

Buena Park Hotel Marketing Association

Annual Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 23, 2022

9:30 AM – 11:30 AM @ Doubletree Buena Park

1. Call to Order - Chairman

An adjourned regular meeting of the Buena Park Hotel Marketing Association was called to order on Friday, September 23, 2022 at 9:36 AM, Doubletree by Hilton by Chairman of the Board - Don Prescott.

Roll Call

Present: Don Prescott, Javier Solis, Camilo Bruce, John Arredondo

Advisor Present: Sara Copping, Visit Buena Park; Karina Diez, Visit Buena Park

Public: Frank Nunes, Buena Park Police Chief and Rikin Patel GM of Hampton Inn & Suites

2. Approval of Minutes – Chairman

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

3. **Public Comment**

No public comment

4. **Police Update – Interim Police Chief Frank Nunes**

Frank introduced himself as interim police chief and said he will be sworn in on October 11th as official chief. He tells the hoteliers that the police department is a service based organization and that community comes first. The police want to make sure the city is safe to play and work, he also passed out his personal cell phone. He then opens up the conversation to questions for the board members. Javier brings up his re-occurring issue with transients/drifters causing concern over by the Fuddrucker's building. They are relentless in disturbing his day to day business and operations of the Doubletree, he says cops show up or they get them to leave for a short time but then they come right back shortly after. John with Fairfield also agrees with Javier and has had some similar issues. Chief Nunes says that homelessness is a national issue that is being addressed differently now by police only getting involved if there is criminal activity. One of the ways they are making changes is by getting State funding and forming a regional task force. There is something in the works called the hope center that would be federally funded and assist with veterans and homeless issues for the region, this will help supplement with the City PD does. The Center will help support those that are not criminals but need mental health and addiction assistance. They will be trying to deal with homeless from a social issue. They are trying quickly to not allow encampments to happen like other cities. Police Chief reminds them of what happened at the river bend when it's not managed quickly. Frank encourages the hoteliers to never give up and continue to reach out and that his department will work closely

with them to get change. Sara brings up the overall issues on Beach Blvd from a tourist safety perspective. She sees pan handlers and homeless sleeping along the busy streets. What recourse do we have to help with that? Chief lets everyone know that pan handling is a crime and can call non-emergency dispatch. The patrol is like ER they are going to throw a band aid on the situation but they are also dealing with staff shortages as they are currently 12 positions short. Most departments are dealing with 50-60% reduced staff but they are hiring it's just takes a long time about 2 years from date of recruitment opens. Lateral promotions is great but everyone is in the same boat. But Buena Park does have a high appeal to candidates and they offer cash incentives. Javier asks if the negative police mentality is hurting the ability to hire and Frank says it was absolutely something that was a hinder to hiring. Camilo says sometimes he will just give the homeless around his hotel a soda so they will leave which works most of the time. Sara asked if there is anything we can do about homeless sleeping on the streets but not partaking in criminal activity? Chief Nunes said there is an outreach team and they can handle those type of issues, he said he will give us the number to call in those situations but it may take them a couple hours to respond. John with Fairfield said sometimes they barricade themselves in the bathroom. Sara thanks the Police Chief for coming out and Frank again lets the hoteliers know they can call him anytime.

5. **PR/Marketing Updates – Karina Diez**

Karina goes over all the press coverage that has been completed. Lifestyle expert, Carly Dorogi, covered Knott's, dinner shows, Porto's and Rock & Brews in broadcast segments on New York's PIX11 news station. And online through her site, CarlyOnTV.com, reach was 10,000, on Pix11.com, reach was 10,000 and on PIX11 "New York Living," reach was 85,000. Travel blog, Travel Lens, put together an article on the Best Things to Do in Buena Park. The blog has a reach of 1.5 million unique monthly visitors. Southern California Life Magazine included recent blog post, "Buena Park's Can't Miss List" in their newsletter with a reach of 10,000. Dining blog, Cuisineist, picked up the story about Romuald Guiot, Porto's Newest Pastry Chef and reach was 100,000. Nightlife guide, PubClub.com, picked up the story about Buena Park as the Halloween Capital of SoCal with a focus on the 21+ scene and reach was 25,000. Stay & Scare deals at Knott's Berry Farm were included in a roundup of fall and winter travel deals. This was syndicated across outlets in the Post Media Network such as Yahoo Canada, Moneywise, Financial Post and several others like Moneywise, Financial Post, National Post, Yahoo Canada, Montreal Gazette, Calgary Herald, Edmonton Journal, Vancouver Sun, Winnipeg Sun, Ottawa Sun and Regina Leader Post. And lastly Dining and lifestyle site Foodgessing covered our story on top fried chicken spots in Buena Park with a reach of 300k UMW.

