

CITY OF MORRO BAY

TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MINUTES – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: JOAN SOLU, ALEX AMINI, NICK MENDOZA, JOHN MEYERS (TELECONFERENCED)

MEMBERS ABSENT: JAYNE BEHMAN, KAREN BIAGGINI, MICHELE JACQUEZ

STAFF PRESENT: JAMIE BOUCHER, CITY CLERK

OTHERS PRESENT: SHARI CLARK, BCA
CRAIG SCHMIDT, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by Chair Solu.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Eileen Barbara advertised an upcoming fundraising event benefitting the MBHS Soccer Program. They are hosting a Beach Soccer Tournament on Sunday, October 28th featuring a visiting professional soccer team. They also asked the board for lodging and food for 5 players and a coach/manager for a one night stay. Chair Solu will make contact with them to see if they could help.

III. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Solu announced that it was MBHS Homecoming Week; the Morro Bay Beer Fest is being held on Saturday, October 20th at Tideland Park; and the Annual Fish Fry is being held at St. Timothy's on Saturday, October 27th.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Member Meyers motioned for approval of the Special Meeting minutes of August 23, 2012 and the regular minutes of September 13, 2012. The motion was seconded by Member Mendoza and passed unanimously 4-0.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Discussion of Lease Term Agreements for the Future Visitor Center at 255 Morro Bay Blvd
Chair Solu related that each member of the board was provided a copy of the signed lease via email and the building will be available to them on October 20, 2012. The landlord will be doing the landscaping, there will be a split on costs of an outdoor deck; the Board will be responsible for any additional painting and for the flooring; and there will be a temporary handicapped ramp installed.

There was discussion of the insurance policy and the importance of having it by October 20th.

MOTION: Member Mendoza moved for adoption of the lease as presented. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and passed unanimously 4-0.

- B) Continued Discussion on a Mobile-friendly App for MorroBay.org
Shari Clark negotiated with JackRabbit for the possibility of decreasing their annual/monthly fee but JackRabbit is so far standing firm. Shari thought that BCA could probably do a build out of the app for approximately \$7,500 and the annual upkeep would be much less.

Member Meyers reinforced that the mobile app is a really important step in moving forward. He also felt that maybe the item should be tabled for 30-60 days until the Director of Tourism was on board.

Shari Clark would like to talk to the TBID Website Sub-Committee to be able to provide them with BCA's hard numbers as well as to discuss the need/desire to provide a "click to call" app.

ACTION: Shari and the Website Sub-Committee to meet and discuss numbers and ideas; then this item will be brought back to the next regular meeting.

VI. MONTHLY REPORTS

- A) Visitors Center Report
Chamber CEO Craig Schmidt provided an update on the activity at the Visitor's Center.
- B) BCA Advertising Agency Report
Shari Clark, BCA representative, provided an update on the marketing and advertising report.
- C) Trade Show Sub-Committee
Chair Solu provided an update on the amazing success of the Savor the Central Coast event.
- D) Web Site Sub-Committee - Did not meet
- E) Hotel Packaging Sub-Committee Report – Did not meet
- F) Creative Sub-Committee Report – Did not meet
- G) Public Relations Sub-Committee – members not in attendance at the meeting
- H) Budget Sub-Committee Report –
Member Solu took the hotelier's request for additional funding to the City Council; Council approved the additional \$58,500 for marketing efforts and \$10,000 for Visitor Center site improvements. Hoping to have a committee meeting prior to the November regular meeting.

- I) VCB/CBID Reports
The Savor the Central Coast was very successful and Morro Bay was predominantly represented.
- J) Review of Transient Occupancy Tax
Chair Solu provided the quarterly TOT report.
- K) Tourism Bureau Formation Business Sub-Committee Report
Member Amini and Member Mendoza will meet to go over insurance issues to ensure there is \$1,000,000 in place by October 20th.
- L) Tourism Bureau Hiring Process Sub-Committee Report
There were over 100 applications received; interviews for 8 candidates are scheduled for October 18th; the interview panels will consist of the TBID Board Members and 3 community members; the City will provide 2 facilitators; application packets will be available for the panel's review by October 15th in the a.m.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Schedule a Mid-Year Review meeting with all Hoteliers/Stakeholders in November, 2012

Discussion was held regarding the best date and time to hold this review meeting.

