

MLT Board Meeting

February 6th, 2013

2-4pm

Tourism Conference Room

1. Call to Order at 2pm
2. Roll Call: Matthew Lehman, John Morris, Howard Pickett, Michael Raimondo, Teri Stehlik, Cheryl Witherill. John Urdi was also at the meeting. Brent Truax was unable to attend this meeting. (Teri was late to the meeting)
3. Minutes – Approval of meeting minutes from 1/9/13. Approved 5-0
4. Bylaws – hold agenda item for BID process.
5. Financial Report:
 - a. TOT forecast – still in decent shape for pacing, etc. We definitely need some snow to make phone ring.
 - i. MLT is awaiting October numbers and still has not received a true up from the 1st quarter
 - ii. Town budgeted low for TOT number this year. The number used for budget is more than last year, but low considering year prior.
 - iii. John was part of the interview process for TOT employee; job description was 99% finance 10% TOT. He questioned this with town. They determined that this was a TOT position; they used an old job description. Met with 5 candidates, 3 were potential. There is a meeting tomorrow with non town staff about future of TOT and importance of TOT not sitting in finance and keeping it a priority. Discussion about “loaning” or “giving back” business tax license fees to help with this position or, do we hire with an in house budget to fill this position? Are there confidentiality issues?
 - b. Town Update: Nothing to Report from John Urdi.
 - i. Matthew reported that there are many staff changes including possibly the town manager position. Council is meeting in closed sessions and meeting with staff on vision. This brings up opportunity to fix some problem areas and make necessary changes.
 - ii. John reminded board members to fill out the Form 700 for town – sign off and deliver to Jamie.

- c. Update on BID Committee:
 - i. Still defining program for comparisons of “who and who not”. Looked at all thresholds (restaurant and retail) and developed guidelines. John wrote an email to Vons VP of communications and VP of Real Estate. He had a phone call to explain BID and Tourism, etc. Goal to bring more people into town. Phone call was successful, they are communicating favorably with John. He is also working on getting a contact for Rite Aid. If we get a “yes” from Vons, that will help with Rite Aid.
 - ii. John is meeting with Mammoth Mountain this week. He will be revisiting the discount pass for locals/employees. Being part of the BID could bring a “deal” to businesses in town.
 - iii. Biggest fear of many is that they are making low profit and they feel this will cut into profit margin. John was able to get an example from Lambreth of a new BID and what it has accomplished. John talked about the successes of Napa who has had a BID in place for 3 years.
 - iv. There could be a local advertising component for small retail/restaurants in town.
 - v. There is still a lot of educating locally and research on John’s end.
 - vi. John discussed customer service could be a component of this by rewarding some type of “service” for participants.
 - vii. Timing: John is looking at a fiscal year begin as July 1st. Once the bid is defined, execution would be July 1st. Once defined, the petitions need to be signed. Once we have 51%, it then goes to Council for a public hearing. There will be admin fees that go to town which will require a staff member. If council supports it, it could very easily go into effect July 1. MLT still does not have a contract. MLT would need a contract that coincides with BID. Also will need lease extension as this is also not long term.

6. New Business

- a. Air Service: John passed around the pacing report. There is a report that comes out every Tuesday showing available seats, passengers booked, has a month end number, etc. Numbers are up in load and in number of passengers. The load factor is the number we watch to show how we stand. John will begin sending this out prior to our meetings for review.
 - i. March 14th, John and Howard meet with Alaska Airlines in Seattle.
 - ii. Could still be an opportunity for a spring/summer/fall quantity pass pack
 - iii. United just did a big marketing event for a “ski free on your arrival date”
- b. PR: Working with PR agency to talk about “if we could increase your budget by \$\$, what would your plan look like?” John meeting with Joanie Lynch and her new Assistant to talk about upcoming events (big writers group coming up). There are a lot of articles hitting now from last year.

- c. Interactive: Mobile App is getting use and the itinerary builder is being built. They are selling space on website which is extra income.
- d. Partnerships: John is going to LA on 2/20 to meet with Jeep on summer programs.
- e. Retail Sales: NTR, budgeted \$5k, we are at \$12k income. Nothing is selling on website. All has been sold in town.
- f. Welcome Center: ESIA is taking over for Forest Service – management of entire complex. We do not have as many restrictions as we have had in the past. We will not have to supply staff any longer. Our two employees need to re-apply. There will be a contribution to staff wages so we have in put in training. Contribution will be approx \$55k/year. John will be involved in interviews, setting staffing, day to day training, etc.
- g. Email from John, CAL Travel. He is asking MLT to financially participate in a SEQUA review process “fight”. CAL Travel is hosting a plan to fix an issue on the table. There could be new requirements on a SEQUA fees for events. He is asking us to participate in this coalition at a \$2500 level to try to avoid this from happening in Mammoth Lakes.
- h. Staffing
 - i. Whitney will be working remotely; John willing to give it a try. She will be back 2 weeks a quarter. John not sure how this will work long term. Last day in office is next Wednesday before she heads out to travel shows.
 - ii. Kristie; John gave her the full \$70k from last meeting with a clear understanding that this is a big jump and an isolated increase moving forward to bring her up to speed.

Board member comments:

1. Matthew went to “League of Cities” and they will be in Mammoth in July. Could be a new group that could build to an annual event.
2. Posters for Century Ride/Kamikaze distributed.
3. School calendar – LA school district change – need to work with Visit CA on getting dates and having a “heads up”. Could be an opportunity to start promoting June for a “school break”.
4. Discussion on Canyon Lodge events and what may happen at Canyon this year.

Next meeting: Wednesday , March 6th at 2pm.

Adjourned

