

Destination Marketing Corporation (DMC)
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes - Thursday, May 14, 2020
2 to 3 pm, Zoom Conference

Attending:

Ken Meifert, Chairman

Camilla Morris, Vice-Chair

Alicia Terry, Secretary

Maureen Lodes

April Islip

Tara Burke

Mark Mosconi

Cassandra Harrington, DMCOOC – Executive Director

Jacqueline White, DMCOOC – Travel Trade Manager

Absent: John Shideler, Marcy Birch, Meg Kennedy, Kerrie Tandle, Laiken Whittredge

Chair, Ken Meifert, called the Board Meeting to order at 2:05pm

• **Chairman's Report by Ken Meifert**

- Mohawk Valley region has been cleared to begin reopen Phase 1 on Friday, May 15, 2020.
- Brief STR Report overview – hotel occupancy down significantly over previous year
- Cassandra and Ken hosted a well-received and successful Zoom conference for the 2020 Partners to discuss current situation and encouraged board members to attend future meetings.
- DMC staff are working from home.

• **March 12th, 2020 Minutes**

- Alicia Terry motioned to approve minutes.
- April Islip seconded.
- Motion passed unanimously.

• **Financial Statement – by Ken Meifert**

- John Shideler resigned from his position at the Otesaga so no longer a DMC Board member nor Treasurer. Ken Meifert stepped into the Treasurer's role in congruence with his role as Chairman.
- 2019 Audit and 2019 990 Tax Return documents were reviewed by both mentioned above and looks to be in good order.
 - Alicia Terry motioned to accept financial statement.
 - Mark Mosconi seconded.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

• **Current Financial Statement – Actuals January 2020 – April 2020**

- Added a new column for 2020 End of Year Projected versus what was originally budgeted for 2020 – adjustments made based on potential lack of income from Matching Funds, Otsego County and Partner Program
- Otsego County heavily depends on Sales Tax and most recently experienced a drop of 33% and continues to plummet.
- Budget agreement with both Schoharie and Otsego County are front-loaded
 - Both counties already paid 70% of what is contracted to be paid to DMC with 30% remaining to be paid in the 3rd and 4th quarter.

- The 2020 DMC Budget was adjusted for worst case scenario – the following adjustments were made:
 - **Otsego County**
 - zeroed out the county revenue coming in Q3 and Q4
 - Loss of remaining Partner Program Revenue - decreased amount to only what we have collected thus far, instead of what was projected to be collected.
 - NYS Matching Funds – likely on hold.
 - **Schoharie County**
 - Outstanding payment from NYS Empire State Development – likely on hold.
 - NYS Matching Funds – on hold.
 - Temporary pause in overall direct marketing placements and cuts to travel and trade shows.

Motion to accept financial report January thru April and the new 2020 end-of-year projected numbers:

- Mark Mosconi motioned to accept financial statement.
- April Islip seconded.
- Motion passed unanimously.

- **Director’s Report – Cassandra Harrington – Otsego County**

- Committee decision to cancel FAM Tour originally planned for September 2020. Plan to revisit planning for 2021 in the future.
- Working with New York Council of Nonprofits (NYCON) to update the DMC Employee Handbook. ETC June 2020.
- Finalized 2019 Audit and Tax Return.
- Created and send e-newsletter promoting remote viewing/virtual experiences.
- Hosted DMC Partner chat. Partners requested a bi-weekly chat during
- Launched two #CooperstownOnDeck videos:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/ThisIsCooperstown/videos/846903229147003/>
 - <https://www.faceboo.com/ThisIsCooperstown/videos/3033691986723585/>
- Placed 2-page ad in local paper with list of restaurants offering takeout or deliver
- Responding to significant quantity of media pitches from Finn Partners, ILNY
- Created COVID-19 Economic Impact Task Force survey and distributed
- Funnel SBA questions
- Promote SupportOtsego.com as County’s primary COVID-19 resource page
- Coordination addition of trails and itineraries to website via Outdoor Active
- Promote Shop Otsego Saturdays
- Brainstorming restructured Partner Program for 2020
- Managing extremely high call volume
- Send daily COVID-19 updates from Ostroff Associates to everyone in the Otsego tourism database
- Shared blog post of Otsego and Schoharie County American Revolution sites
- Monitor consumer sentiment surveys for consideration in planning for future promotional efforts – close to home, road trips, outdoor recreation
- Jacqueline created a video tutorial that was sent to Otsego database for website event calendar inclusion
- Initial planning for “The Real MVPs”, black and white photo series campaign for social media. In-house project.

- Collecting virtual or remote viewing experiences for promotion in e-newsletter and social media
- Composing questionnaire for businesses to see who will be open this season and who has a brochure rack to promote those open, with intentions of sharing list and encouraging self-brochure distribution

Schoharie County

- Launched new website: www.VisitSchoharieCounty.com
- Developed 3-phase marketing plan in response to COVID-19 – not encouraging travel until its safe
- #SchoharieCountyShowAndTell usage in social media promotion
- Started the “Front Porch” photo series, highlighting business owners at their place of business in black and white pics. In-house project with Laiken as photographer.
- Responding to significant quantity of media pitches from Finn Partners, ILNY
- Requested details from entire database on any virtual or remote viewing experiences to promote via social media
- Updated imagery for the site – upload to Dropbox
- Generation of Itineraries and blog posts for website
- Coordinate distribution of remaining travel guides: website, Haunted History Trail and Great Getaways leads
- Began sharing blog post of both Otsego and Schoharie American Revolution sites
- Beginning to put together a video tutorial to send to Schoharie business database for website event calendar inclusion
- Photo shoots – Laiken
- Composing questionnaire for businesses to see who will be open this season and who has a brochure rack to promote those open, with intentions of sharing list and encouraging self-brochure distribution
- Planning to create a how-to and importance of travel packages video to accompany the handout previously distributed

• **New Business**

- Maureen Lodes shared an update from Sharon Springs -meeting planning for cooperative and cohesive messaging for reopening expected in June. Ideas included:
 - Consistency
 - Modified business hours and by appointment only
 - Employee and customer safety
 - PPE and facemasks for businesses with logo or message to ensure consistent visitors/patrons that everyone is working to be safe.
- Cassandra Harrington will continue to share information from the NYS lobbying firm, Ostroff Associates, about the latest COVID-19 updates with both County databases
- Supported Hale Transportation as they departed from Clinton in the *Motorcoaches Rolling For Awareness Rally* – tour buses headed to Washington DC in advocacy for the travel trade industry

• **Old Business**

- None.

- **Next DMCOC Meeting**

- Thursday, June 9, 2020 at 2:00pm. Meeting place TBD.

Ken motioned to adjourn meeting.

Maureen seconded.

Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:51pm.