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Explorers' Edge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Tuesday January 14, 2020
Super 8, Parry Sound, ON

Present: Jeff Suddaby, Michael Simonett, Brenda Scott, Don MacKay, Eric Miglin, Scott Doughty, Angela Pollak, Hilary Chambers, Curt Dunlop

Resource: Laura Ross, Regional Development Advisor, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

Staff: James Murphy

Welcome and Chair Remarks: Michael began the meeting at 9.30am.

Conflict of Interest: Jeff Suddaby, Muskoka Accommodation Board
Scott Doughty, Muskoka Accommodation Board
Hillary Chambers, NOTO
Don MacKay, Airport Board of Directors & Golf Muskoka
Angela Pollack, SABA

Approval of Agenda – January 14, 2020

Motion: Michael Simonett

Seconded: Gail Burrows

Discussion: n/a

Approval of Minutes – November 25, 2019

Motion: Brenda Scott

Seconded: Scott Doughty

Discussion: n/a

Simonett brought the meeting to order speaking to the exciting year we have ahead.

Treasurer Simonett along with ED Murphy presented the financials noting that as we come close to the end this year, with the exception of what has been noted at earlier board meetings regarding over budget items, we are on track to hitting targets. It was noted that the income statement had a total revenue error which will be fixed in the budget section.

Motion to approve the Income Statement, Balance Sheet for the period ending January 14, 2020

Motion: Gail Burrows

Second: Hillary Chambers

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Executive Director 2020-2021 Business and Operational Plan Presentation

ED Murphy began by updating the board on 2020-2021 budget considerations for each pillar:

Marketing - 530K

- Domestic and International Marketing
 - Porter Airlines Year Two Contract Commitments
 - Transition of the Commercial Airline Project 2021
- New Website
 - Leverage Grants – Build over two fiscal years
- International FAM Tours and Trade Shows
 - Rendezvous Canada – Quebec & Sales follow-up New York
- Referral / Reservation Program
 - Hammond Dispersion and TICO Packages
- Transacting - Fly and Explore
- TICO Licence

With several deliverables pressing with a finite marketing budget grants and additional funding opportunities would be explored in order to offset the spend.

Workforce – 105K

- Catalyst Housing, Training and Regional Currency Research
- Additional Staff Resources Required

Investment Attraction – 20K

- Communication, Outreach and Meetings
- Rail Investigation, Development & Planning

Product Development - 55K

- Bus Dispersion – Muskoka Airport
- Porter Airlines Year Two
- Research
- Statistics Canada & Occupancy Statistics
- Indigenous Development
- Supported via Grants & Funding

Directors supported the investment into the second year of Porter airlines and dispersion tactics to support the service.

Partnership – 186k

- Domestic
- International
- Visitor Signage
- South Algonquin
- Workshops - TIAO Conference @ Deerhurst Resort
- Workforce - FAM Tours Georgian College

Additional Considerations – Additional Income

- Product Development
 - Indigenous – FedNor
- Workforce
 - Framework - Ontario Trillium Foundation
 - Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development - Skills Catalyst Fund
 - Georgian College, Ryerson, Waterloo
- Private Sector - RBC, GMC
- TICO Package Sales - Travel Revenue

Scott brought forward the need to have a system in place regarding the selling of packages for the next fiscal year. Murphy noted that this is in the early stages of development. Pollak offered to help with future grant applications, second set of eyes and feedback.

Governance and Administration

- Office Equipment and Rent Increase
- Insurance Increase
- Travel Increase
- Continue to support industry with memberships
- TIAO, TIAC, Chambers etc.

Estimated 2020-2021 - 19% administration costs

- MHSTCI Funding \$1,148,107.00
- Matching Partnership \$166,000.00
- Governance & Administration \$251,007.00

Motion to approve 2020-2021 Business and Operational Plan.

Motion: Scott Doughty

Second: Michael Simonett

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Executive Director Update

ED Murphy noted that staff executed 4 town halls in two days, Gravenhurst, Parry Sound, Huntsville & South River, 58 stakeholders in total. It was noted that the discussion revolved around workforce, Catalyst Housing, Regional Currency, Cross-Ministerial Approach, and Sustainable Industry & Education Programs. The town hall also touched on next steps related to the Rail Discussion.

Murphy also touched base on 2017 research results which yielded good news for the health of our industry year over year:

- **Occupancy Rate** - 51.2% 2016 – 55.1% 2017
- **Average Daily Rate** - \$163.30 2016 - \$167.50 2017
- **Revenue per Available Room** - \$83.53 2016 – \$92.33 2017

Murphy also updated the board on partnerships:

- 2020 Huntsville Municipal Accommodation Tax Association: Greater Context, Process & Communication
- PARC Association: Communication Challenges, Process & Governance
- Armour Township: Limited Budget for winter content
- Georgian College Winter FAM: Week of March 9, 2020, part of the annual College partnership program

Suddaby noted that the partnership with the new HMAT board was welcomed and has the ability to increase shoulder season business in Huntsville. Scott noted that the Armour township partnership includes several townships and is a collaborative effort despite the contract being entered into with just Armour Township.

In addition to partnerships ED Murphy provided updates on

- Porter Airlines selling starts week of February 1, 2020
- Fire & Ice 10K People Attend (Partnership Head Start on Selling,)
- Winter 2020, Slow start, no winter in Toronto & Major campaign by Tourism Toronto
- Dog Sledding - Lobbying government Norm Miller
- Ryerson Tourism Conference: Jack Hopkins presentation – February 1, 2020
- Muskoka Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting – Recommendations

Chambers noted that she will follow-up with operators regarding the dogsledding issue. MacKay commented on the success of the first year of Porter and looking forward to developing packages and increasing the commercial air service results in year two.

Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries

- RTO Council: Conference Call & In Person Meeting Winter 2020
- MHSTCI: Visioning Session with the Minister – February 2020
- Ontario Tourism Strategy: Spring 2020

Break

Governance Chair Scott reviewed the process and items involved in the development of the slate of directors related to the upcoming Annual General Meeting. Scott noted that this would be an application committee and not a nomination committee as the board had seen years before. The committee would review the applications on experience, work on other boards, industries, ideas, competencies (food & beverage, camp grounds, indigenous, attractions), etc. The committee would attempt to fill holes in the current board with the applicants and noted that owners and GM's would be ideally suited as board members. The board also discussed the role of advisor(s) to the board. Discussion ensued about the process and gaps that would require advisors. Simonett enquired about the process to rate potential directors.

The application committee would consist of:

- Michael Simonett
- Gail Burrows
- Angela Pollak
- Jackie Leung
- Brenda Scott

The board identified three retiring directors:

- Jeff Suddaby
- Curt Dunlop
- Eric Miglin

Motion to take board of directors in camera with ED.

Motion: Brenda Scott

Second: Jeff Suddaby

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Motion to take board of directors in camera without ED.

Motion: Gail Burrows

Second: Scott Doughty

Carried

Motion to come out of in camera without ED

Motion: Gail Burrows

Second: Hillary Chambers

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: Michael Simonett

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

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