

CITY OF MORRO BAY

TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MINUTES – THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: JOAN SOLU, ALEX AMINI, NICK MENDOZA, JOHN MEYERS, JAYNE BEHMAN, KAREN BIAGGINI, MICHELE JACQUEZ

MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE

STAFF PRESENT: JAMIE BOUCHER, CITY CLERK

OTHERS PRESENT: SHARI CLARK, BCA
SHARON BUFO, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Solu.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - None

III. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Solu announced that Thanksgiving is coming up; there is a Veteran's Day event on Market Street; she congratulated MBHS on qualifying for a CIF Football game and wished them luck; MBHS Music Boosters will be selling Poinsettias and Christmas Trees as a fundraiser; and, the Lighted Boat Parade is being held on Saturday, December 1st.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Member Mendoza motioned for approval of minutes from the October 11, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded by Member Meyers and passed unanimously 6-0-1 with Member Behman abstaining as she was did not attend that meeting.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Continued Discussion on a Mobile-friendly App for MorroBay.org

Shari at BCA was tasked with finding out what JackRabbit can do for Morro Bay vs what BCA can do. Shari has continued with her negotiations with JackRabbit but it still remains cost prohibitive. There was board consensus that we don't need a booking site, just a mobile site that gives Morro Bay a mobile presence.

MOTION: Member Jacquez motioned BCA move forward with their original estimate of \$3240 for the mobile site. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and carried unanimously 7-0.

- B) Restaurant Month Update
Shari has been working on creating a new webpage that will link to Restaurant Specials and Deals. They will also be sending out an email blast to restaurants to see who is interested in participating in this event. This item was informational only.
- C) Approval of Legal Counsel Contracts
Contracts aren't available as of yet and may need to be presented at a special meeting. Member Meyers hoped that we could delegate authority to a sub-committee to review the contracts as they are provided/negotiated and then assuming they are legally compliant, move forward. Member Jacquez was comfortable with a sub-committee review but wanted to ensure she was allowed to see them before their implementation. The contracts needing to be completed are the Visitor Center contract, the BCA contract and the contract for the general fund assessment and BID monies. Member Biaggini reiterated that the time frame is very short so that they can be heard before the City Council in December.
- D) Finalize Plans for Mid-Year Review Meeting with all Hoteliers/Stakeholders in November 2012
There was discussion as to whether or not to move forward with this meeting as scheduled in late November or whether to wait for the Director of Tourism to be hired and hold the meeting at the same time as a meet and greet. Members Amini, Biaggini and Mendoza were in favor of holding the meeting in conjunction with the opening of the Visitor's Center. Member Behman disagreed stating that this meeting is held every year and feels it's important to be consistent. She volunteered to organize the meeting and hold to the original date and time – November 29th at 11am at the La Serena Inn.
- E) Continued Discussion of 2012/13 California Welcome Centers/Certified Contracts
There was continued discussion on placement of printed medium and/or video in California Welcome Centers. Shari presented new estimates/options for placement of medium that included video which the members felt were cost prohibitive. There were discussions on which locations to place rack cards/visitor's guides with an emphasis on looking at Mammoth or Yosemite instead of Barstow and San Bernardino. Shari will bring back distribution numbers at the current sites and give updated prices on the new desired locations. Member Biaggini hoped that BCA can bring back recommendations on where to place the printed material for no more \$3,000. Member Jacquez agreed but didn't want to limit it at \$3,000 but instead \$5,000 or \$6,000 just to see what else is out there.

VI. MONTHLY REPORTS

- A) Visitors Center Report
Chamber's Visitor Center Manager Sharon Bufo 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 – did not meet
 - 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 – did not meet
 - H) Budget Sub-Committee Report
The committee met with BCA and focused on the additional \$58,500 that was received from the City for regional marketing. BCA will be coming back in December with an updated budget. There was also discussion on the renovations that have been made and will be made to the new Visitor’s Center site. To date, everything is coming in at or below cost.
 - I) VCB/CBID Reports
The preliminary numbers from the Savor event showed that everything was substantially up.
 - J) Review of Transient Occupancy Tax
Chair Solu provided the quarterly TOT report.
 - K) Tourism Bureau Formation Business Sub-Committee Report
Member Mendoza stated they are working on liability insurance for the Visitor’s Center. They received a quote for \$2251 for the year. They still need to look for Worker’s Compensation insurance but first needed a number of employees and volunteers that will need to be covered.
- MOTION: Member Mendoza motioned for approval of the Liability Insurance quote, the use of the Visitor’s Center as the billing address and to set up the billing on a 10 month cycle for now. The motion was seconded by Member Biaggini seconded and passed unanimously 7-0.
- L) Tourism Bureau Hiring Process Sub-Committee Report
They are currently checking references on a candidate and hope to be ready to begin negotiating a contract by the end of the week. Will keep the Board informed. The goal is to have a DOT on board by the last week in November.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Info Board Electronic – Visitor Center Presentation
A presentation was made by Trendera and Joe Stennett and Earl regarding Info Boards. They specialize in Visitor Services and Visitor Displays. Board discussion centered on the possible locations of the boards, how many they can place, cost of placement, can there be phone lines, can it/they be linked to the morrobay.org site and how much content control does the TBID have? There was Board consensus and enthusiasm to move forward with this concept.

