



Brewster County Tourism Council
Minutes and Motions
Regular Board Meeting May 21, 2019
Val Clark Beard Board Room – Alpine, Texas

Attendees: Bill Ivey, Barbara Trammell, Tom Williams, Linda Walker, Wendy Little, Travis Roberts, Robert Alvarez, & Kara Gerbert

Absent: John Price, Carol Peterson, Marsha Roberts, Alaine Berg

Guests: Jayne Gallo, Molly Finnerty, Kaci Kothmann, Sarah Eckert, David Elkowitz, Tiffany Swift, Belle Pena-Lancaster

Meeting was called to order by President Bill Ivey.

It was established that the notice for the meeting was posted properly and that there was a quorum.

Minutes were read & approved with a motion by **Travis Roberts** and a 2nd by **Barbara Trammell**.

Motion Passed

Introductions

Kaci Kothmann & Sarah Eckert introduced themselves and presented the first printing of the Bird'sEye View maps of Terlingua. The first printing was 10,000 & Sarah noted that she expected there to be a few errors, but that they would be rectified quickly.

Agenda Item 1. – Conference Call with Diana Valdez, Attorney for the RGCOG to clarify labor issues.

Contract Labor Definition – independent contractor who generally has a set amount of time to complete a project and there is a written contract agreement with specific terms.

Salary definition – At will employment arrangement with no guarantee of employment.

Generally, an employee will receive a W2 and an independent contractor will receive a 1099 for tax purposes.

Independent contractors may be reimbursed mileage and per diem.

Volunteers will be able to be used for State Fair at our regular reimbursement parameters. Legally, volunteer reimbursement does not have to be reported through a 1099, as reimbursement is not considered income.

Show crew may be considered as a seasonal or part time employee, but this may pose issues with labor requirements for benefits. A future conference call will occur with Judge Cano, Treva Watson, Robert Alvarez, Kara Gerbert, & Julie Morton.

Bill asked the board if it was ok if we began moving reports up in the agenda, so that folks such as those with the parks and on time constraints can give their reports and then leave. All members agreed.

REPORTS

BBNP – David Elkowitz reported that there were going to be renovations to areas of the park. Madgalena House and Rio Grande Village were to receive new exhibits this year and the Chisos and Panther Junction next year.

Road construction will occur in the park from late October early November through February.

This will include the basin road, and Panther Junction to Persimmon Gap as well as the main road to Study Butte.

The Basin Visitor's Center will be closed for renovations on June 24th, but there will be an alternate site set up.

Visitation October through April was up 2% from last year even taking in consideration the shutdown.

THC – Travis Roberts thanked Robert & Kara for helping with setting up for the THC conference held in Marathon and Wendy for her Texas Mountains Trail presentation. Of the 88 that said they would attend, there were 55 that showed up. About 10 people went to the post after the meeting. Travis explained that he used a local diner and the local pizza place to feed the group. Pecos County will host the meeting next year. The local THC meeting will be in August.

BBCoC – First social, which was a dark sky event went well. Tiffany Swift was hired as the social media assistant for the chamber.

TMT – Wendy Little told the board that the Executive Director of the Forest Trail is now the full time CEO for Authentic Texas.

The new state coordinator for the Trails is Sarah Paige & their next meeting will be in El Paso on August 7th.

MCoC – No Report

BBRSP – No Report

Discussion ensued on moving the reports above the agenda items on the posted agendas in the future. Robert said it was up to the president to make that decision and the board thought this was a good idea.

Agenda Item 2 – House bill was a go in the beginning and then the last week, Sen. Flores stated he would vehemently oppose this, and it would fail. He felt that this would be giving state funds to the federal government and he was adamantly opposed to this. Our attorney suggested to back off and wait until the next election. This was a discussion only item.

Agenda Item 3 – Marketing Committee – Budget for Fiscal 2020

Tom Williams thought that the airport ads were a great idea. Other discussion ensued. Travis mentioned that the archives were supposed to receive monies last year, but did not, and he would like to see that fixed. Everyone agreed to switch places with the museum who was to receive the donation this year to the archives, because no check was presented to anyone last year.

Bill asked for a motion with the amendment that instead of the Museum of the Big Bend receiving the funds this year, that the Archives would receive the donation this year and a request would be made to the Commissioner's Court to split funding to the 3 entities to split funding and bring the total to \$2,000 each per year for simpler budgeting for them and BCTC.

Motion: Wendy Little

2nd: Barbara Trammell

Passed

Budget is scheduled to be presented to Commissioner's Court on June 26th.

PR & Social Media Report – Instagram is up 2.8k follower increase from 37.7 to 40.5k with an all-time high engagement on posts. Facebook has 498 new page followers and a total of 52 posts during the reporting period. Post engagement at 29,763 which is holding steady from the prior reporting period. Twitter is up slightly with 18 tweets for the period. Pinterest is a new account for Visit Big Bend. This site has Big Bend Weddings, things to do, birding, hiking, and places to stay. Pins are permanent & a report with stats will be given at the next meeting.

There were several FAM trips, with a Dutch family unit, a Texas Tourism Social Media Influencer FAM, and an upcoming Chinese FAM.

Content creation and publicity for several lodging businesses as well as restaurants. A newsletter will be sent out next week as well.

President's Report – Bill is working on HOT tax info to send to all the hoteliers and is also continuing to work on a policy manual, where he hopes to present it at the next board meeting. Any and all input from the board is welcome. He applauded the output and hard work that the marketing committee put in on the budget this year as well as the entire board. Financials were handed out for board members to look at and no questions came up.

Director's Report- Robert Alvarez told the board that the girl that was being interviewed for the HOT tax position in conjunction with the RGCOG had backed out. He noted that Blues on the Green was to begin in Austin and Aaron Rodriguez would be representing us. Robert also told the board that the new offices had been mapped out and that the schedule to be in them would probably be around the end of summer if all goes according to plan.

Sign Committee – Ranch signs are on order & TX DOT signs should be in the pipeline.

Film Committee – No Report

IT Report – Aaron gave us a handout with analytics for our current website.

New Business – None, except for a question from Molly Finnerty about where the 7% on the budget went.

Next Board Meeting set for Tuesday July 16th in Marathon

Bill Ivey asked for a motion to adjourn

Motion was made by Barbara Trammell with a 2nd by Linda Walker

Meeting Adjourned