that is needed to inform guests of options. There is a TV at the airport that could detail some information. The Board discussed the communication level and customer service piece to make this a better experience.

- g. PR: Chris Lyman has been involved in the winter experience “beyond the slopes”. John U. working with USA Running and Houston Marathon Groups for Olympic Trials with all athletes and an event around “Mammoth”. The idea is a reception about Mammoth and accomplishments, speakers, etc.
- h. Interactive Update: We had a first glimpse of the new website and have requested input from Board. They are a bit behind schedule for a goal of a September launch. The original site was designed in 2007, this is complete rebuild. It will have an itinerary feature that will detail to the traveler which will be great. Goal now, November prior to Thanksgiving. Vacation Roost will be ready to go with launch, John needs to have that discussion. It may be an extra cost for a temporary widget to be able to package. MLT has shot a ton of footage for social media. People are excited for snow, some want summer back, the good news is that people are responding.
- i. International: John’s UK trip was strong. He had many media visits that were positive. International is reporting Mammoth interest is up 30%. There are some issues with connecting times for International Travel. Some may still require a layover. The push at the show was to come and enjoy San Diego for a few days and then come to Mammoth. There are other airport connections, it just takes them longer.
- j. Bylaws: The discussion was had to review the Bylaws now that we have been in operation for over a year. Cheryl will contact John Morris to find a meeting date. Cheryl will send around to see if anyone else is willing to join this committee.
- k. Other:
 - i. Brent discussed a job position that is currently on the table for the Chamber. He has talked to John U. about hiring someone through MLT with a reimbursement arrangement to reduce costs and overhead. He is bringing this to the Board for discussion. The pros would be cohesiveness in working with MLT. Cons would be the separation and the “benefits” that follow MLT guidelines. This

position would be housed in MLT offices. The question was brought up to see if a “contract” employee would need to have the same benefits of the remaining staff? The Board agreed that it is worth looking into the options and restrictions. If this shows in budget, will it be questioned down the road by Town? The Chamber Lease is expired so this is also something that needs to be looked at.

ii. Bonus/Salaries of Staff:

1. We discussed vacation time in closed session prior to the meeting. Questions: Is this for MLT and VB? John verified this is just MLT. The VB staff is all part time so they are not offered benefits. The offer is for 4 extra vacation days. When we put this policy in place originally, it was set up just as the rest of the town on a PTO basis. John U. explained that this could just be an extra 7 days rather than simply paid days off. Right now, when someone is hired in, there are 2 weeks PTO, after a year, there is another week available. This totals almost 4 weeks of PTO after a year. It was discussed that PTO is earned, holidays would be immediate. John U’s comparison was that this is the “insurance” company rather than the “front desk”. It was discussed that perhaps there could be “five flex holidays” rather than a specific day off. A motion was made by Brent to add two additional days and change to a 5 floating holidays to the year to be used at the discretion of the GM throughout the year. Motion was seconded by Howard. Approved 6-0.

6. Board Member Comments/Report

7. Cheryl spoke to the Lift and Lodging conversation that happened at the Lodging Meeting last week.

8. Next Meeting Date will be TBD, at the MLT offices.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:20pm.