MOTION: Member Biaggini motioned to approve the plan to move forward with the Infoboard Interactive Touch Screen System at the new Visitor

Center location. The motion was seconded by Member Mendoza and passed unanimously 7-0.

- B) Release of Funds for the Morro Bay Tourism Bureau for November and December
There is a need for the release of funds from the City in order to pay bills (rent, utilities, insurance, marketing costs, etc.), make payroll and move forward with plans.

MOTION: Member Mendoza motioned to request a release of \$50,000 of assessment funds as well as the \$10,000 in Visitor Center improvement funds from the City of Morro Bay. The motion was seconded by Member Jacquez and passed unanimously 7-0.

- C) Discussion on Obtaining an Official Weather / Webcam Channel in Morro Bay for the Website

To date, Shari has made numerous attempts to make contact with Rick Turton regarding this but has had no luck. She will keep pursuing this and hopes that if any board member sees Mr. Turton, they can bring this up with him.

- D) Discussion of Launch Event for Visitor Center/DOT

Discussion was held regarding the Grand Opening of the Visitor's Center. There was thought to try for a December 1st opening in conjunction with the Lighted Boat Parade. A majority of the board felt that was too premature for a variety of reasons which include not having a contract for the Visitor's Center as of yet as well as hoping to be able to remain open after the Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting. There was further discussion to plan the opening around the Winter Bird Festival. This item will be brought back to the next meeting for further discussion.

- E) Selection of Day of Week, Time and Location for Morro Bay Tourism Bureau Regularly Scheduled Meetings

The Board discussed what day, time and location would work best for the Tourism Board meetings in 2013. There will also need to be regularly schedule TBID meetings quarterly.

MOTION: Member Mendoza motioned that starting in January; hold their meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 9:00am and to work with the City for a location. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and passed unanimously 7-0.

- F) Discussion of Request for City to Post Visitor Serving Web-site on City Entrance Signs

There was discussion to request the City add "morrobay.org" to the City entrance signs. There was added discussion that maybe it's not the lack of signage but instead the ineffectiveness of the signage that is the problem. Morro Bay Beautiful is working on the signage at the kiosk at the Main Street exit and the board should make efforts to work with them to ensure that appropriate visitor serving signage and language is placed there. There were additional thoughts to form a short-term sub-committee to look at effective signage as there was

disagreement on the advertising terms - direct people to the website or to the Visitor Center? There is also a need to work with CalTrans to help with effective signage

MOTION: Member Biaggini moved the board look at the 3 entry sign assets – City owned signs at Highway 41 and Highway 1 South and work on signage directing “next exit to Visitors Center” and that we create a tag for the top of the existing billboard that does the same. The motion was seconded by Member Jacquez and carried unanimously 6-0 (member Behman had to leave the meeting)

G) Discussion of Request for City to Post Directional Visitor Center Notices on Signs

There was discussion to form a sub-committee to look at City signage within City limits with the goal of providing better visitor-serving needs. A Sub-Committee was formed consisting of Members Behman, Amini and Jacquez. They will meet and report back at the December or January meeting.

H) Discussion of Request for Marketing of the 2012 Morro Bay Lighted Boat Parade
Chamber CEO did discuss this with Shari at BCA requesting funding for marketing of the event. Member Biaggini stated that this is a SLO County event and it is within reason to reach out in the community to do some regional advertising.

MOTION: Member Jacquez moved the Board allocate \$1500 to help support the marketing and promotion efforts of the Lighted Boat Parade at the request of the Chamber, earmarked out of the general fund monies in addition to changing out some of our banner ads. The motion was seconded by Member Mendoza and passed unanimously 6-0.

I) Approval of Compensation Package for Director of Tourism

There was consensus that the bonus program should be incentive based as well as “start over” each calendar year. Member Meyers will prepare the incentive package so that negotiations for hire can begin.

MOTION: Member Biaggini moved for the creation of a matrix for bonus compensation based on presented information to the board so they can move forward with negotiating a hiring package. The motion was seconded by Member Amini and passed unanimously 6-0.

VIII. DECLARATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 a.m.