

MINUTES
SANTA MONICA TRAVEL & TOURISM (SMTT)
MEETING OF THE SPECIAL ANNUAL JOINT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND TMD COMMITTEE - WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2021
DIGITAL ZOOM MEETING VIA SECURE LINK - 5:00PM

Call to Order: Vice-Chairman Gielicz called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

Roll Call & Self Introductions: Vice-Chairman Gielicz called for self-introductions. Board Members and those present provided brief self-introductions. The following persons were recorded in attendance:

Board Present: Vice-Chairman Albin Gielicz, Treasurer Neil Carrey, Secretary Jan Williamson, Member Lauralee Asch, Member Younes Atallah, Member Darlene Evans, Member Gerry Peck, Member Anuj Gupta, Member Jeff S. Klocke, and Member Rosemary Regalbuto.

TMD Present: Chairman Gerry Peck, Vice-Chairman Abraham Juarez, Secretary/Treasurer Aileen Carreon, Member Kevin Anawati, Member Younes Atallah, Member Sam Jagger, Member Juan Viramontes, and Member Erik Burkhart.

Also, Present: SMTT President/CEO Misti Kerns, SMTT Director of Operations Evan Edwards, SMTT CMO Kim Sidoriak, and SMTT Marketing Coordinator Christine Emhardt.

City Manager Update: City Manager Gupta discussed personnel changes at the city; Interim City Manager Lane Dilg will be departing in June. City Council is recruiting for a permanent City Manager to be hired before the end of May. Gupta shared the recruitment for a new Police Chief is underway. He then shared that Fire Chief Bill Walker will be leaving the city on June 4, 2021 and a search will be conducted for a replacement for this position as well. Gupta noted that a full recovery budget was released by staff and is available online for the public; two budget session meetings are scheduled for May 25 and 26, 2021, to be adopted on June 22, 2021. Council received the OIR report from the May riots and protests with forty-four recommendations; Council directed PD to come back within 60-days with a written implementation plan. Gupta shared information on the city's Economic Recovery Plan which included that the Task Force update will take place on June 8, 2021. The action items will focus on outdoor dining, the city's survey found that most residents and businesses want to keep outdoor dining. Treasurer Williamson asked for information about the city's plan to provide rent abatement on city leased property; Gupta stated that council provided direction on how to allocate the 29 million in American Rescue Plan funds and that staff is working on and will provide a report to council in June. Gupta will provide further information at the July board meeting. Vice-Chairman Gielicz asked for updates on the impact for vendors regarding the situation at the pier. Gupta shared that the city has been making an effort to get correct facts out to the public are located on the city website blog. Police say there's no indication that this is tied to gang activity. The city has done extensive outreach for lawful permitted vending and encourages all vendors to have a legal permit in an ordinance with what the city council adopted in 2019. Police and code enforcement have seen improvement in the core public safety front by removing large box trucks in the 1550 lot and lot 1 North. In addition, the city has increased fire department presence, making it safer, especially on the weekends. Gupta said this is not an easy solution and has met with vendor advocates, and they are trying to find a balance to ensure public safety.

Approval of the February 23, 2021 Tourism Marketing District TMD Meeting Minutes: Secretary/Treasurer Carreon presented the Meeting Minutes. Member Atallah moved to approve the minutes; Member Anawati seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Acceptance of the TMD Collections Memo: Secretary/Treasurer Carreon presented the TMD Collections Memo. Member Atallah moved to accept the TMD Collections Memo; Member Peck seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the March 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes: Secretary Williamson presented the Meeting Minutes; Treasurer Carrey moved to approve the minutes; Member Regalbuto seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Acceptance of February 2021 Financial Memo: Treasurer Carrey presented the February 2021 Financial Memo. Member Asch moved to accept the Financial Memo; Member Evans seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Acceptance of March 2021 Financial Memo: Treasurer Carrey presented the March 2021 Financial Memo. Member Regalbuto moved to accept the Financial Memo; Member Asch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

SMTT Staff Updates: Sidoriak shared that the Santa Monica Shines Spring Campaign will have elements incorporated from the “Make an Expression” Campaign that was briefly launched just prior to the pandemic. She reported on performance numbers for the first month of the Spring 2021 Campaign. SMTT is working with Visit California on a new joint campaign called the “What if” campaign and shared images from this and the Dreaming on Campaign that is being used as the main image on the Visit California website; She gave updated information on new SMTT digital content and showed the newest video from the Santa Monica Shines campaign. Kerns shared that the Santa Monica Pier was featured in the new Visit California Visitors Guide on a 2-page spread.

Kerns provided an update on Travel Industry Sales. TMD Secretary/Treasurer Carreon shared details on Virtuoso and how SMTT's new membership is a benefit for all. She shared that SMTT is hosting a destination webinar with the California Star Program; she explained that education is a form of international sales. Kerns gave updates on the ATI Co-op agreement with West Hollywood, and a virtual event with Brand USA and Visit California. Sidoriak explained Domestic Trade Programs; Travelzoo and the United Campaign. Kerns shared information on Visit California's Virtual Luxe Event. She updated that Director Wright is currently in Phoenix at GMITE and gave feedback that travel interest is very high. She shared that SMTT did destination webinars with Visit California and Virtuoso for top potential and current clients.

Edwards provided Visitor Services updates for Rachel Lozano's absence. She gave updates on PPP Covid Safety Upgrades; shared that the Visitors Centers are now open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.. She stated they are in a final implementation phase of a cloud-based point of sale (POS) system. Edwards thanked everyone who attended the successful beach cleanup; she shared that local businesses are interested in cleanup partnerships moving forward. Edwards provided that SMTT returning staff, Sue Skaggs and Danny Tec both Travel Specialists are back and that we onboarded additional new staff members, Ozzie Otero Sales and Services Manager, Christine Emhardt Marketing Coordinator, Ryan Burton Senior Administrative Assistant, Kevin Linares Client Services Coordinator. She gave an update on upcoming hires that include a Communications Director, Public Relations Manager, Public Relations Coordinator, Travel Specialists, and a Sales Manager.

CEO Update: Kerns provided background and information on the importance of the role for our Communications department positions. She shared that nominations for officers of the SMTT Board of Directors are official open please let current EOC or Misit know if you are interested in serving. The vote for Officers for FY 20201/2022 will take place at our July board meeting.

Approval of SBA Resolutions: Treasurer Carrey presented the SBA Resolution for approval. Member Regalbuto moved to approve the SBA Loans Fund Resolution; Member Asch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of PPP Resolutions Treasurer Carrey presented the PPP Resolution for approval. Member Regalbuto moved to approve the PPP Resolution; Member Asch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote on 2022 TMD Increase: TMD Chairman Peck brought forward a discussion on the approval of increasing TMD assessment fees, \$.10 for Tier 3 and \$.25 for Tiers 1 & 2 and to officially move the start of 2022 collections from July 1, 2021 to January 1, 2022. Chairman Peck asked for a motion to approve the increased fees and to officially move the collections start date to January 1, 2022. Member Atallah moved to approve the TMD increases and new start date; Member Viramontes seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

For the Good of the Order: Vice-Chairman Gielicz called for the Good of the Order. Treasurer Carrey shared information on the Chris Carrey Scholarship PAL Education Fund and extends the invitation for June 3, 2021, 5 p.m. and thanked SMTT for the donation.

Public Comment: Vice-Chairman Gielicz called for public comment. There was none.

Adjournment in honor of Joyce Syme, Owner of the Sea View Motel: Vice-Chairman Gielicz moves to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Member Regalbuto, the meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.