

PINELLAS COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
September 16, 2020

Some members of the Pinellas County Tourist Development Council (TDC), as created under Pinellas County Ordinance 78-20 pursuant to Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes, met as a subcommittee via a virtual Zoom Meeting on this date at 9:00 A.M. with the following members present:

Pat Gerard, BCC Chair, Chair
Julie Bujalski, Mayor, City of Dunedin
Frank Hibbard, Mayor, City of Clearwater
Russ Kimball, Sheraton Sand Key
Doreen Moore, Travel Resort Services
Trisha Rodriguez, Clearwater Ferry
Tony Satterfield, Alden Suites
Mike Williams, Innisbrook Resort

Others Present:

Steve Hayes, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater (VSPC) President and CEO
Tim Ramsberger, VSPC Chief Operating Officer
Teri Tuxhorn, VSPC Administrative Director
Leroy Bridges, VSPC Vice-President, Digital & Communications
Katie Bridges, VSPC Senior Advertising Manager
Suzanne Hackman, VSPC Vice President, Business Development
Maria Hargrett, VSPC Accounting Manager
Liz McCann, VSPC Executive Administrative Assistant

Agenda

- I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – Chair Pat Gerard
- II. CHAIR COMMENTS – Chair Pat Gerard
- III. APPROVAL OF TDC MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES – July 15, 2020
- IV. MARKETING UPDATES & OVERVIEWS
 - A. Rise to Shine Campaign Update- Leroy Bridges, VP, Digital & Communications, VSPC & Katie Bridges, Sr. Advertising Manager, VSPC
 - B. Next Phases
 - C. Sales Overview
 - i. Meetings – Suzanne Hackman, VP, Business Development, VSPC
 - ii. Leisure – Rosemarie Payne, Director, VSPC
- V. ADJOURNMENT

MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Julie Bujalski, Mayor City of Dunedin
Russ Kimball, Sheraton Sand Key Resort
Rick Kriseman, Mayor, City of St. Petersburg
Doreen Moore, Travel Resort Services
Tony Satterfield, Alden Suites
Mike Williams, Innisbrook Resort

NEXT MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING:

NOVEMBER 18, 2020 – 9:00 am to 9:50 am - TBD
Regular TDC meeting will follow at 10:00am.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Gerard called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

CHAIR COMMENTS

- Commissioner Gerard commented on the feedback received from the Rise to Shine Campaign and her intent to review the campaign.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Minutes from July 15, 2020 were approved. Motioned by Mayor Bujalski and seconded by Mr. Kimball.

MARKETING UPDATES & OVERVIEWS

Rise to Shine Campaign Update- Leroy Bridges, VP, Digital & Communications, VSPC & Katie Bridges, Sr. Advertising Manager, VSPC

- Mr. Hayes started the meeting by addressing the subcommittee on why we were doing the Rise to Shine Campaign. Based on research that has been going on since March on visitors and potential visitors and how safe they feel about coming to our destination, the campaign VSPC is doing is based on that research and he felt the team did a great job putting together a campaign that will show people how safe it is to come to our destination.
- Mr. Bridges started by sharing the research numbers with the subcommittee. The slide showed 43% of travelers expressed hesitation to travel due to unclear health and safety protocols, while 97% said it was very or somewhat important that a destination follows strict safety guidelines, such as limited indoor capacity, requiring masks and allowing outdoor dining only. The campaign was built in direct response to consumer traveler sentiment research. Also, its important to note we have never worked more closely with our business community, municipalities and our Chambers to build this campaign and helping to get our message across the county.
- The Media Event to launch the campaign was strategically planned to happen right before the start of the Labor Day weekend and it was important to get the visit safely and responsibly campaign out. Mr. Bridges thanked all those that

helped to launch the campaign. The launch was very successful with broadcast and digital exposure.

