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Explorers' Edge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday June 4, 2019

The Griffin Gastropub, Bracebridge, ON

Present: Gail Burrows, Jeff Suddaby, Michael Simonett, Brenda Scott, Scott Doughty, Don MacKay, Curt Dunlop, Eric Miglin, Scott Doughty

Resource: Laura Ross

Staff: James Murphy

Welcome and Chair Remarks: Vice Chair Dunlop began the meeting at 9.00am

Conflict of Interest: MacKay spoke to his role with Golf Ontario and the Airport board.

Approval of Agenda – June 4, 2019

Motion: Don MacKay

Seconded: Michael Simonett

Discussion: n/a

Approval of Minutes – April 29, 2019

Motion: Scott Doughty

Seconded: Gail Burrows

Discussion: n/a

Vice Chair Dunlop opened the meeting with the board of directors speaking to the weather and current regional flooding while welcoming everyone to the pub.

Dunlop presented the financials and noted that spending in the first months of the fiscal year have been limited. He noted that he RTO had received its first transfer payment. Dunlop commented that the audit was in process with invoices and files being reviewed ahead of the Annual General Meeting.

The financial presentation moved into a discussion of the current budget and the updates to the current budget related to base, proportional and partnership funding. As a result of the budget reductions and no change in the partnership allocation the board was presented with an updated budget.

Additional changes to the budget reflect the following:

- Recommended that a short selling season with commercial air service reflects the budget addressing domestic vs. international spend 150k a piece in order to ensure success in year one.
- Recommended increase to the dispersion program due to route expansion – five routes 45k
- Recommended additional budget to offset additional components of RVC Canada – total budget 60k

Savings would be found in the marketing portfolio related to the delivery of marketing services.

With the update on partnership funding from the MTCS the recommendation would be to set aside partnership budget for workforce development activities.

The updated budget was presented to the board of directors which will be put forth to finalize the TPA.

Motion to accept the updated budget to be included in the 2019 – 2020 BOP and forwarded to the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport.

Motion: Don Mackay

Second: Michael Simonett

Discussion: n/a

Carried

While discussing the budget board members then reviewed the Business and Operational Plan. ED noted that while changes / updates to the budget have been made the workings of the 2019-2020 BOP remain the same.

Motion to accept the June 4, 2019 presented 2019-2020 BOP & to be forwarded to the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport.

Motion: Scott Doughty

Second: Gail Burrows

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Break

ED Murphy updated directors on the flooding, RVC 2019

Regarding the flooding ED Murphy outlined the following work completed by the RTO:

- April 22: RTO12 starts ramping up social promo of the annual Muskoka Maple Festival
- April 28 thru May 1: telephone outreach and site visits were conducted by staff to directly-affected operators in Muskoka
- May 1: a **tourism operator survey** was developed and deployed in order to better understand the impact of the flooding on tourism businesses – **60 responses**

- May 2: the RTO Board of Directors was briefed and the Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport was contacted by myself to request an urgent meeting.
- May 2 thru May 14: RTO12 staff commenced touring the entire region to launch an ‘Open For Business’ social media campaign, which was – and continues to be – posted to our social assets.
- May 8: RTO12 collaborated with Santa’s Village to deploy a costumed Santa throughout downtown Bracebridge to counter the serious impression that Bracebridge in particular was destroyed by flooding.
- May 8: Destination Ontario was engaged to assist us with counter-messaging; this will be in the form of social posts (currently in development) and the partnership between the province and the RTO in order to facilitate a live Breakfast Television broadcast in our region (at a cost of 5k to the RTO). **Breakfast Television was today – June 4 – in Gravenhurst**
- May 9: Muskoka Tourism was contacted by RTO12 and asked to share social content regarding the positive message related to business: they did not

The ED update also included information related to RVC 2019:

- Luncheon (campfire décor and video, background Canadiana music, guided wolf howl, audience participation was key)
- Booth & Activation Zone
- Massive response to our presence, particularly for the luncheon we organized
- Dozens of contacts made from all over the world
- Primarily interested in our content production, and our ability to inform them of product
- Positioning – the great Canadian wilderness just north of Toronto – is MASSIVE. We OWN THIS SPACE and must build upon it
- 50 appointment with International Buyers – CONTENT
- Invitation extended to MTMA and District of Muskoka
- Up next: New York trade mission for James and Kate in New York, including event at the Canadian consulate