Sara then spoke about the Statepoint Media round up coverage we have received. Sara says they have been featured in a dedicated story on Top 5 Reasons to Visit Buena Park this Halloween and those results will be presented at next meeting. Summer Experiences to Put on Your List had 52 media placements with a 2.5 million reach a \$30k ad value. Fun Regional Family Attractions to Check Out had 49 media placements with a 1.9 million reach a \$23k ad value. And Cheers to Spring with These Tasty Regional Experiences had 51 media placements with a 2 million reach a \$24k ad value.

Karina then jumped to go over the Most Wanted List that they put together. The list consisted of the 26 most wanted media for the fiscal year and she has secured 10 so far. Karina stated they have hosted several media so far. In collaboration with Visit California, Visit Buena Park hosted Instagram influencer, Krystian Gabrielle on September 9th – September 10th. Her coverage on Instagram included Knott's Berry Farm, Pirates Dinner Adventure, and Porto's Bakery. Krystian's reach/follower count is 71,900. Visit Buena Park also hosted Austin-based travel blogger, Jane Ko, on September 19th – September 21st. Jane's campaign include (1) blog post, (3) Instagram stories, and (1) Instagram reel. Her coverage focused on a dining aspect, including local favorites at The Source OC, SUP Noodle Bar, Miss Shabu, Porto's, Knott's, and several other locations. Karina says there are 8 Upcoming Hosted Media which include: Theme park enthusiasts, Mouse Vibes with 24,900 Instagram followers and 7,310 YouTube followers; TheTimTracker with 277,000 Instagram followers and 880,000 YouTube followers and Ordinary Adventures with 53,300 Instagram followers and 295,000 YouTube followers. Family travel includes: Trips with Tykes with 6,200 Instagram followers and 246,100 unique monthly blog visitors, The Mom Trotter with 286,000 Instagram followers and 23,500 unique monthly blog visitors, Y Travel with 42,400 Instagram followers and 147,900 unique monthly blog visitors. And Couples Travel includes: My Perfect Itinerary with 24,800 Instagram followers and 98,200 unique monthly blog visitors and The World Pursuit with 111,000 Instagram followers and 440,200 unique monthly blog visitors. Sara asks if there are any questions and nobody has any at that time.

Karina stated that she has also put together a Media Database on Muck Rack of 3,550 contacts, sorted into niches of travel, family travel, theme parks, foodies, hotels, as well as categories sorted by job title. She said she will use that database to send Blog Articles and Press Releases and then lists the following content: It's Always Festival Season at Knott's Berry Farm, Family-Friendly Attractions in Buena Park, Top 10 Waffles, Buena Park's Can't Miss List, A Laid Back Getaway in Buena Park, The Best Date Spots in Buena Park, Top 10 Cheeseburgers in Buena Park, CA, Top Breakfast Sandwiches & Burritos in Buena Park, CA, Meet Romuald Guiot: Porto's Bakery's Newest Pastry Chef, Our Love for Chicken Runs Deep...Fried, The Wiener Takes All – Top 5 Hot Dogs, The Insider's Guide to Knott's Scary Farm, The Minds Behind Knott's Scary Farm, Halloween Happenings in Buena Park and The Future is Bright for Buena Park. Sara interjects and says that the hotels are welcome to repurpose or use this content on their website or social media channels. Javier said to send him the list so they can explore that with their internal team.