- Mr. Bridges shared the radio and TV spots that are currently running to further get the message to visit safely and responsibly and to show safety in the destination.
- Mayor Bujalski thanked Leroy and stated the radio and TV spots are great. She mentioned the concerns seem to revolve more around the print ads and not the spots, people wearing masks on the beach and outdoors, she asked what his plans were to address those concerns.
- Mr. Bridges mentioned that a request has been put out to remove the masks from the paid print of people outdoors, however our business and Chambers wanted to depict people wearing masks to emphasize that when going into a business you need to have a mask on.
- Mayor Bujalski asked if we were going to take the masks off the print ads.
- Mr. Bridges mentioned due to feedback from the County Commissioners and others it was being considered and he would welcome input and advice from the subcommittee on how to move forward.
- Commissioner Gerard mentioned they had received a lot more feedback about masks on the people in the ads that were doing outdoor activities.
- Mr. Satterfield asked what the length of time was on the campaign, to which Mr. Bridges said it is scheduled to run through the end of November and into December. He also mentioned to Commissioner Gerard that some of the print ads that depicted water scenes with people in masks was created for a very short time and most of the campaign ads do not have that water scene. He also reiterated the importance of getting the message out to let people know what St. Pete Clearwater is doing as a destination to keep people safe.
- Ms. Moore mentioned her concern over the length of the campaign and if it would become an outdated campaign if the mask mandate was lifted before the end of the campaign.
- Mr. Bridges stated that consumer confidence is at an all-time low, people are not traveling, and we need to remind people that they can travel safely to our destination. Even if the masks mandate is lifted, there are many businesses that have put in place a mask mandate, such as hotels, so we need to continue to educate our visitors.
- Commissioner Gerard let Mr. Bridges know that the TV spot was perfect to show people inside and wearing masks. Feedback from the public has been pro mask wearing and she did not feel the mask mandate was going to be going away any time soon.
- Mr. Hayes stated we can slow or stop the campaign at any time, but we also have a safety message that's being sent to the consumer. We also have other visitation messages that we can put out once we see people are ready to travel again. We will continue to watch what is happening locally, statewide and nationally so we can react accordingly.
- Mayor Bujalski stated the campaign is great and how many of the small business are behind it. It clearly states, we want you to be safe, but also keep us safe.

- Ms. Moore stated she was having difficulty keeping track of what states are allowed to travel, still quarantining, who is allowed in to Florida etc... and would appreciate an update from us as travel restrictions change.
- Mr. Kimball commented that the Sheraton Sand Key as a branded hotel is required nationally to have a mask ordinance and that it was important to continue to let consumers know we have a mask mandate.

NEXT PHASES

- Mr. Bridges shared with the subcommittee the digital marketing efforts that VSPC is doing. We will continue to ramp up our efforts to run along the Rise to Shine campaign.
- Mrs. Bridges shared with the subcommittee where the marketing is headed. We are going to go with a more evergreen creative message that will take into winter and beyond. It will involve positive, inspirational and forward-thinking tones on how visitors feel when they visit St. Pete/ Clearwater. We will continue with the traditional and digital media across a variety of in-state and out-of-state markets. This will be more of a “reignition” campaign and will be launched post-election in November.
- Mr. Bridges mentioned we are reigniting our Travel Zoo campaign because they are now promoting Florida outside of Florida and hope to get that rolled out within the next couple of months to the South East in Florida, Mid-West, Mid-Atlantic and the North East.

SALES OVERVIEW

- Meetings – Suzanne Hackman, VP, Business Development, VSPC
 - Ms. Hackman gave a brief presentation to update the Subcommittee on what the Meetings Team is doing. The Powerpoint will be sent to the TDC.
- Mr. Williams commented that it was a great idea to bring on the Holmes Briscoe group, but also recommended they filter out the agents that have a strong Florida hotels and destinations bookings profile
- Ms. Hackman stated they have a good relationship with Holmes Briscoe, and they work with the group leaders in Florida to see what they type of business they have currently and what they have coming up in the future.
- Mayor Bujalski asked if there has been conversation about the special events that can drive tourism into a community.
- Mr. Hayes stated that Mr. Ramsberger and Mr. Campbell have been talking with the Elite Events folks but unfortunately, right now we are not sure what will happen, if they will happen and in what form. Currently looking at data that shows dips at certain times for travel and try to help them in any capacity we can.
- Mr. Ramsberger stated that right now there is a pent-up demand for amateur youth programming. However, the organizers are struggling financially and unwilling to keep taking risks. We are trying our best to partner with our local facilities and all the municipalities on how we can assist those events organizers to provide a safe

environment so they feel comfortable, so they can then pass that on to their consumers which are the teams that register for their event.

- Leisure – Rosemarie Payne, Director, VSPC
 - Ms. Payne gave a brief presentation to update the Subcommittee on what the Leisure Team is doing. The Powerpoint will be sent to the TDC.
- Mr. Satterfield asked if there was a date to reopen the border with Canada and if the CVB going to wait for the UK/Ireland Director to reopen their business or if we were going to send it out to bid.
- Ms. Payne stated there is no definite date to reopen the US border to Canada yet, however that Canadians are hopeful they will reopen for peak time. Also, all the UK/Ireland contacts have been turned over to her office in the interim.
- Mr. Williams added he has been told by Canadian members involved in Canadian politics, that the border restrictions with Canada will most likely stay extended through the rest of the year awaiting the outcome of a vaccine and they are hopeful that they can reopen in the first quarter for next year.
- With nothing else to discuss, Commissioner Gerard adjourned the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 A.M.

NEXT MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING:

NOVEMBER 18, 2020 – 9:00 am to 9:50 am

Pinellas County Extension – Magnolia Room – 12520 Ulmerton Rd. Largo