Provincial communication also include briefing the Minister with all the RTO’s in Toronto,

- Attempt to unify RTOs and strengthen the RTO model, rather than relying on TIAO or Destination Ontario to do so
- Survey deployed to RTO EDs and Chairs
- Well received by MTCS / shout out to the RTO12 work
- James Chaired the session – asked to continue
- Streamlines the messaging ahead of time and finds common points of interest/output/strategy

ED Murphy briefed the board on the newly developed South Algonquin Business Association:

- Return trip for James and Kate to present in Whitney
- About 12 members participated (that’s a lot for them...like LRBA when they started)
- Kate presented RTO programs and example of Loring-Restoule development
- Created a product inventory survey that was distributed for pre and post meeting

- Good intel gleaned from this meeting and the survey; one piece of content will be developed immediately
- One member of SABA has applied to be on the RTO12 Board
- Key: they do not consider themselves part of Algonquin Park proper

ED Murphy updated the board on activities in the Almaguin Highlands related to the sub-regional website:

- Stewarded the site once Perry Township (formerly Almaguin Highlands Info Centre) no longer supported it
- Originally built with FedNor money
- Taken over and updated with branding (logo, content site, FB)
- Handed to the Almaguin Highlands Chamber of Commerce (Willie) and new Regional Economic Development organization (David Gray) on April 1·2019
- Stewarded by RTO12 for about 4 years so FedNor investment wasn't lost

Included in the update as work completed on Municipal presentations & Partnership work:

- Presentations included Georgian Bay Township, Muskoka Lakes, Lake of Bays Township, Town of Huntsville,
- Partnerships include Golf Muskoka, Muskoka Tourism, Deerhurst Resort, Lake of Bays Township, Muskoka Chambers of Commerce, Georgian College Workforce, FedNor Indigenous 2nd half

Finally ED Murphy updated the board on current marketing, TIAO summit, Regional Tourism Summit and commercial air service.

- Marketing Program: Retargeting with MTMA, Parry Sound Tourism, Santa's Village, The Kee to Bala, Huntsville Adventures, Content for Porter doing extremely well – millions of impressions, 4000 entries for the 5440 contest so far with 6 weeks to go, Outbound contests with Moose FM in Parry Sound and Muskoka (\$2K spend)
- TIAO Summit: Kate to present on social media at the Ontario Tourism Summit in October (Collingwood), James to facilitate a panel of winter tourism operators from our region (RTO12 to make recommendations for participants), We will do the same way we did the Entrepreneur Panel
- Regional tourism summit: sign ups already for the Open Mic, Guest speakers are Rob Stimpson & Robin Tapley, Stockey Centre
- Commercial Air Service: Planes starting to book up – can't discuss load factors, Porter reps were our guests at RVC – extremely impressed, Now working with the District on the inaugural flight. (Minister of Tourism, Mr Deluce, RTO12 & District)

Break

Governance Chair Brenda Scott provided the board an overview of the nomination process and committee. It was noted that four applications were reviewed and two were brought forth to the governance committee and now to the board. Discussion related to conflict of interest was discussed at

length and wearing your regional hat at the board table was reiterated. The slate of directors to be brought forth at the AGM include for vote by membership include:

- Angela Pollack
- Brenda Scott
- Curtis Dunlop
- Donald MacKay
- Eric Miglin
- Gail Burrows
- Hilary Chambers
- Jeff Suddaby
- Michael Simonett
- Scott Doughty

Chair Scott noted that work will continue to be done to ensure proper succession and regional representation moving forward.

Motion to accept the slate brought forward by the Nomination Committee for the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

Motion: Brenda Scott

Second: Curt Dunlop

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Governance Chair Scott then took the board through the accountability portion of the agenda reviewing policies 1e thru 1h, they included:

- Committee Principals
- Board Member Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Member Consultation and Strategic Planning
- Board Meeting Performance Expectations

Board directors spoke at length of the need to be present and accountable at the meetings while discussing the board meeting process.

Motion to take board of directors in camera with ED.

Motion: Curt Dunlop

Second: Eric Miglin

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Motion to take board of directors in camera without ED.

Motion: Scott Doughty

Second: Gail Burrows

Discussion: n/a

Carried

In Camera

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: Michael Simonett

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

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