



**MARYLAND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT (MTDB) BOARD
QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES**

June 7, 2024 | 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 pm
50 West Baltimore Street
Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ben Seidel, Real Hospitality Group
Del. Wayne Hartman, Maryland House of
Delegates
Chris Riehl, Rent-A-Tour
James Mathias, University of Maryland
Eastern Shore
Juan Carlos Linares, Federal Realty
Investment Trust
Rick Howarth, Levy Restaurants
Robert Arthur, The Ivy Hotel
Sandy Turner, Cecil County Tourism
Shelonda Stokes, Downtown Partnership
Cassandra Vanhooser, Talbot County
Department of Economic Development
and Tourism

Dave Ferraro, Friends of Patapsco
Valley State Park

MEMBERS ABSENT

Gerardo Martinez, Wild Kid Acres, LLC
Tonya Fitzpatrick, Esq., World Footprints,
LLC
Al Spence, A.S. Midway Tours
Melonie Johnson, MGM National Harbor
Leverne McElveen, Leverne McElveen &
Associates, LLC
Heather Shaffer Braue, CFG Bank Arena/Oak
View Group
Del. Melissa Wells, Maryland House of
Delegates
The Honorable Kate Frye-Hester, Maryland
State Senate

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Ruth Toomey, Maryland Tourism Coalition
Rachelina Bonacci, (for Ross Peddicord)

DESTINATION MARYLAND ORGANIZATIONS (DMO)

Dan Spedden, Visit Hagerstown & Washington
Kristen Goeller, Talbot County Economic
Development and Tourism
April Plummer, Queen Anne's County
Economic Tourism & Development
Shalyn Bolden, Kent County Economic and
Tourism Development
Holly Gilpin, Dorchester County Tourism

Jamie Williams, Kent County Tourism
Bonnie Staub, Carroll County Tourism
Trish McClean, Visit Baltimore
Austin Schneider, Visit Harford
Dave Ziedelis, Tourism Council of Frederick
Kristen Pironis, Visit Annapolis & Anne
Arundel County
Melanie Pursel, Worcester County
Leslie Graves, Prince George's County CVB

Amanda Hof, Howard County Tourism & Promotion
Tara Coursey, Caroline County
Justin Polizzi, Wicomico County Tourism

Economic Development & Tourism

COMMERCE STAFF:

Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director
Marci Ross, Tourism Development
Brian Lawrence, Advertising and Content
Cynthia Miller, Strategic Partnerships & PR
Rianna Wan, Research

Peter Ayeni, Tourism Development
Brian Lawrence, Advertising and Content
Greg Bird, IT
Julia Bouie, Administration

GUESTS

Mike Mason, Providence Strategies

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Having a Board quorum present, Seidel called the meeting of Friday June 7, 2024, to order and noted that the meeting is being recorded.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- b. Seidel called for a motion to approve the minutes of 4/12/24. A motion to approve was made and seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

III. BOARD OPENING REMARKS

- c. Board Co-Chair Seidel thanked Dan Spedden, President, Hagerstown Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau for hosting this joint meeting at the new Meritus Park. Spedden welcomed everyone and provided a brief history of the new park. Seidel remarked that this is the first time that the Maryland Tourism Development Board and the Maryland Destination Marketing Organization have met in one place on the same day. The synergy and partnership between the two organizations is paramount for the success of tourism to our great state.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- d. **DMO/MDMO presentation (Sandy Turner)**

