

SANTA MONICA TRAVEL & TOURISM (SMTT)

Regular Meeting of the Tourism District Marketing Committee

Santa Monica Travel & Tourism, First Floor Conference Room, 2427 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405

Tuesday, September 11, 2018 from 9:11 a.m. – 10:28 a.m.

TMD Committee Members Present: Matthew Lehman (Chairman, Fairmont Miramar Hotel), Daniel Ben-Efraim (Vice Chairman, ETC Hotels), Gerry Peck (Secretary/Treasurer, Shore Hotel), Brian Murphy (Double Tree Suites), Joyce Syme (Seaview Hotel), Leah Edwards (Oceana Beach Club Hotel), and Michael Bridges (Viceroy Santa Monica).

TMD Committee Members Absent: Daniel Gregory (Ocean Lodge) and Derek McCann (Loews Hotel Santa Monica Beach).

Additional Attendees: Cyrus Nourafchan (Cal Mar Hotel Suites), Frank Kastelz (Wyndham Santa Monica at the Pier), Mark Averett (The Georgian Hotel), and Victor Randall (Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton Santa Monica)

Staff Present: Misti Kerns, Kim Sidoriak, Evan Edwards, Lauren Salisbury, and Tammy Ryan.

Call to Order: Chairman Lehman called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

Roll Call & Self Introductions: Chairman Lehman called for self-introductions. TMD Committee Members gave brief self-introductions.

Acceptance of the TMD Financial Memo: Chairman Lehman ceded the floor to Secretary/Treasurer Peck to field any questions on the TMD Financial Memo. Being there were no questions on the memo Lehman motioned to approve the financials and the motion was seconded by Murphy; L. Edwards motioned to approve; E. Edwards called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with all TMD Committee Members present with the exception of Daniel Gregory and Derek McCann.

SMTT Staff Updates: Kerns gave a brief instruction on the critical nature of participation of hotel group sales managers in taking advantage of Fair Share opportunities in cooperation with SMTT i.e.: conferences, trade shows, missions and networking opportunities and how SMTT staff is happy to work with them to facilitate participation in these events.

Sales & Marketing: Sidoriak presented the Sales & Marketing Update. This included the latest in SMTT's marketing tools. She gave an overview on the new video series that encompasses the local farmers markets, hotels, meeting spaces, and "car-free" Santa Monica; the new Virtual Reality technology we're using to spotlight rooms, meeting spaces, retail, and restaurants on Santamonica.com. The content includes updated photos and videos, reflecting the latest cultural and market trends. Being we can never acquire too much content she requested more from the Committee Members, preferably containing imagery from actual events. Kerns expressed SMTT's willingness to provide support with resources if necessary. Sidoriak closed by giving brief details of what's next – MICE App and microsite; Family & Luxury Guides; Street Art Walking Map; exploring the Influencer relationships further; Updating sales video and language dubs.

Public Relations Update: Salisbury thanked the members for their continued hospitality in hosting the international press when they're in town. She then presented the "state of the globe" through the trends and insights over the past year and how that affects our market strategy; beginning with Australia. 67% of visitors from Australia are repeat visitors, magazines are still hugely popular, and recently Cosmopolitan Magazine Australia did a piece on Santa Monica. Brazil is very art, fashion, and travel centric. Their influencers are heavily vetted and followed with strong niche focus. The United Kingdom is still a strong market, with a leaning toward "car-free" environments, representing "big thought" influencers. France still envisions the California

Draft – To be approved by Secretary/Treasurer Gerry Peck

through the spectrum of Baywatch, yet their magazines are a bit more eclectic and reflect and intellectual vibrancy. SMTT is actively working with the Hylink group to further penetrate the market in China where Key Opinion Leaders or KOLs have a huge impact on consumer opinions and choices. Indian media picked up Kerns's Op-Ed piece and the recent visit to Satna Monica by a popular Indian Influencer is still resonating with his followers and the media.

Operations Update: Edwards gave a brief overview of the Lane Five update and noted the recent addition of new staff members including the new Executive Assistant, Marketing Manager, and Visitor Services Associate. She spoke of the recent successful toiletry drive for the homeless that SMTT collected and delivered. Kerns reiterated that the collection continues even beyond the initial drive. Edwards then shifted toward the Accounting portion of Operations informing the Committee about the recent intensive training received by the entire SMTT staff; from topline to entry level basics; funding; fiscal responsibilities; and quick FAQ checklists. Client Services update included an overview of the success summer mixer and a look at upcoming events.

Brand Perception Study Work Session: Sidoriak reminded the Committee of the Brand Perception Study Work Session scheduled for the next week. The session is a culmination of data collection including Social Media Analysis, Residential and Visitor Surveys, 1:1 Interviews, Travel Agent Focus Groups and Regional Destination "Competitors". Some positive key insights gained from the last session included that the Pier and the beach are our greatest assets, as are our luxury accommodations, the walkability of the community and dining establishments. Some of the negative perceptions included homelessness, safety, cleanliness, high cost of living and purchase power, not enough "new" things to do, and not enough new hotels being constructed. She addressed the next steps to be taken will include what we as a group can do to begin to improve visitor perception of our brand.

CEO Update: Kerns reminded the Committee of the upcoming TMD Increase letter and spoke briefly to the rent issues and vacancies on Main Street.

For the Good of the Order Chairman Lehman called for the Good of the Order.

Adjournment: Being no items for discussion, Chairman Lehman adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.