

SANTA MONICA TRAVEL & TOURISM (SMTT)

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
SMTT Conference Room, 2427 Main Street

Wednesday, September 13, 2017

5:03 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Richard Chacker (Treasurer), Neil Carrey, Matthew Lehman, Darlene Evans, Rick Cole (City Manager) and Rosemary Regalbuto.

Board Members Absent: Raphael Lunetta (Chair), Nicole Flynn (Vice Chair), Paul Leclerc and Albin Gielicz.

Staff Present: Misti Kerns, Kim Sidoriak, Evan Edwards, Omark Holmes, Jenny Battaroff, Lauren Salisbury and Monique Haslock.

Call to Order: Treasurer Richard Chacker called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Roll Call & Welcome New Member: Treasurer Richard Chacker welcomed new Board member Matthew Lehman. Lehman also serves on the TMD Committee as Vice Chairman and is the General Manager at Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows.

City Manager Report: City Manager Rick Cole presented three updates: Homelessness, future economic prosperity, and well-being. City Council met last night, and approved Cole's recommendation to hire someone to spearhead the homeless issues. Cole confirmed they will move quickly to hire someone. The Homelessness Committee had a third meeting this week, SMTT President/CEO Misti Kerns serves on this committee. A second internal meeting was held that was focusing on homelessness, and on what the City is doing internally. Cole shared some of those efforts which include gathering timely and accurate dates; where the homeless are, and whom they are; develop effective tactics, depending on need/issue; housing, job & mental health; rapidly deploy resources. Cole shared that in July the City did a pilot program, where the City of Santa Monica engages with our homeless population.

On September 26th the City Council will hold a study session to discuss a strategy for long-term economic sustainability.

Cole notified the Board that previous City of Santa Monica employee Katie Lichtig is coming back to serve as an Assistant City Manager/Chief Operating Officer.

Meeting Minutes: Kerns presented the meeting minutes from the June 14, 2017 Board of Directors Meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was offered by Cole and seconded by Evans, the motion passed unanimously.

Kerns presented the meeting minutes from the July 12, 2017 Board of Directors Meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was offered by Regalbuto and seconded by Cole, the motion passed unanimously with Matthew Lehman abstaining.

Board Financials: Treasurer Chacker presented the June, 2017 and July, 2017 end financials. A motion to accept the financials was offered by Cole and seconded by Carrey; the motion passed unanimously.

Acceptance of Revised Meeting Dates: Treasurer Chacker presented the revised SMTT Board of Directors meeting dates. A motion to approve the revised meeting dates was offered by Carrey and second by Regalbuto, the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Chacker gave a friendly reminder for the Board of Directors to re-commit to attendance.

Staff Updates: Sidoriak introduced Lauren Salisbury, Public Relations Manager to the Board. Lauren gave a brief background of herself. Sidoriak informed the Board that the Santa Monica Daily Press which is the largest newspaper in Santa Monica, and have the largest circulation. SMTT produce the column called Toursim Talk every other Thursday. The article highlights the benefits of tourism for tourists and the local community. The COAST open streets event is coming up, and Board members have been asked if they would like to participate in the commissioner booth on the City Hall lawn at the event. Carrey and Regalbuto volunteered.

Kerns talked about the Chinese market, and how SMTT is currently connecting with students at UCLA and Santa Monica College. Kerns encouraged Board members to review the monthly report of our strategic plan, which shows what SMTT is currently working on. Kerns informed the Board that we may reach out to the Board members to help be a part of the events, FAM and tours to better understand what we do. SMTT will get back to the Board about a Hospitality mixer with details, and dates.

Edwards gave an update of new hires: Lauren Salisbury, PR Manager, Jenny Battaroff, Executive Assistant, and Kristie Wong, Marketing Coordinator. Edwards informed the Board that SMTT is in the process of getting ergonomic standing desks for staff, and preparation of the upcoming audit.

Holmes gave a brief marketing update, and provided the Board of new sections created for our website. Holmes advised the Board to feel free to copy and paste the materials from our website, and use for their own business marketing purposes.

For the Good of the Order: Regalbuto informed the Board that she continues to bring awareness to human trafficking. A discussion took place of options for having this subject be educational or informational for guests at hotels or conference events. It was noted that this is a sensitive issue to have signage at the front desk area for hotels. However, discussion with hotels should begin.

Adjournment: Being no further Treasurer Chacker adjourned meeting at 6:00 p.m.