Fitzsimmons introduced Sandy Turner, Maryland Tourism Development Board member and Cecil County Tourism Coordinator to present on Destination Marketing Organization and the Maryland Destination Marketing Organization (MDMO). Turner, a part of the organization's community for twenty-seven years explained that the initials DMO stand for *Destination Marketing Organization* - the principal organization responsible for leadership in tourism development and marketing within their jurisdiction. There are 25 recognized DMOs in Maryland. Turner provided details about DMO funding (can come from local government or occupancy taxes, membership dues, paid partnership projects, or a combination), structure (varies, some are local government or are 501C6 organizations),

staffing (ranges from 1 to an entire team with focus on sales, marketing, membership, public relations). Each jurisdiction has its own structure, funding sources, and staffing that suits their needs. Emphasizing the importance of the relationship with Fitzsimmons and the Office of Tourism (OTD), Turner stated that MDMO/DMOs benefit greatly from the annual marketing grants received through OTD and the Maryland Tourism Development Board. In 2008, the Maryland Tourism Promotion act delegated by law \$2.5 million in grant funding for DMOs. In addition to the annual grants, DMOs collectively invested more than \$10 million over the last several years, of their own funding, in marketing Maryland's tourism industry. Turner remarked that individually, DMOs could consider other DMOs to be competitors; in Maryland, DMOs work as a team. MDMO is the *Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organization*, an association of Maryland's twenty-five DMOs working together to develop tourism in all corners of the state, to elevate the tourism industry, collaborate with partners and foster awareness in partnership with the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC) and OTD. The association meets every other month and as part of the agenda receives updates and dialogue with partners, MTC and OTD. In 2007, three members of the association were added by legislation and appointment to the Maryland Tourism Development Board. After the presentation Board members suggested surveying the DMOs to see if the current grant formula works in the best interest of DMOs.

e. MARYLAND OFFICE OF TOURISM (OTD) UPDATE
Liz Fitzsimmons, Managing Director, Office of Tourism & Film

FY25 Marketing Plan Presentation: Fitzsimmons thanked the Board marketing committee for taking the time to hear the plans from the OTD team as they developed the marketing plan.

MTDB Marketing Committee

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Robert Arthur | 5. Sandy Turner |
| 2. Cassandra Vanhooser | 6. Ashley Chenault |
| 3. Dave Ferraro | 7. Tonya Fitzpatrick |
| 4. Chris Riehl | 8. Trish McClean |

Vision Statement

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 Statement

OTD stimulates and drives Maryland's thriving tourism economy, with a primary goal of creating a great place for all Marylanders to live, work and play.

Tourism is an economic ecosystem derived from visitor spending that delivers opportunity and quality of life for Marylanders.

MARKET EXPANSION

- Further promotional pushes in Cleveland, Pittsburgh and New York metro

LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS

- Working with private sector and county tourism offices on grants to generate overnight stays

MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES

- Looking for those events, trends and opportunities to showcase Maryland in a positive light - domestically and internationally

Transactional Outcomes = CUSTOMERS SPENDING TIME AND MONEY IN OUR STATE

Fitzsimmons presented the following statistics:

- Maryland & U.S. visitation volume percentage change
- Competitors' Visitation Volume in 2023 (Person-stays, in millions)
- Maryland Visitor Analysis – Share of Maryland visitation in 2023
- 023 vs 2022 Top 10 Origin DMA*
- 2023 vs 2022 Top 15 Activities for Travelers*
- FY24 Media Expenses by Campaign
- Holidays & Q1 ROI and Web Visitation
- Fall, Underground Railroad, and Byways ROI
- Holidays & Q1 ROI and Web Visitation
- Spring/Summer Campaign ROI
- 2024 Spring/Summer Campaign Flowchart
- Spring/Summer '24 Spend by Market

Marketing Plan – 5 leading (Differentiators)

- The Most Powerful Underground Railroad Storytelling Destination in the World
- Maryland's Trail System Second-to-None
- 18 Scenic Byways
- Fish & Hunt Maryland
- The Great Chesapeake Bay Loop

FY24 Media Expenses by Campaign

- Holidays & Q1 ROI and Web Visitation
- Fall, Underground Railroad, and Byways ROI
- Holidays & Q1 ROI and Web Visitation
- Spring/Summer Campaign ROI
- 2024 Spring/Summer Campaign Flowchart
- Spring/Summer '24 Spend by Market
- Spring/Summer Campaign by Channel: Video - \$134,400, Broadcast & Connected TV: \$1,459,000
- Spring/Summer Campaign by Channel: OOH (Outdoor): \$264,100
- Audio: \$134,400, Digital Display: \$913,500, sponsorship (Digital): \$55,000

