



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Jeffery Sayer, Director

IDAHO TRAVEL COUNCIL MEETING
Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, Idaho
May 6, 2014

Idaho Travel Council Members:

Doug Burnett, Region I
Lara Smith, Region II
Jim Manion, Region III
Diane Newman, Region IV
Bill Code, Region V
Courtney Ferguson, Region VI
Dick Andersen, Region VII
Paul Norton (Chair), At-Large

Commerce:

Matt Borud, Marketing & Business Development Administrator
Diane Norton, Tourism Manager
Cindy Lee, Grants & Contracts Officer
Amy Rajkovich, Administrative Assistant

8:09AM meeting called to order by Chairman Paul Norton

Paul greets the council and thanks Dick for his hospitality.
Council and audience introductions

Bill Code motions to approve the minutes with one amendment; Paul Norton needs to be reflected as chair.

Paul seconds. Ayes have it. No discussion. **Motion approved.**

Director's Welcome – Matt Borud (in place of Jeff Sayer)

- Thanks everyone for being here, and looks forward to seeing the presentations this afternoon
- Shows PSA by Governor Otter
- Matt reflects on the importance of tourism in our state

Budget Update – Diane Norton

- We have spent 75% of our administration budget
- Only 53% of program operations budget (fulfillment) has been spent, we are looking at areas to allocate the funds
- Collections are 8.24% over from last year
- 11.79% up in collections for March

- \$100K allocated for Canada, and it is in the process of being spent

Review/Explain Grant Presentation Process – Diane Norton

- Diane explains how the presentations will work today
 - Everyone has 15 minutes to be used as they please
 - There will be a 3 minute, 1 minute, and TIMES UP! warning
 - We will play Oscar music to escort you off the stage...

Grant Updates – Cindy Lee

- We are getting 95% of RFFs paid in 30 days
- Thanks Amy Rajkovich and Linda Sparks for their assistance in the granting process
- Cindy thanks everyone for their patience and productiveness with the new granting system

Other Business – Paul Norton

- Grant Award meeting will be in Coeur d'Alene August 11th & 12th
- October 6th, 7th, 8th in Moscow, Idaho Tentative
 - Chosen Dates: October 1st & 2nd

Southern Idaho Tourism – Debbie Dane

- There are 7 Chamber partners in the region, and they all work together to write one grant (operated by SIT)
- This year they used the funds to strengthen touch points with visitors
 - Spanish translations on website
- Market the promise of the area
- This year's funding: Purchase vertical video screens and appropriate software for the visitors center and investing in market research
- We have a tie between economic development and tourism that makes the region so unique

Sun Valley Marketing Alliance – Arlene Schieven

- Air Service Board is a new funding source for the Alliance
 - Only for markets where they have air service contracts
 - As the flights grow, we will grow our markets
- Most of the marketing dollars goes to external advertising
- Summer campaign focuses on arts and recreation
 - Coordinate funds and media plan with the resort
- Digital approach (80% of media buys)
- Flights to resume on May 22nd

Drake Cooper – Josh Mercaldo, Bill Drake, and Katherine LaMott

- Bill introduces the spring/summer campaign
 - It's an emotional connection with the audience
 - The way we sell Idaho in this piece is in a direct and emotional way
 - This campaign was completed in 90 days

- Strategy behind the summer campaign:
 - An emotional divergent from Vitamin ID
 - Research showed that families used the excuse of “their children were too young” to go on vacation
 - Theme: Kids grow up fast
 - People are not taking their vacation days, and we want to inspire them to come to Idaho
 - “You get closer by getting away”
- 18summers.us is compatible on mobile devices
- Docu-memory: a 4 minute video of candid family moments
- This is a highly social campaign
- Trending: What is the song at the beginning of the video, and what is happening to Tucker
- Sweepstakes shuts down on August 31st
- May 18, 2014: FSI drops with Madden Media
- The PSA with Governor Otter will run the last week of August, 18 Summers PSA will run the first three weeks of May
- 429million travel days are not taken off by Americans
 - Could be \$160billion into the travel market
- All 4 videos are available in YouTube and the 18summers.us microsite
- Local communities would be interested in adding a personal plug at the end of the video (call to action)
- We are sending three families on adventures this summer in order to create more footage for media purposes