Karina then talks about her Upcoming Press Events to TBEX North America from October 12th, 2022 – October 14th, 2022. The event lectures on pitching, audience growth, blogging, monetization, social media, business models, online content and partnerships. Networking opportunities with creators, DMOs, and travel brands are also available. Past Press Events Karina attended include Getaway Today at Knott's Berry Farm Luncheon on September 1st. The event included networking with 48 theme park influencers in luncheon format. She Gained several contacts that she has begun discussions with for potential future hosted stays. She also attended Visit California's San Francisco Media Reception on September 22nd, 2022 that included a Cocktail reception with 1:1 opportunities to meet with local media from the San Francisco area. The Visit California Fall 2022 Pacific Northwest Media Mission in November 10th, 2022 – November 11th, 2022 we were denied registration due to the amount of applicants vs. limited group size for the small media market in the PNW. Javier asked why that happened? Sara

said its disappointing that you have to budget but then potentially won't get to attend. She explains how the process works and its quite frustrating and that all of their missions are only based off of who they choose to attend. Javier asks if Sara was on the Visit CA board and she explains how she was when they were part of the California Welcome Centers. Lastly, she is researching Canada and Mexico Missions to determine which has the highest return on investment for us to attend. Karina says they have been debating between Anaheim vs California and chose to go with California because of budget. Javier asks if they are at the same time and Sara says no. Sara says Anaheim's mission is crazy expensive, its \$5500 just to register.

Karina purchased Search Engine Optimization software called SEMRush and have used it to conduct a general SEO audit as well as a backlink audit. She is now working with Saffire to have all the issues fixed on the website.

Karina sent out 2 Newsletters to over 24K subscribers. The Fall Newsletter had a 20.3% open rate and was sent on September 7th, 2022. The Summer Newsletter had a 17.7% open rate and was sent on June 27th, 2022.

Lastly, Karina said they have created a New Travel Waiver for media partnerships. The travel waiver addresses liability for Visit Buena Park and partners, laws in the area, travel costs, and being medically fit to participate was added to the media contract template. The waiver verbiage was created by modifying a travel waiver that Visit California had recently provided. Sara said we wanted to protect our partners from influencers and any liability issues from media coming to our city and getting ill or spraining an ankle. The City Attorney is close to getting back to us with any changes to the waiver then we should be set.

6. Executive Director Report – Sara Copping

Sara pulled up the web report and stated that they have over 171K unique visitors to our site from July – August that's a conservative number because of a privacy laws. Topping the list is Pay per click at 59K and display at 39K and social at 35K are neck and neck.

Organic search is strong with 32K. The 2nd page shows the page views coming in at over 300K with top producing landing pages: most notable is hotel page coming in at #3 with over 30K views, travel guide requests are coming at 30K and the top page is the landing page with over 100K visits. Deals is #5 and Soak city comes in at #6 might be because of how hot it was this Summer. Javier asks me what is the top visited hotel? Sara says its Knott's hotel and then says all the hotels in this room are top performers.

DCI put together a 2-month overview digital report of our current program. The first slide shows the strategy used for google ads across all audiences including paid search, YouTube and display. Slide 2 shows the funnel focused approach to drive visitation: dreaming, planning, booking then experiencing the destination. Next they tested new formats to drive performance such as performance max, responsive search and responsive display. Slide 4 touches on crafting new campaigns to capture SoCal travelers from events/conventions to seasonal getaways and seasonal events. The next slide talks about the measuring successes and meaningful metrics. The primary conversion events are hotel links, travel guide requests and engagement time. Data highlights include a 13% click thru rate for paid search, 1.89% click thru rate for YouTube and .61% click thru rate for display. Ad programs drive 65% of total site traffic with over 143K

sessions and average time of 7 minutes. But what is most impressive is ad programs drive 99% of hotel page views. Sara worked with DCI to completely transform and update our PPC strategy – going over every single keyword, phrase, and images. And also updated all blogs/landing pages.