MOTION: Member Mendoza moved that the Mid-Year Review/Update meeting with all Hoteliers/Stakeholders be held on Thursday, November 29, 2012 at 10am at the La Serena Inn. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and passed unanimously 4-0.

- B) Discussion of Off-season Occupancy Rates and possible Events or Promotions that might help

Member Amini brought this item forward as there seems to be a lack of events going on in the off season (November/December). He suggested forming a sub-committee to search for/research ideas that might be feasible during that time.

Chair Solu stated that they didn't want to become a physical events board and their strength was in the marketing of events.

Member Mendoza felt that if we found out what local events might be occurring during that time, they could be solicited and offered financial marketing help that way there aren't more events but instead there is better marketing of already existing events.

Member Meyers stated that there was an opportunity to utilize Morro Bay Golf Course as it is widely known as the "poor man's Pebble Beach".

ACTION: Bring this item back to the next regular meeting for further discussion.

- C) Discussion of Release of funds to the Morro Bay Tourism Bureau
Chair Solu stated that they needed to make an official request of funds from the TBID to the Tourism Bureau so that leases can be paid, bank accounts set up, furniture purchased, etc...

MOTION: Member Mendoza moved to request \$20,000 from the City of Morro Bay to be released to the Morro Bay Tourism Bureau to begin being able to do business as the Morro Bay Tourism Bureau. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and passed unanimously 4-0.

- D) Discussion of Restaurant Month – January 2013
Discussion was held about bringing back Restaurant Month. It would entail advertising set menus for a fixed price. This could also encompass hotels packaging these restaurant deals. The package could be sent out on an email blast focusing on both tourists and locals.

They requested the Chamber send both the TBID and BCA their database listing of restaurants to include contact information and email addresses.

There was consensus to have each participating restaurant set their price with given guidelines (ie: 3 course meal; for 1 or for 2; and/or...)

MOTION: Member Meyers moved to make January 2013 Restaurant Month and start promoting it as soon as possible. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and passed unanimously 4-0.

- E) Discussion of Retaining Legal Counsel to negotiate Contracts for Morro Bay Visitor Center, Flow of TBID Funds, Regional Marketing Funds, and BCA Contract
The Budget SubCommittee has been in touch with John Lambeth's office for a quote. The bid came in at \$2500 which would include 4 rounds of revisions and negotiations of the necessary contracts.

MOTION: Member Mendoza moved to retain John Lambeth's services to negotiate the required contracts for \$2,500. The motion was seconded by Member Meyers and passed unanimously 4-0.

- F) Discussion of the 2012/2013 California Welcome Centers/Certified Contract
Shari Clark with BCA let the group know that we initiated our one year contract last November and it is up on October 31, 2012. It is up to the board if we want to renew it or not. As background, the TBID supplied fulfillments in many CA Welcome Centers as well as 4 International Airports. We have the option to renew the contract for \$2850 or make amendments as deemed appropriate.

Chair Solu suggested doing less airport rack cards and taking the money and making a video to post at some of the Welcome Centers.

There was ongoing discussion about the best Welcome Centers and Airports to keep advertising tools in. Member Amini wasn't in favor of the entire concept as there is no way to measure the success/benefit.

ACTION: Bring this back to the next regular meeting after checking into the possibility of going straight video and visitor's guides in the CA Welcome Centers in Pismo, Oxnard, Salinas and San Francisco (as long as they have video); say no to rack cards and only advertise in 2 airports – San Jose and Burbank. In addition, there is the need to check into possible advertising at the SLO and the Santa Maria Airport(s).

VIII. DECLARATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- A) Continued discussion on Mobile Friendly App for MorroBay.org.
- B) Restaurant Month Update
- C) Approval of Legal Counsel Contract(s)
- D) Discussion on Interest in Obtaining an Official Weather / Webcam Channel in Morro Bay for the Website
- E) Finalize Plans for Mid-Year Review Meeting with all Hoteliers/Stakeholders in November 2012
- F) Continued Discussion of 2012/13 California Welcome Centers/Certified Contracts

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.