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Explorers' Edge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 16, 2023
Webinar

Present: Hilary Chambers, Angela Pollak, James Roberts, Gabriela Hairabedian, Jackie Leung, Darren Smith, Michael Martyn, Didier Dolivet

Resource: Laura Ross

Regrets: Dave Anderson

Staff: James Murphy, Erin Smit (taking minutes)

Call to Order and Chair Remarks: Hilary Chambers called the meeting to order at 9:33am.

Hilary asked for any conflict of interest – there were none.

Approval of Agenda – May 16, 2023

Motion: Darren Smith

Seconded: James Roberts

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

Approval of Minutes – April 12, 2023

Motion: Darren Smith

Seconded: Angela Pollak

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items – May 16, 2023

- Sustainable Tourism Pilot Project
- Partnership Program Project Update
- Research Reports

Motion: Michael Martyn

Seconded: Darren Smith

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

Business and Operational Plan Status

STAKEHOLDER RESOURCES

Finalized BOP is with the graphic designer. Research decks have been circulated to the board, and have also been sent to the designer to be prepared for public circulation. The GreenStep report has been posted, and Rebecca Francis has developed a video that will be circulated and can be accessed by operators to watch at a time that is convenient for them. Luke Preston will also make a workforce video about employment programs which will be circulated with a follow-up AMA on Zoom to promote uptake from operators (while being aware of their time restraints).

Documents:

- Business & Operational Plan
- Research Decks (data hub in development)

Helpful Content for the Industry:

- Top Tips for Property Sustainability: Rebecca Francis
- Workforce Employment Programs: Luke Preston
- Follow-up AMAs on Zoom

MARKETING

- Partnership with Destination Ontario: Spring/Summer (report should be in shortly from them)
- Destination Ontario Int'l/National Geographic Quote for Lakes Campaign (Kate)
- Prepping for lead nurturing re-boot
- Kate to test "transformative travel" content dev (TICO positioning)
- Jake Good: 1st check point on Job Mapping completed

PARTNERSHIP – Existing

Attestation goes to the Ministry, final report document will be circulated for ongoing updates. Friday morning there will be an onboarding session between James and Luke to move the partnership program over to his purview (with oversight by JM).

Jayne's Luxury Cottages

- Rendezvous Canada International Trade Show - \$3k toward \$6.5k

Tall Pines Music Festival

- Media Purchase and Marketing - \$5k towards \$12k

Georgian Bay Mindoo Gamii Biosphere

- Signage, tent and dispersion material - \$5k towards \$12k

Township of Muskoka Lakes

- Signage & Wayfinding – \$8k towards \$20k

Toronto Metropolitan University Workforce Co-Creation Fam Tour

- Travel Fees - \$10k - \$22k

PARTNERSHIP – New

BlackFly Festival, South Algonquin

- Marketing and Entertainment \$3.5k towards \$7k budget

Howl Photography Convention, South Algonquin

- Speakers and Marketing \$3.5k towards \$7k budget

Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency Fall DO Spotlight

- Marketing Contribution - \$12.5k towards \$25k

Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency

- Segmentation Research – \$25k towards \$50k

JW Marriott The Rosseau Muskoka Resort & Spa – CP24 Season Launch Broadcast

- DO Marketing Buy in - \$5k towards \$10k budget (overall program is 20k)

Town Of Parry Sound – Cruise Ship Dispersion & Great Lakes Cruise Membership

- Transportation & Membership - \$8k towards \$16K budget

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: Short Term

- Job Board: 142 listings
- Micro-credential Completion: 350+
- Promoted Job Board: 104K impressions since April 15
- Toronto Metropolitan University: tourism management students co-creating solutions for workforce development (May 2023 – wrap report to be circulated)
- 2nd Annual Big Applause Awards to launch last week of July. Winners will be announced at the Regional Tourism Summit on September 20th.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: Social Enterprise Catalyst Housing Development

Ongoing outreach over the last 6 weeks meeting with a number of contacts.

