

Coronado Tourism Improvement District (CTID)



Minutes from Advisory Board/Board of Directors Meeting September 4, 2014, Council Chambers, Coronado, Ca.

1. Call to Order. The meeting of the CTID was called to order at 2:03p.m. The following CTID Advisory Board/Board of Directors were present: Claudia Ludlow, Andre Zotoff, Denise Schwab, Mary Ann Berta, Brian Johnson, David Spatafore and Phil Monroe. Eddie Warner and Nusrat Mirza were absent.

Also in attendance: Executive Director (ED) Todd Little, Assistant Coronado City Manager Tom Ritter, Sue Gillingham from Hotel Marisol Coronado and Karen Finch from Coronado Chamber of Commerce.

2. Approval of Minutes from August 7, 2014. *Motion for approval: Schwab, Second: Johnson. Approved 7-0*
3. Staff Discussion and Updates. The ED said the Board packet included the CTID assessment data for July. The first month in FY15 came in at about 2% over last year's total. \$83,567 was collected.

He said there were copies of *LA Magazine* next to each Board Member. On page 70 the first of 4 inserts appears, promoting upcoming Coronado events. The campaign will also includes space in a 5th issue and sponsorships of two *LA Magazine* email blasts.

4. Oral Communications. None.
5. Review and Approve Benefits Study Project. Recently the ED met with the National Marketing Subcommittee to update them on the CTID's group marketing efforts. The top candidate for the National Sales position declined the offer from the SDTA and they are doing their due diligence on other candidates. In that subcommittee meeting the group discussed what it should take for Coronado to effectively compete and the ED

recommended pursuing a Benefit Study. The ED felt such a report will help the Board further understand the potential group meeting demand, the advantages or disadvantages Coronado has, analysis of regional competitors and the anticipated return on investment. This report, he said, would benefit not just the CTID, but also the future National Sales Manager and the Board can also use it should they wish to pursue an increase in assessment.

The Board packets contained three proposals for researching and delivering a benefits study and the ED said he would be happy to work with any of the bidders. After reading the proposals and speaking with them, The ED recommended Tourism Economics because of their extensive background, how compelling their proposal was and how they suggested ideas to improve the report.

The ED said if Tourism Economics fields the report right away, the Board could see the results in early November. This could help the CTID target a January 1st 2015 start should City Council approve an increase in assessment.

The ED asked the Board to identify 5 competitive destinations they would like included in the study.

Because Tourism Economics' bid was the lowest, Andre Zotoff asked if their study would be as complete as the others. He was told yes by the ED. David Spatafore commented on a list of the Top 50 Group Meeting Destinations saying Coronado ranked 4th in California. He asked the hoteliers whether "region" was important to group meeting planners. He was told that central locations matter to Fortune 500 companies who must consider travel time for CEOs attending the event. Andre Zotoff said incentive based planners are driven by location and "how pretty the destination is." He added that seasonality also plays into decision-making as does fiscal year calendars. Brian Johnson felt destination ranking wasn't as important as market share. (The list did not include volume of guests, meeting space usage or ancillary spending.) Phil Monroe asked why the list indicated 15 Coronado hotels with meeting space. He was told the list wasn't accurate because not every hotel actually had meeting space. Sue Gillingham asked if the Benefits Study would include data about non-CTID hotels and whether the Study would be made public. The ED summarized Proposition 26, which stipulates that an assessment can only benefit those who pay the assessment. Thus, the report would only study the four assessed hotels. However, the report would be made public in the future. