

# Buena Park Hotel Marketing Association

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

11:00 AM – 1:05 PM @ Knott's Hotel

---

### 1. Call to Order - Chairman

An adjourned regular meeting of the Buena Park Hotel Marketing Association was called to order on Tuesday, March 5th, 2024 at 11:03 AM at Knott's Hotel by Chairman of the Board - Don Prescott.

#### Roll Call

Board Members Present: Don Prescott, Mariah Fritzges, Javier Solis, Camilo Bruce,

Public: Roxanna Aceves and Mauricio Flores.

Advisors: Sara Copping, Karina Diez, Michelle Munoz - Visit Buena Park.

### 2. Approval of Minutes – Chairman

Don made a motion to approve the minutes; Camilo seconded it; approved unanimously.

### 3. Public Comment

Sara briefed the board on an email from Aaron France, the City Manager of Buena Park, regarding the Hotel Ordinance proposal. The email outlined safety restrictions for hotel staff. She noted Javier's prompt response, which likely helped set the proposal aside.

Sara discussed the email sent to the board regarding volunteer needs for the DECA event and pointed out the flyer placed at each member's seat. She shared details about the event taking place at the Anaheim Convention Center and mentioned her volunteering on the 28th, with Karina assisting on the 29th. Sara encouraged board members to consider volunteering as a valuable opportunity to contribute to the community.

### 4. City Update – Karina Diez, Marketing Specialist, Visit Buena Park

Karina shared the latest status of development initiatives, including:

- Ambridge held a job fair on Jan 30<sup>th</sup> at the Buena Park Community Center for The Hilton at The Source OC. Assistant GM Michael Samawi noted success with over 261 candidates in attendance. Hotel is scheduled to open in April 2024.
- Knott's PEANUTS Celebration concluded on Feb 25th. Preparations are underway for the Knott's Boysenberry Festival, beginning this weekend (March 8th - April 7th), with weekend extensions until April 28th. The festival promises delightful boysenberry treats and beverages, sure to captivate visitors once again.

- Knott's Hotel renovation nears completion, anticipated finish date March 2024.
- 7886 Beach Blvd approved to become a dance studio; improvements underway.
- McDonald's at Beach Blvd. and La Palma demolished; undergoing complete remodel. Expected completion is early Summer 2024.
- The Cauldron's exterior sunroom completed, adding 935 square feet, seating for 72 additional visitors

#### 5. **Public Relations/Media Updates – Karina Diez, Marketing Specialist**

Karina presented press coverage updates since the last board meeting, featuring notable outlets like Local Anchor, Sandy Toes and Popsicles, Locale Magazine, Conexion Migrante, Mommy Poppins, Food, Fun, and Faraway Places, Visit California, Laughing Place, Justin Plus Lauren, Yahoo! Finance, Hello Kids Fun, Upstrack, Muse TV, ABC7 Los Angeles, and Parenting OC.

Significant Pieces included:

- Locale Magazine featured The Cauldron in their "Best OC Bars" article with 301K UMV.
- Spanish Outlet, Conexion Migrante highlighted Buena Park as a destination for Mexican immigrants with 1M UMV.
- Visit California showcased the PEANUTS Celebration in their January events roundup with 3.46M UMV.

Sara inquired about Knott's feature on the Today's Show. Mariah mentioned seeing it in a Knott's COMMS recap but will confirm and update Sara. Media visits completed since the last board meeting focused on family and food travel. Notable outlets included Getting Stamped, with a 107k UMV post from their September visit. Just Plus Lauren shared coverage of Buena Park and a vegan/vegetarian foodie guide, garnering around 240k UMV. Lastly, Life's Incredible Journey recorded 38k UMV on their recent post. Upcoming visits include Stuffed Suitcase, with 70k UMV, for a couple's getaway weekend in March, and Local Adventurer on April 22nd, boasting about 1.5 UMV, promising great media coverage. Sara inquired about coverage focus: food or attractions. Karina confirmed both will be covered.

Several blog posts have been written lately, which include: Bite into Bliss: Porto's Bakery Holiday Guide, Burning Calories in Buena Park, Taste of Buena Park Food Award Winners, Adventurous Valentine's Day Getaway, What You Need to Know for the PEANUTS Celebration, What Kind of Valentine's Couple Are You?, 10 Ways to Celebrate Valentine's Day in Buena Park, Are You Bready for the Best Croissants in Buena Park, Southern California Family Spring Break Itinerary, College Spring Break in Buena Park and Love in Every Bite: Top 7 Romantic Restaurants.

Karina shared her recent media event engagements, including IMM TravMedia North America in January, a day-long marketplace in NYC with 24 appointments with editors, journalists, broadcasters, and influencers. She also met with podcasters to explore potential involvement in podcasts. Additionally, Karina mentioned her attendance at the Visit California Dallas Media Dinner in late February, offering an intimate dinner and networking opportunity with 29 Dallas-based media and influencers.

Karina provided an update on the Taste of Buena Park Food Awards. The finalized list was released in late January, in descending order from 10 to 1. She personally visited each restaurant to deliver frames and decals: Porto's Bakery & Café, Ramen & Tsukemen TAO, Portillo's, Gaucho Grill, Gangnam Station, SUP Noodle Bar, The Cauldron, Miss Shabu Restaurant & Sake Bar, Jin Cook - Authentic Korean Soul Food and Misoolkwan OC.

Karina announced the launch of Visit Buena Park's 2024 Travel Guide, which was distributed to all members present. The guide was promoted across social media platforms and featured prominently on the VisitBuenaPark.com homepage and footer for requesting. It will also be distributed at tradeshow and sent to homes. Sara asked the board for their interest in the travel guides and offered to supply them from the current stock. Don suggested exploring the inclusion of the guides in the guest directory. Javier requested a copy of the travel guide for himself and Lafleche. Sara agreed to send them a digital copy, excluding the hotel information section.

Karina offered merchandise for VIP Clients staying at Buena Park hotels. She presents various bundle options on the screen: attractions-themed, Knott's boysenberry package, and Visit Buena Park merchandise bundle. Sara mentions Visit Buena Park Bluetooth travel speakers as a new item not yet included. Camilo inquires about availability for purchase. Sara clarifies that hoteliers will receive them from VBP for free, without any purchase required, also noting that bundles can be reserved for high-end clients such as repeat customers or large event planners. When Camilo asks about the limit, Sara explains they are available as needed.

#### **6. Executive Director Report – Sara Copping, Executive Director**

Sara opens the presentation by highlighting Advertising Performance Insights from DCI Traffic, promising to share the PDF with the board. She then discussed the Paid Conversions Overflow for the fourth quarter, October through December, noting its exceptional performance. Key points included approximately 3.8K views on play, plan, or dine pages, and 61.8k visits to the Stay Page. She also covered the Paid Marketing Funnel, which showed a 20% increase in page views to 168,842, with over 9.2K in the Dreaming & Planning phase and 61K on the Booking page, up by 33%. Sara addressed the limitation on advertising in Los Angeles, aiming to attract multiple-night visitors while maintaining proximity to the LA audience. Moving to page 2, Sara noted Performance Vs. Benchmark. Google Search exhibited a benchmark Click-Through-Rate of 6.50%, with our placement reaching 11.90% this quarter. Google Display fell slightly below benchmark but wasn't prioritized. Sara highlighted YouTube as key for target audience impressions, with Spanish Promotional Ads performing strongly.

Sara reviewed the "Book Now" Overview, emphasizing Knott's Hotel's lead with 1,472 bookings. She also highlighted the appearance of the book now click rate for the upcoming Hilton @ The Source. Sara then discussed performance by channel, noting her focus on leveraging city attractions to drive hotel bookings. Mariah inquired about visitor demographics, to which Sara confirmed having data on visitor origins, hotel stays, duration, and demographic insights for market targeting.

Sara discussed the Traffic Originating breakdown, focusing on Non-DCI and DCI Generated Traffic. She noted an unexpected surge in traffic from three cities in Mexico, despite minimal marketing efforts there. To investigate further, DCI will conduct beta testing on pay-per-click advertising in the Mexico market. Sara also mentioned ongoing collaborations with Visit California and Brand USA, now active as of March 1st through an Expedia campaign targeting the Mexico market. Javier asked about the choice of Expedia, Sara explained that it was set up by the co-ops for Brand USA and Visit California, emphasizing its effectiveness in driving results and impressions on bookings. Sara provided an overview of Search Ad Performance, noting Ad Clicks exceeding 20K and a 12% Click-Through Rate. A higher than normal Average CPC at \$2.31 was shown, along with the total cost of approximately 47k with a conversion rate of 25k indicates effective engagement with the booking tab. She briefly reviewed Top Performing Metros and discussed successful Ad Groups, particularly those targeting 'OC' hotel searches and featuring keywords like "Knott's Scary Farm" prominently. Sara mentioned limited investment in Google Display Ads due to performance rate, except for specialized ad groups for military ads managed by the VBP team. Sara briefed on Performance Max, enabling Google to allocate funds for platform strategy in marketing and ads, emphasizing a notable CPC reduction to \$0.82. She also discussed Video performance, citing Visit Buena Park's ads with 3.2M impressions, \$0.18 CPC, 9.42% Video Completion, and 393,435 total video views at a cost per view of \$0.04, totaling \$14k spent. Sara highlighted the success of not only Mexico Video promotion with 47k clicks but also other video ads. Despite a 6.63% CTR and 0.05% conversion, she clarified the discrepancy due to indirect bookings in the Mexico market, urging awareness of this factor.

Sara provided an overview of website performance metrics, detailing traffic sources, device usage, top referral sites, and visitor demographics, which is beneficial for the hotel GM. She also discussed top-performing blogs, events, and engaged pages on the website.

Sara proceeds with the Executive Director's report by highlighting collaboration with TravPro Webinars & B2B software. This includes a 10-minute training module featuring Buena Park information and promotional ads. Domestic tour operators are urged to complete it for a chance to win prizes mentioned earlier. Sara mentions their first expo experience with TravPro, held online with about 1500 attendees and 200+ completions. She notes the email sent to the board regarding the module for hospitality staff, reiterating it's the same referenced module.

Sara covers the International Collateral & Club California Events presentation segment, noting availability of sales kits and promo videos in Korean, Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese. She mentions the availability of TravPro modules in multiple languages. Sara highlights their collaboration with Club California events and have partnered to where VBP attendance isn't required; Club California reps will manage presentations and translations for all B2B events listed on the screen. Camilo inquires about Western European marketing promotions; Sara notes Knott's Berry Farm's limited recognition outside the west coast and the absence of partnerships for international ticket bookings. Javier suggests exploring avenues through Visit California; Sara mentions Luanne Miracle and Mariah Fritzges involvement in doing so. Sara also emphasizes her focus on B2B market and highlights Club California's potential in reaching untapped audiences.

Sara presents Expedia Ad results: BP signifies Buena Park ads; Q4 OC Coop denotes Orange County co-op with other destinations. OC Coop performs well and brings in: 2.83M impressions, 5K room nights booked, \$625k revenue. December 2023: 671k impressions, 438 room nights, \$55k revenue, spending \$13.8k. January 2024: 1.2M impressions, 533 room nights, \$67k revenue, spending \$23.4k.

Sara offers the board the 2024 Sales and Media Kits for hotel sales support, offering to provide all copy except for the hotel accommodation segment. She then discusses the Print Ads, showcasing the Visit Anaheim Guide including the Buena Park segment with 250K impressions. Additionally, she highlights the Visit California Visitor Guide with 600k+ impressions and the Miramar Air Show Program with 80K impressions.

Sara's IPW update includes securing a double booth with all necessary pop-ups ordered for a 20x10 booth. Karina will assist with one day of media and the following 2 days at the booth. Over 100 appointments will be covered in three days. Sara also mentions the Cinco de Mayo Event in partnership with Travel Santa Ana, inviting board members. This dually-hosted celebration will target the Mexico Market, with all media and travel trade invited. Javier asked of location to which Sara replies at the Wayfarer Downtown Los Angeles. Finally, Sara kindly notes and request any small giveaway donations be coordinated with VBP.

Sara reports that the annual report has been filed by the Buena Park City Council and approved at the January 23rd Buena Park Council Meeting.

Finally, Sara concludes her report by summarizing the Hotel Rack Card Displays, now available at most Buena Park hotels' front desks. She highlights the QR codes offering guest discounts and attractions, with unique codes for tracking individuals.

#### **7. Budget & Marketing Planning Discussion – Board Members**

Sara announced she will present the completed Budget at the next meeting and sought feedback from the board. Javier confirmed we're on track with no concerns raised. Camilo suggested emphasizing international markets, particularly those showing promise, and establishing a path to the European market.

#### **8. Discuss Finance/Budget Review YTD & Year end – Javier Solis, Treasurer**

Javier presents year-to-date spend, highlighting revenue and carryover from 2023 (\$596,800). Current year revenue is \$752,000, resulting in a total revenue of \$1.3 million and nearly \$1 million spend. He notes the positive aspect of spending exceeding revenue to prevent carryover. Javier discusses expenditures and revenue, noting a consistent trend of spending surpassing revenue. He questions Sara about a missing month's summary from Howard Johnson. Sara explains they paid February but not January TOT or TMD, and assures ongoing communication with the city. Javier also mentions that year-to-date through January 2024, total revenue compares favorably to pre-COVID levels, indicating surpassing the recovery point. Javier concludes his discussion.

**9. Public comment on matters on the agenda**

There were no public comments.

**10. Set Meeting Schedule – Chairman**

Don approved scheduling the next board meeting in May 2024.

**11. Agenda Items for Future Meetings – Board Members**

No agenda items for future meetings were discussed.

**12. Adjourn**

The board meeting concluded at 1:07 PM.