



Mammoth Lakes Tourism
Board Meeting
Wednesday, December 3, 2014

2:00 pm -4:00 pm
Mammoth Lakes Tourism Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

1. **Call Meeting to Order 2:05pm** – Brent Truax, Board Chair
2. **Roll Call** – Erik Forsell, Matthew Lehman, John Morris, Sean Turner (called in), Brent Truax, Paul Rudder, Kirk Schaubmayer, Michael Ledesma, Michael Raimondo, John Urdi, Natalie Post (MLT representatives)
3. **Minutes** – Paul moved to approve the November minutes with Brent’s suggestion to revise the TOT numbers to their updated amount and fix typos, Matthew seconded. Passed unanimously.
4. **Marketing**
 - a. Fall Open House feedback
 - John U heard positive feedback from the local media and local residents who have questioned MLT. People liked that there was more detail as opposed to the previous presentation.
 - Erik thought it was well received and put together nicely, especially hearing the research directly from SMARI.
 - Paul heard feedback that it was a very professional presentation.
 - Brent heard people saying that it was a lot of information and they asked him about the website that contains all of this information
 - The general consensus from the Board is that almost all feedback was positive.
 - The Mammoth Times did not write anything about it, and Ted from The Sheet wrote a positive editorial about it.
 - Paul asked if we can track conversion rates from the number of clicks on our website and online advertising
 - John U thinks that some conversion rates are not very trackable, but MLT will definitely look into what conversion rates are trackable.
 - b. Ski Shows
 - The Ski Show season is wrapping up with Ski Dazzle this weekend.
 - John U is turning over the US Travel Board (which has a lot of major destinations represented) to Whitney.
 - MLT dropped out of the Las Vegas Ski Show when they decided to move the date to Thanksgiving weekend, but still have other strong marketing plans in Las Vegas because of the new flight.
 - MMSA did have one person to represent the mountain at the Vegas Ski Show
 - c. Air Packs and Service Update
 - Air Packs are pacing slower than last year.

- John U is not sure if it is because of the high pricing, lack of snow, or past customers not repurchasing because they were not able to use all of the tickets last year.
 - Paul thinks it has everything to do with the lack of snow, especially because of the past couple of years also being low snow years
 - John U asked Erik to send out a couple of promotional emails about the air packs from MMSA to their database, because this has been crucial support in the past.
 - The only restriction on air pack tickets are blackout dates, which we unsuccessfully fought to eliminate, and space available.
 - John Haycock is an influential businessman in Las Vegas who supports MLT and has offered to try and help us promote the air packs and Las Vegas flight. He is going to put us in touch with his daughter, who is the anchor on Fox5, and his son who has good friends that own ski shops in Las Vegas
 - To promote the Vegas flight MLT is doing a Wed and Shred giveaway promotion that includes a wedding in Las Vegas and then a trip to Mammoth Lakes instead of the inaugural flight party, because there was not enough media in Las Vegas to make the party worth it.
 - Pre-bookings for LA are up about 1,000 from last year, San Francisco is down about 1,000 from last year, and San Diego is pacing even which is good news because there are less seats being offered this year (flights are not being offered seven days a week).
 - A more optimized flight schedule should help the air subsidy aggregate.
 - Las Vegas and Denver flights are slow on bookings, but there is nothing to compare to since this is the first year and the marketing efforts just started about a week ago.
 - John U will keep an eye on cancellations. There have already been three so far this year that were all due to weather (fog, winds aloft, and winds at the airport).
- d. Website RFP selection
- MLT has decided to go with Miles Media to build the new website.
 - They have work with Visit California and many other DMOs.
 - Their proposal was chosen because of the functionality and plug and play programs.
 - They will start developing the website in full force in January and should have it done by October.
- e. Snow/storm marketing (John U added)
- The recent storm is a huge deal, and MLT is going to hammer the snow message.
 - MLT released \$50,000 to increase SEO and presence online in regards to snow.
 - All storms between now and Christmas will be hammered the same way because it will create momentum and perception for the whole year. Especially when Colorado has a lot of snow and there are a lot of articles out there about the California drought.
 - There was a big piece about the storm on the Weather Channel
 - MMSA invested \$250,000 in an HD satellite to encourage more media coverage
 - John U wanted to do a last minute radio spot (DJ mention) about the storm, but 24 hours is not enough time for a radio buy. He will probably buy a radio spot in advance for the next predicted storm.
 - Erik mentioned that accurate snow reporting is a big focus right now for MMSA.

- Michael L commented that different weather sites and reports seemed to be very different for this storm and wants to know what is the best weather source.
- MLT uses NOAA, set to Mammoth Mountain, and is going to send out an email to database recommending this link as a trustworthy source.
- Kirk, Brent, and John M (lodging representatives) confirmed that the storm definitely got their phones ringing more.
- There was a general consensus that it especially helps when it pours rain in southern California (like this storm), because people assume it is dumping snow here.
- Erik mentioned that MMSA website traffic doubled because of the storm.

