



Maryland Tourism Development Board Business Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 28, 2020

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

The Maryland Inn, Annapolis, MD 21401

Roll Call

MTDB, Casey Jenkins, Melonie Johnson, Senator Katie Fry-Hester, Dan Spedden, Del. Wendell Beitzel

Also in attendance: Ruth Toomey, MTC; Amanda Hof, Howard County; Jason Aul, St. Mary's County

COMMERCE: Tom Riford, Liz Fitzsimmons, Brian Lawrence, Rianna Wan, Greg Bird, Julia Bouie

Call to Order/Welcome – Casey Jenkins, Delta Hotel North by Marriott

Casey Jenkins called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in the absence of Board Chair, Judy Bixler who notified the Board in advance that she could not attend. The Board extended greetings and appreciation to Judy in absentia.

Executive Director's Report: Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, Office of Tourism and Film

Liz thanked everyone for their investment of time for the session in October and noted that the Board was heard very clearly. To provide more frequent communication, the Board will receive more frequent email updates regarding news and happenings in tourism/Commerce and electronic versions of new publications as completed. Assistant Secretary Tom Riford thanked the Board and OTD for the great work performed. He also commented on attending the Legislative and Senate sessions today supporting bills that directly affect tourism businesses. Liz directed the Board's attention to the Fiscal Year 2019 Tourism Development Board Annual Report and Fiscal Year 2020 Tourism Marketing and Development Plan included in the Board packets. Liz highlighted new OTD products:

Following in His Footsteps – Frederick Douglass Driving Tour from his beloved birthplace to his liberation and triumphant homecoming.

Please take a moment to check out the new Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman statues in the State House Old House Chamber today.

Legislative Update:

Budget Bill HB150, making the proposed appropriations contained in the State Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, in accordance with Article III, Section 52 of the Maryland Constitution was heard last Friday. Liz thanked Casey Jenkins for giving testimony for the Hearing before the Appropriations

Subcommittee's Education and Economic Development and Gigi Windley of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation and Ruth Toomey, of the Maryland Tourism Coalition for their support of the Maryland Tourism Development Board Budget.

SB 190, making the proposed appropriations contained in the State Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, in accordance with Article III, Section 52 of the Maryland Constitution will be heard later today before the Senate Budget and Tax Education, Business and Administration subcommittee at 12 noon. Dan Spedden, Matt Libber of the Maryland SoccerPlex and Debbie Gosselin of Watermark will provide testimony before the Senate Budget and Tax Education, Business and Administration subcommittee.

General Updates: Liz shared Secretary Kelly Schulz, Blog Post, (copy in your Board packets) "We're fighting for our business community" and heed her call. The tourism industry truly aligns with her guiding principle at Maryland Commerce that economic development is "prosperity with a purpose". In her blog, she makes an appeal for businesses to call your lawmakers and invite them to visit. Post about what you do and why it matters on social media. Write letters to the editor. Tell the world—what's your purpose? What does your company do for Maryland? How do you serve your clients? Who are the people you employ, and how are you helping them advance their careers?

Also, in your packets, is information from US Travel Association, the nation's travel coalition, on the annual legislative day "Destination Capitol Hill" scheduled for April 1 and 2nd.

Strategic Board Retreat Update: The definition of the Maryland Tourism Development Board was taken from the synopsis of the enabling legislation back in 1993. The Maryland Office of Tourism's mission is to stimulate and drive Maryland's thriving tourism economy with a primary goal of creating a place for all Marylanders to live, work and play. Or, more simply: MORE CUSTOMERS. MORE REVENUE. MORE JOBS. After the Board's retreat, the staff went through a similar process. We worked on aligning the mission the staff developed and aligned it with the Board's mission. The aligned mission reads: We stimulate and support Maryland's thriving tourism economy with a goal of creating a great place for our visitors and for Marylanders to live, work and play. This is the first time these have ever been aligned.

Judy Bixler and the team from MTC went to meet with Senator Brinkley – Secretary of Budget and Management. The Maryland Tourism Development Board budget increased \$500,000. There was discussion on the Tourism Tax Codes (in your packet – the FY 2020 Maryland tourism tax codes for the first six months and they have increased nearly 7 percent. Much growth in Tax Code 901 – this probably can be attributed to sales tax collection on platform lodging such as Airbnb and VRBO.

Maryland Office of Tourism Development & Marriner Marketing Ad Effectiveness & ROI Study (Post Campaign) Report: Liz presented information on how OTD is using research to drive marketing platforms. Marriner Marketing, our ad agency, and Destination Analyst, a market research company, conducted an advertising effectiveness study on behalf of the Maryland Office of Tourism highlighting the campaign's effectiveness and the significant economic impact the study had on the state from April through September 2019. This on-line survey-based research was conducted after the commencement of the OTD FY 2019 advertising campaign, with the primary objective of measuring trips to Maryland

(between the spring and summer season of 2019) motivated by the campaign and estimating the economic impact of this incremental travel to the state. Key findings from the report which include:

More than 53,500 incremental trips to Maryland

More than 123,000 incremental visitors to Maryland

\$45.4 million in direct spending from incremental visitors in Maryland

\$6.2 million in tax revenue for the local government from the direct visitor spend

31:1 return on investment, meaning that for every dollar spent on advertising, \$31 flowed back into the state's economy

Most impressive of the statistics was the 31:1 ROI. Also significant was identifying the top 4 travel motivators - local seafood, bond with family, coastline and water, and relaxation.

Website Update: Liz informed the Board that OTD challenged our current vendor to build a much-needed new site that captures Maryland's personality with a casual sophistication with a hint of quirkiness. A hub content strategy based on the Advertising Effectiveness report will be used. Each hub will contain Trip Ideas – inspirationally written reasons to experience Maryland, Things to do and See and related towns to those activities.

Media Plan: OTD research guides the media plan recommendations of \$2 million for the spring (we spent \$984,000 in the fall winter). For FY21, the MTDB proposed budget is \$10.7 million with \$2.5 million for the DMO Grant program. OTD generated \$45 million in positive publicity around the release of the movie Harriet and has begun training our Chesapeake Bay waterman on the tourism side of their business to earn more money. Our advertising campaign is up for the Baltimore ADDY Consumer Integrated Campaign—Regional/National Consumer ad campaign using more than one medium that appears in more than one market (DMA). Winners will be awarded by March 5. OTD often shows one byway or product at a time, Liz shared the new byway reel which is a combination of many videos produced in line with the philosophy of OPEN FOR IT!

DMOs – Amanda Hof, Ruth Toomey and Dan Spedden reported out on events in their areas.

Adjournment

Casey Jenkins reminded the Board of our upcoming meetings. For our September 10, meeting plan on hanging around as the Navy-Blue Angels will practice at 3:00 that day.

Thursday, June 25, 2020

Time: 10:00 AM– 11:30 AM, Location: TBD

Thursday, September 10, 2020 (Fleet Week)

Time: 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, Location: TBD

Monday, November 16, 2020 @MTTS

Time: TBD, Location: MD Live! Hotel and Casino at Arundel Mills

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made, seconded and unanimously approved, the meeting was declared adjourned.