Sara says that Greenhaus completed all Halloween deliverables including a Halloween logo. VBP Halloween newsletter went out to 25 subscribers on Sept 6th, Statepoint sent out a dedicated halo story on Sept 14th, Travelzoo went out Sept 22 and will be up on Travelzoo website until Halloween, PPC/YouTube Halloween video/ display Halloween ads-started the 15th, TV streaming commercials started Sept 1st, Social media ads for Halloween started Sept 1st and Halloween landing page, pop up and homepage Halloween takeover started Sept 6. Camilo asks how long this will run? Sara says she will run until mid-October when most tickets and hotels will be booked by but they should be aware that we are still running our generic ads. Social Media is showing growth with over 88K click thru's, 3.4M impressions, 518K views, 35 CTR and a .20 CPC and .08 CPV which are fantastic results. Sara says they spend a ton of money on Expedia campaigns and shows a landing page for the OC coop campaign – says they usually give us the top spot not sure why maybe because we are a top producer. VBP has completed Q2 OC coop which ran April – June and produced \$263K of revenue and over 1684 room nights. Also wrapped up July and August individual campaigns with over 1700 room nights. Currently running a OC international, Q3 OC coop and individual campaigns. Upcoming for Expedia is the Q4 OC Coop and Buena Park individual monthly campaign. For Print ads Sara says they have full page ads in the 2023 Visit California travel guide, 2022 Fall AAA Texas Magazine, 2022 Fall Western Journey Magazine – PNW and 2022 Fall Via Arizona Magazine. Sara said for travel trade she attended SYTA in Washington DC from Aug 26-30. She had 25 appointments and several leads from the show. Upcoming events include the SYTA summit in January where 80 tour operators will have stops in Anaheim, Buena Park and Los Angeles. Go West Summit is in Alaska in Feb 2023 and IPW is in San Antonio in May of 2023. Sara reminds every one of her new hire Ed Vaca, the part-time Marketing Assistant he is in every morning from 8am – 1pm.

Sara then started with City Updates. The Source Hotel has a new estimated completion time of 1Q 2023. The Stanford Hotel Site at 7860 Beach Boulevard on September 27, the City Council will be considering an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with a developer to construct a 5-story, 132 room hotel at this location. The Former Butterfly Pavilion – The City released a Request for Proposals in July and received (8) proposals for redevelopment of this site with a family-friendly, tourist attraction type-use. The City will be reviewing proposals and making a recommendation to the City Council by November. Property at 7851 Beach Blvd is in the final stages of repurchasing the former Aloft Hotel Site. Once acquired, the City will determine the next steps and desired future uses. The property across from Hampton Inn will be a mixture of fast casual restaurants, EV charging and a drive-through coffee use. Construction to begin in 1st quarter of 2023. Sara says there are some new Business Listings that they have added to the site: Athenian Burger, Belinda's Authentic Mexican Food, Don Melt, Fresh Bagels & Café, Hat Trick Hot Chicken, Overflo., Slurpin' Ramen Bar, SoCal Wings, and Tacos Mexicanos.

7. Present and discuss Finance/Budget Review YTD – Treasurer, Javier Solis

Javier explained the healthy financial state of the budget, due to cautiousness during the pandemic. Carryover from 20-21 is \$781K and carryover from 21-22 is \$992K. Total revenue collected for 21-22 is \$1.06M which is much higher than projected. Total expenses came in at \$855K giving us a healthy budget for FY 2022-2023. These numbers bring us to \$1.99M budget for FY 2022-2023 about \$225K more than what we have budgeted. Javier says he thinks this is great and that we need to put the pedal to the metal with spending. For now, Sara pushed the additional funds into the general misc. funds until this meeting. Sara says there are some projects in the fire with Brand USA and TripAdvisor. Javier asks if we can piggy back with Visit California opportunities? Sara said yes they had some cash matching but we had to use their creative and it didn't work. Javier said he was more interested in travel trade and asked what Brand USA was. Sara said it's the US government's tourism board and its funded by the general fund. VBP has partnered with them in the past and already have a page created. Camilo says people really use TripAdvisor still and it's a good resource. Sara says with the new proposal VBP will have control over the Buena Park landing page to add content, events and control images and video. Sara would recommend adding TripAdvisor, Brand USA and adding more to paid search. Javier says we need to make sure we budget for all our funds this year so there isn't major carryover. Sara agrees and says that is the plan this year.

John made a motion to adjust FY 22-23 budget to \$1.99M and to allocate \$50K for TripAdvisor and \$35K for Brand USA campaign. Camilo seconded it; approved unanimously.

8. Public comment on matters on the agenda

No public comments were made.

9. Set Meeting Schedule – Chairman

The next meeting will take place in January 2023

10. Agenda Items for Future Meetings – Board Members

No agenda items for future meetings were discussed.

11. Adjourn

The board meeting ended at 11:02am.