5. Financial Report

a. Cash Flow

- Cash flow is very strong.
- AP will continue to be high (around 300,000 every two weeks) for the next couple of months.
- There is about \$1,000,000 in the TBID account and about \$300,000 - \$400,000 in the Measure A account. This is built up intentionally with the idea that it will be spent in the next couple of months.

b. TOT & TBID Update

- October was another record TOT month, up 10% from last year.
- Every month starting with July and after has been up from last year, so the Town has approximately \$150,000 more than was budgeted and \$300,000 - \$400,000 more than last year. This equates to about \$30,000 to MLT.
- These numbers are up 11% over last year and 4.5% over budget.
- TBID has been up from the projections every month, which puts it up \$241,000 cumulatively through October.
- We estimated nothing from MMSA in October, but with the sale of the Cali4nia pass we ended up with \$45,000.
- TBID in September was up about \$40,000 from last year and is the first month that we can do a year over year comparison with TBID numbers. John U will bring that up at the Town Council meeting.
- John U wants to spend money on promoting any snow we get before the holidays, but still wants to keep a reserve to be safe.

6. New Business

a. TBID Appeal – Brian’s Bicycles

- The TBID appeals panel met to discuss Brian’s Bicycles appeal.
- He has submitted information that would classify his business as Tier 2 meaning that his revenue is between the \$50,000 - \$150,000 range, so the panel recommends that he be reclassified as Tier 2.
- John M motioned to approve the Tier 2 classification for Brian’s Bicycles, Michael R seconded. Passes unanimously.
- Spike from Mammoth Liquor did receive his \$8100 reimbursement check for his TBID appeal. We are still waiting on Lyn from Tailwaggers reimbursement check to give to her.
- The Town is sending a packet out to all TBID remitters and there will be a letter from MLT included in the packet. It shares successes from last year, promotes the MLTIndustryInsider.com, and warns businesses that if they are not current with their business license, TOT payments or TBID payments, MLT will not promote them including the website, app, media visits and Visitor Guide. There will also be a

reminder that even if your business appealed the TBID last year, you will need to reapply this year with updated numbers.

- John U built a pacing report spreadsheet that he hopes to have 35 properties fill out looking 6 months forward.
 - This would be a no cost option as opposed to DestiMetrics, which businesses are paying for currently and it could be filled out after businesses report their TOT numbers
 - This would be a useful tool for businesses and MLT would be able to break out the data by month and segment.
 - John U is thinking of offering an incentive for businesses to do this and in return would want them to sign that they will report every month.
 - John U is going to talk with Nate Greenberg about an online portal for this instead of a spreadsheet and will also talk to the Lodging Association about the plans.
- b. Representation on MLR Board
- Michael L is stepping down from his seat on the MLR Board because of both personal and professional commitments that did not exist when he accepted the seat that do not allow him the time commitment necessary for the MLR Board.
 - Sean Turner is an ad hoc member that also sits on the MLR Board, so MLT Board is wondering if he can wear two hats and represent MLT as well.
 - John U will talk to Danna Stroud to see if this is possible, but he and Sean agree that this will only work if it is a MLT liaison position and Sean will not have to take on more work.
- c. Board members representation of stakeholders
- Brent wants the MLT Board to use the next month to get feedback from their constituents about how well they think they are being represented and what their concerns are.
 - We can take this feedback to get a plan together for next year and make sure we are addressing issues that are important to these stakeholder groups.
 - It is equally important to make sure that the Board members are communicating back to these groups about what is happening and being done.
 - The Board agrees that they should create a list of questions that all Board members should be asking their constituents.
 - MLT can also use their database to send out the questionnaire as well.

7. MMSA Update

- Strong presence in southern California this weekend with participation in a big LA Live event, co-sponsoring a snow day at Petco Park with Alaska Air, and Ski Dazzle.
- 2 million views a week of their digital billboards in southern California that were just changed to say "It's snowing".
- They have upped their spending with the storm and have made 6 million impressions with all of their snow coverage.
- Heavenly and Utah are more aggressively competing with MMSA on Pay-per-click
- Revenue is better than skier visits right now, with the Village doing the best.
- June Mountain is scheduled to open on December 13 and Night of Lights is December 20.
- MMSA puts on 255 events a year and will add the Bike Championships this summer.
- Business insider ranked MMSA #2 on their list of best resorts in America.
- Yahoo reported that MMSA is the #4 most searched resort.
- The wedding website has been updated for a big push for a destination wedding here.
- The top of the mountain will open soon, but the goal to get the whole mountain open from this storm was unsuccessful.

8. Board Member Comments/Report/Agenda Additions

- John M has seen a large increase in bookings from Booking.com and the Asian market. He also reminded everyone that the trampolines are open at Snowcreek Athletic Club and are a great activity for people who are looking for something other than skiing.
- John U wants to look at how Vacation Roost is performing at booking.
- Erik wants to remind everyone that MMSA is now marketing both seasons all of the time and that they are doing Kids Week if the Town wants to get involved.
- Sean said that upstairs at the Brewery is now being used as an event space that can hold 175 people and can be booked. The food by Bleu will open by Christmas
- Kirk mentioned there is a new Expedia representative in town.

9. Next Meeting Date – January 7, 2015 2-4pm

10. Meeting Adjourned at 4:00pm