Yellowstone Teton Territory – Donna Benfield

- Application includes marketing from Teton to Clark County
- YTT goal is to be the best advocate for tourism
- Both national parks can be enjoyed in this region for a lower price
- 81% of our purchases have come from email offers, the rest comes from organic traffic
- All the grantees in the region have agreed to work together in order to not overlap efforts
- Billboards, magazine publications, distribution fulfillment, new maps
- Website development, maintenance, and social media
- Travel shows
- Last year they stepped out of the box and hit a digital campaign and it is really working for their region
- Metrics and measurements really help in the application process

Snake River Territory - Michelle Holt

- We want to look at what our community has to offer without duplicating efforts
- Keeping tight to the billboard campaign due to passer-by travelers
- Will focus on sports and meeting and convention planning
 - Want to create a package of information regarding event space

- Looking to partner more with local businesses
- Investing in a digital art campaign geared towards kids and the “artitorium” program
- Want to host landing page for Trip Advisor
 - Still researching social media and digital campaigns to see what is the best method for their area
- Trade shows
- The sports facility did not break ground this year, but they have a hockey team locked down and are hoping to break ground in summer 2015

Moscow Chamber of Commerce – Gina Taruscio

- Thanks Diane, Amy, Cindy, and Lara for their efforts with this program
- Have grown their membership by 25% in the last year
- 130 at membership lunch (20 or 30 in years prior)
- We have the only permanent link off the Go Vandals website
- Trip Advisor hits have doubled
- On the cusp of the second printing of their visitors guide
- Focus is on branding the community, and this is the right time for us to do it
- Started with 2,500 dining guides, but they now print 5K every time (it is an extremely popular publication)

Greater Pocatello CVB – Matt Hunter & Bragitta Bright

- Implementation of Marketing plan to promote overnight stays at the lodging properties
 - Reunions, business meetings, conventions
- Hoping to bring more events to the area
- Maintenance of website
 - 89% increase of use at the lodging website
- Working to attract meeting planners and sporting events
- Pocatello Auditorium District has been working on a new events center, and should break ground in 2-3months
- Want to focus on event promotion
- Running events in the area are hitting capacity
 - Want to utilize on the visitors for these events
- Been working with lodging association on coordinating event promotion, logistics to see what events are bringing visitors to the hotels

Coeur d’Alene Chamber of Commerce – Katherine Coppock

- \$52M lodging tax generated in Kootenai County in the last 5 years
- Zip line opening in CdA this summer
- Racecda.com will host all races around the area
- Silverwood attendance continues to rise
- Holiday light show had an increase of 1,000 rooms this year
- Most visitors are from Washington, California, Idaho, Alberta, and BC

- Requesting funds in 2014 for visitor guide, participating in state coops for the Canadian markets, bringing more writers to CdA, video advertising, digital campaigns, website maintenance, considering a blog, FAM trips, trade shows

Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce – Kate McAlister

- Thanks the council and staff
- Direct marketing to Seattle, Portland, and Canada
- Late October international chef cook-off
- Will continue to appeal to the Boomer generation
 - More have been coming in late April and May
- Enhancing social media campaign
- Support “Spot” (public transportation)
- “What a Wonderful Pace” campaign (rollercoasters to kayaking on the lake)
- Dinner theater company starting in the area
 - Music and theater is becoming very predominant in the area
- Looking at a partnership with Silverwood for radio ads
- Looking at marketing classes, and want to beef up photography this year for marketing purposes
- Download of visitors guide nearly doubled
 - Many from Texas and the east coast
- Looking at hosting less writers with greater potential
- Want to create video vignettes

Post Falls Chamber of Commerce – Pam Houser

- Using more photos and less text in their marketing
- Working with a new marketing company
- Ran a Christmas campaign for the first time this year, and plan to do a similar campaign in the next grant cycle
- Requesting for video campaign
- Focus on social media campaign
- Last year has 9,000 visits to tourism website, and want to increase that number
- First visitor center when you get off the freeway when traveling in from Washington
- 100-130 visitors per week from out-of-town
- Full time employee hired for communication needs
- Looking at creating a 7 day guide of things to “eat, drink, and do” in Post Falls

North Idaho Tourism Alliance – Stephanie Sims

- Cooperatively market the 5 northern counties in Idaho
- Use funds to promote the region as a whole and to coop with their members to highlight individual community assets
- Want to enhance the regional website
- Want to continue the expansion of the PR by contracting with a PR professional

