



MARYLAND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT BOARD

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 10, 2020

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM - (Virtual Conference Meeting)

ATTENDANCE

Maryland Tourism Development Board (MTDB): Judy Bixler, G. Hale Harrison, Monroe Harrison, Michael James, Casey Jenkins, Cara Joyce, Ali Von Paris, Dan Spedden, Cassandra VonHooser

Executive Directors Council to the Maryland Tourism Development Board: Amy Rohrer, Maryland Hotel & Lodging Association, Kevin Atticks, Brewers Association of Maryland, Deborah Carter, Maryland Association of Campgrounds, Mary Presley, Maryland Motorcoach Association, Roseanne Souza, Maryland Tourism Education Foundation, Jordyn Brand, Maryland Million, MD Horse Breeders Association (for Ross Peddicord).

Destination Maryland Organization (DMO): Ashli Workman, Allegany, Dani Bottcher, Annapolis and Anne Arundel Conference and Visit, Majorie Hampson and Daniel Singh, Baltimore County, Hilary Dailey, Calvert, Bonnie Staub, Carrol, Ashley Chenault, Charles County, Sandy Turner, Cecil, Amanda Fenstermaker, Dorchester, Amanda Hof, Howard County, Jana Carter, Kent, Leslie Graves, George Cooley, Rhonda Walker, Maria Montero, Prince Georges, Mary Wagner, St. Marys, Kelly Groff, Montgomery, Heather Tinelli, Queen Anne, Melonie Pursel, Worcester, Ruth Toomey, Maryland Tourism Coalition

Commerce: Tom Riford, Assistant Secretary, Division of Tourism, Film, and the Arts, Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, Department of Commerce Office of Tourism and Film, Julie Woepke, Executive Director, Brian Lawrence, Assistant Director, Advertising and Content, Rich Gilbert, Travel Trade Sales Manager, Rianna Wan, Research Analyst, Lucy Chittenden, Assistant Director, Interactive Services, Marci Ross, Assistant Director, Tourism Development, Cynthia Miller, Director, Office of Strategic Partnerships and PR, Greg Bird, Web Development/Customer Service Coordinator, Julia Bouie, Executive Assistant/Maryland Tourism Development Board Liaison

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – Judy Bixler, Maryland Tourism Development Board Chair

Judy Bixler, Board Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Participants were made aware that this meeting was being recorded. Unanimous approval of the 6/25/20 meeting minutes was granted with a motion by Dan Speeden and seconded by Cara Joyce.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, Office of Tourism and Film

Tom Riford thanked everyone for attending the meeting and remarked that the MTDB has long served as a productive advocate, advising, governing and promoting tourism efforts in Maryland. Times have been very challenging for Commerce and the tourism industry however we have shown the world how to persevere, overcome and adapt. We are moving forward and today we will share some pretty amazing work going on here.

Liz Fitzsimmons, OTD Managing Director, began the meeting speaking about how important it is to have a clear vision and mission.

- **Vision:** Maryland leads the way as one of America's most exciting, diverse and welcoming destinations, creating memories and experiences for visitors worldwide to enjoy.
- **Mission:** We stimulate and drive Maryland's thriving tourism economy, with a primary goal of creating a great place for all Marylanders to live, work and play.

The tourism industry is very resilient, jobs are coming back and she is optimistic. The Maryland Department of Commerce launched the *MasksOnMaryland* campaign to encourage residents as well as visitors to wear masks properly, practice social distancing, and adhere to Centers of Disease Control hygiene practices in order to fight a surge of COVID-19 cases. The campaign, which features the tagline "*Only You Can Keep Maryland Open for Business*," includes a series of announcements being aired throughout the state on local radio stations, as well as social media outreach. PSA radio spots were recorded by Dr. Liz Delasobera, MedStar, Naijha Wright, Land of Kush, Mark Andrews, Baltimore Ravens and more. Costs were reimbursed by Cares Act funding. Hashtags #MasksOnMaryland; #MDinFocus; #PhysicalDistancing.

Governor Larry Hogan proclaimed September as *International Underground Railroad Month* for the second year in a row. This is a great campaign with lots of support from DMOs and tourism directors. Social media coverage has also been big. We thank Cassandra Vanhooser and the OTD team for their work with the ceremony celebrating the *2nd Annual International Underground Railroad Month* and the unveiling of new outdoor exhibits at the Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe.

OTD launched our new website embracing the colors red, black and gold in our Maryland flag. We are very excited about our new look. Please visit:
https://www.visitmaryland.org/?gclid=CjwKCAiAv4n9BRA9EiwA30WND2L1DGMn2qyNB3XaEnflWypvtHWT6d9i5j9ORzXHAtLX6iQMwVvx2xoCfv0QA_vD_BwE.

On September 2, 2020 our Welcome Centers reopened with a safe and comfortable environment.

Longwood and Miles - Impact on Travel plans reports: Please visit our industry site:
<http://industry.visitmaryland.org/research> for travel/tourism research reporting. Our web stats show

more people are comfortable with travel so we launched our Open for the Open Road campaign to drive traffic to hotels increasing overnight stays and to support our Open for the Bi-way campaign. More at <https://www.visitmaryland.org/open-road/open-road-itineraries>. OTD is also working on a deal component for the campaign, Rich Gilbert, Trade & Tour Manager, and Cynthia Miller, Director, Public Relations and Strategic Partnerships, provided updates on the work in their respective roles. DMOs provided updates for their respective regions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dan Spedden, seconded by Michael James made motions to adjourn. The meeting was declared adjourned at 12:00 PM by Board Chair, Judy Bixler.

Next Board Update:

Thursday, October 15, 2020 Time: 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm (virtual)

Next MTDB Business Meeting:

Thursday, November 19, 2020 Time: 10:30 a.m - 12:00 pm (virtual) - final 2020 meeting

Approved 11-19-20-JAB