- Jeff Lehman, Chair: District of Muskoka
- Stephen Rettie: Town of Bracebridge
- Lauren McDermid and Denise Kelly: Town of Huntsville
- Ryan Coyne: Muskoka Ontario Area Health Team
- Hannah Lin: YWCA Muskoka
- Saleem Hall: YMCA Muskoka (includes immigrations settlement services)
- Ryan Swartz-Collins: Executive Director of Tapestry Capital
- South Algonquin “Tourism Summit” (Camp Bongopix Tavern)
- Loring-Restoule (June 5)
- Toronto Metropolitan University students (housing/transportation suggestions)
- John Martyn, Board Member, The Mount Community Centre in Peterborough

The Mount Community Centre: Celebrating 10 years of Community-Centric Housing

- Intelligence gathering on funding model including Community Bonds (template being provided)
- 67 ppl raised \$2 million in community bonds for conversion of property

- Phased approach
- Revenue Generation: residential vs. commercial (and “ghost kitchen”); capital campaign (tax receipts via municipality or service org since we are not a charity)
- Self-directed RRSPs eligible for community bonds (as an investment)
- Peterborough runs “Home Again” program – four years of college training at Fleming College for single, homeless mothers that provides concurrent housing and leads to a job

James discussed the committees used to develop this project and how important those will be to move the project forward.

FISCAL SPENDING: Of Note

TPA was received on Friday – now no longer need to vote on financing (as mentioned in the agenda).

- Research: CBRE Accommodation Tracking
- Office & Travel Expenses: mileage, training and regional outreach
- Partnership Expenses: office equipment, technology, travel expenses

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: Parry Sound Cruise Ship Dispersion & Economic Impact

- Case Study / Pilot Project – tour guide bus with Explorers’ Edge/Downtown Parry Sound Business Association
- Voucher Program to track impact for 250 businesses in downtown BIA catchment and further afield
- Regularly funded shuttle for all cruises remains (from partnership program)
- Consider program for daily local cruises/boating with higher volumes of visitors who would potentially stay overnight and eat/shop local (Island Queen, MV Chippewa, marinas)

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: Authentic Indigenous Experiences

- Waaseyaa Cultural Tours, Whitney/Algonquin Park
- Misko Aki Exhibit at the Muskoka Discovery Centre (installation underway). A draw for domestic and international travelers; will be working with MSDC to help promote this new product.

GOVERNANCE: Not For Profit

- Carters: Feedback on ONCA , Revenue Generation Guidance (committee to be established soon)
- Regional Tourism Summit/AGM at the new Muskoka Discovery Centre Sustainability & Misko Aki Exhibit: September 20, 2023

Final report is due May 28th – a final draft will be circulated to the board executive before it is submitted.

FINANCIAL STATUS

Income Statement & Balance Sheet Period Ending May 10, 2023

Loan payable showing. Have held off on processing invoices while awaiting the TPA; now received these will be pushed out this week. Transacting \$25k moved to accrued liability, comes off the balance sheet

when they are submitted for reimbursement so shows as an expense. Product development line is budget for Rebecca Francis, is paid as a consultant. EMT will be sent to cover interest charges for the four weeks the bridge financing was held to Muskoka Futures.

Motion to Accept Financials as Presented – May 16, 2023

Motion: Darren Smith

Seconded: Michael Martyn

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

Hilary asked for an update from Laura Ross while she was on the call. Laura discussed her role as part of the assessment team for Experience Ontario – working through those applications. Discussed changes to the program, smaller funding stream available than has been in the past (*technical challenges with microphone; some of Laura's comments were not caught*).

James will choose a date in late June for one more quick board meeting before the summer; a meeting agreement will be sent out with understanding that if members are not available we understand.

Hilary asked for any other comments from the board – none.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: n/a

Seconded: n/a

Discussion: n/a

Carried.