- Coop with state with advertising in niche markets
- Assist members in enhancing their own websites and want to provide training on social media updates
- Support members participation in trade shows
- Creating a NITA logo to create fluidity with members
- Requests for guides are up 200%+ from last year
- NITA members provide a cash-match of 35-55%

Break for Lunch

Southwest Idaho Travel Association – Christina Lenkowski

- Website gets 2,700 hits a month
- Has collaborated with Red Sky
- Attended 10 trade shows in the last year
- Continue to host writers in the region
- Are able to attract the international travelers through the international marketplace meetings

Boise CVB – John Cohen

- 96 bids out for meetings last year
- It's a challenge to identify which room nights are for leisure over business
- Seek an 8% increase in funding this next round
 - Media kit, print ads, and planning for editorial calendar
- Focal point for this year: website revamp
 - Create optimal results for search engines
- Invest in CRM program
- Continued support for Albertson's Open, Potato Bowl
- Three markets: leisure, meetings, and international

Nampa Chamber of Commerce – Debbie Kling

- 3rd largest city in the state
- The grant is mostly utilized in advertising
- They are still focused on their branding and creating who they are
- Established a tourism council and a grant administration team
- Working on website and branding
- Snake River Stampede rodeo is celebrating its 100th year next year, and we are looking forward to embracing and promoting it
- Focus on bringing more corporate meetings to the area
- State baseball championships are hosted in Nampa

Gold Buckle Champion – Sue Marostica

- Bringing in shows and contestants (many internationally) for Cutting Horse Shows, use this opportunity to show them what the state has to offer
- This would be a means to support sponsorships for events here

- These events need 1,200 hotel rooms in order to support shows
- Looking at selling “fun” as part of the shows, “A Taste of Idaho Adventure”
- This is an expensive sport to be a part of, hence there is a lot of expendable cash that competitors have to spend
- There would be a lot of collaboration with hotels in the area
- This is an initiative that needs to be administered by a single entity, not through a coop partnership with the other grantees (due to experience)

Destination Caldwell – Keri Smith-Sigman

- Wants to create things to do in Caldwell, so the next generation decides to stay and create their own families in Caldwell
- Funds will be spent on hiring Rodger Brooks to identify the unique quality that will bring people to Caldwell
- Want to create a brand marketing kit
- Working with SWITA to make this happen

Cascade Chamber of Commerce – Bobbie Patterson

- Want to focus on WHY people should come to Cascade
- Drive to Cascade, not through Cascade
- Were fortunate to have a very wealthy family come into the area and invest a lot of money into the areas resources
- Focus on bike challenges
- Focus on biking, snow mobiling, and RVing
- Only 104 hotel rooms in Cascade
- Would like to create some seasonal videos to put on the website
- Ontario to Boise shuttle bus; would like to put a billboard on the side of it
- Would like to go to two snowmobile shows this year

McCall Chamber of Commerce – McKenzie Christensen

- Website overhaul was one of the biggest moves with last year’s grant (still under construction, should be live by the end of June)
- Designed a new branding strategy and label: McCall Idaho: The Perfect Temperature
- Had a lot of coop advertising this past year
- Valley County was up 15% in lodging last year (highest ever)
- Focus on tri-cities areas (as well does Brundage) for marketing
- Want to dedicate funds towards coops
- Want to continue their work with Red Sky Relations
- Focus on social media
- Focus on event promotions
 - This year is the 50th anniversary of the McCall Winter Carnival
 - FAM tour January 15’
 - Taste of McCall
 - McCall Music Society
 - Donnelly Chamber of Commerce: Huckleberry Festival

- This year, a majority of our support will come from the community (matching funds)

Idaho Outfitters and Guides – John May

- 50th year of the Wilderness Act, 60th year of IOGA, and 65th anniversary of Idaho Fish and Game
- Marketing plan has changed at IOGA: focus on promoting the activities IOGA sponsors
 - Raft Idaho, Fish Idaho, Recreate Idaho, Hunt Idaho, etc.
- A lot of the things we sell are continuations of other reasons people come into the state
 - Business trip turned into a family vacation
- Concentrating on learning and creating partnerships with other groups to advertise all aspects of the state
 - Trade Shows
- Goals: Prioritize and promote outdoor activities (print, social media, video, television), attend and participate in trade shows and meetings, enhance user functionality of our website, partner with the state and other regional and multiregional groups in any coop opportunities, print advertising