MARKETING UPDATES

- Began incorporating Hispanic audience-targeted element into spring/summer campaign (+\$275K spend) and into others going forward
- Increased use of targeted geofencing: \$2.2-to-1 ROI on Atlantic City boat show; next will be Norwalk boat show in the fall
- Completed new winter-themed assets; created and will deploy new winter-themed TV spots
- Fish & Hunt Maryland joined with other agencies to push new marketing around eradication of invasive species initiative

RESEARCH UPDATES

Top 10 Website Content-(July 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024)

- Total website views increased 10% and sessions increased 15% YoY
- Home page visitation increased 22% YoY

Competitors Prospecting in our Region

- State Marketing Budget 2023
- Florida: \$54,456,106
- West Virginia: \$23,467,111
- Puerto Rico: \$17,600,000
- South Carolina: \$14,052,826
- Virginia: \$8,487,000
- Maryland: \$10,058,800
- Massachusetts: \$5,031,600
- Delaware: \$1,000,000

FISCAL YEAR 2021 - 2025 Maryland Tourism Development Board Budget

MTDB (Expenses) 2021 - 2025 MTDB	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022	Fiscal Year 2023	Fiscal Year 2024	Fiscal Year 2025
Domestic Advertising					
-Media Purchase	4,188,829	4,313,829	5,685,050	7,000,000	7,000,000
- Media Service Retainer	208,896	208,896	213,180	220,000	220,000
-Production	282,376	282,376	350,000	500,000	500,000
- Production Service Retainer	425,544	425,544	450,540	450,540	450,540
Sales Promotion					
-Domestic	30,000	30,000	50,000	50,000	41,000
-International *** (CRUSA and Canada)	450,000	450,000	600,000	600,000	599,460
- American Bus Association	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000

Printing & Production -- offset by special funds revenue	462,000	462,000	480,000	50,000	50,000
Press and Public Relations	182,030	182,030	182,030	200,000	200,000
Research	250,000	250,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Development Program					
- Matching Grants (PSGP/Open for IT!)	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
- Inquiry Fulfillment/Call Center	73,154	73,154	85,000	90,000	90,000
- Website Development/Maintenance	338,000	338,000	338,000	350,000	350,000
- Product Development (incl. grants match)	177,971	177,971	200,000	200,000	140,000
Total MTDB (Expenses)	8,193,800	8,318,800	10,058,800	11,135,540	11,066,000

- Advertising and Communications: \$8,170,540
- Domestic & International Sales and Promotions: \$599,460
- Publication Printing & Production: \$200,000*
- Digital Development: \$350,000
- Research: \$315,000
- Matching Grant Program: \$1,000,000
- Destination Marketing Organization Grants: \$2,500,000
- Inquiry Fulfillment & Call Center: \$90,000
- Tourism Development: \$140,000

Upcoming MTDB meetings

Friday, September 13, 2024

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: TBD

Friday, November 1, 2024

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Agenda: Annual Meeting with Chair/Executive Committee Elections

Location: TBD

Announcing Upcoming Event:

A VIRTUAL "VISIT" WITH THE MARYLAND OFFICE OF TOURISM

Date Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Time 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Where A Virtual Meeting via Google Meet

- Learn about who we are, what and how we inspire travelers to visit Maryland
- Guide your marketing decisions with visitation research
- Hear about seasonal and themed advertising and social media campaigns
- Gather ideas and tools to promote your destination/attraction/business
- Receive “Ways to Work with Us” Tool Kit to maximize opportunities to promote events, package and initiatives.

REGISTER HERE and find more information on industry.visitmaryland.org.

V. Adjournment and Upcoming Meetings

A motion was made and seconded for adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Friday, September 13, 2024 -Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: Merriweather Lakehouse Hotel

Friday, November 1 , 2024 Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: TBD