Idaho RV Campground Association – Anne Chambers

- 20% of tourism inquiries were for RV Idaho
- 13% increase in lodging tax at private RV campgrounds
- Economic impact of camping dissected
- Funding for Campground Directory, RV Idaho brochure print, advertising, Canadian publications, website maintenance (26,000 visitors to the website last year, 89% were new visitors), social media
- Would like to change the idea of camping from a lodging activity to an outdoor recreational activity

Idaho Ski Area Association – Tom Stebbins

- Contract with Peak Video to create footage throughout the state that grantees are welcome to use (raw footage)
 - Create a two to three minute show from every ski area to post on social media
- Stevens Williams PR: focused on Seattle (Seattle Ski Show)
 - Spent more on a trade show than he had ever seen before
 - Hosted a media party
 - \$175,000 of earned media
- The reach keeps rising for this program

Yellowstone Park Trips – Florian Herrmann

- Visiting China because the community is looking for places to find clean air
- 1 out of 5 people in Yellowstone are visiting Idaho
- Next year, he hopes to create an online editorial for Idaho

Idaho Bed and Breakfast Association – Shar Scott

- Funding for map outlining major courses in the area
- Partnering with Idaho wineries and breweries
 - Creating map of locations throughout state
- Bicycle map showing trails throughout the state of Idaho
- Brochure with all the lodging in Idaho
- Three, possible five shows this year, including California
- Website revisions have been fabulous this year, and content management
 - You can make reservations for every lodging on their website
- Partnerships are strong
- Would like to create a larger partnership presence in Calgary
- Would like to market target audiences for brochure distribution
- Have captured 70 of the 200 bed and breakfasts in the state

North Central Idaho Travel Association – Terry O'Halloran

- Expanding winery region
- Arts and culture programming expanding
- Trying to highlight their attractiveness to visitors beyond outdoor recreation
- Use membership funds for their travel guide
 - Seek a more aggressive approach when requesting advertising space in the guide
- Focusing on social media
- Looking on focusing some strategically placed print advertising
- Funding for new marketing plan
- Cooperate with advertising
- Funding for training budget
- Looking for a cooperative venture with Lewis and Clark State College and Hells Canyon for a Travel and Tourism/Hospitality training program
 - Increase the service level of the people working in the field, it will increase the amount of visitors we have

Hells Canyon Visitors Bureau-Lewis Clark Valley – Michelle Peters

- Destination marketing campaign
- "Visit Lewis Clark County: Gateway to Hells Canyon": new name
- Focus on comprehensive marketing plan of activities
- Placed between two state lines
- Attract conferences and convention groups
- Funding for Idaho State Travel Guide ad
- Northwest Travel and Horizon Air full sized ads
- Sunset magazine and national geographic traveler ads
- #1 market is Spokane, Washington
- Public Relations: Pacific Northwest Writers Convention
- Lewiston's downtown is evolving
 - Cruise Boats
 - Can have 15,000 passengers this year

- Social media campaign is progressing

Pioneer Country Travel Council – Mark Lowe

- Focus on regional travel
- US Forest Service and USGS are mapping all of Idaho's trails
 - This has been needed in the area and they are looking forward to it
- I-15 Corridor and international marketing
 - How to convince them to slow down and stay a couple days in our area
 - Digital and print media
- Looking to create a better skilled younger worker
- Funding for various print materials to have at shows
- Very active and interested in promoting the region outside the granting dollars
- Focusing on Canada: It is an ideal halfway point between Calgary and Las Vegas
 - Still focusing on Salt Lake City market
- Free online training available on customer service

Future Meetings:

- Need new October date: September 29th, 30th, 1st (will conduct a Doodle poll)

Other Business:

- Are we being proactive around private entities that rent out houses? Are they collecting the 2% bed tax?
 - Bed and Breakfast Association will be giving a presentation in Coeur d'Alene to the Council
 - **Action:** Commerce will work on getting someone from the Tax Commission to talk on this matter at a future meeting
 - Lodging tax on State Campgrounds: nothing has happened yet, State campgrounds (by law) are exempted from paying that tax (if they were to collect the 2%, it would have to go back into the ITC program and they could NOT apply for a grant because they are not a nonprofit)
 - Historically, the Tax Commission does not see it as their responsibility to collect anything but sales tax

Meeting Adjourned 4:53PM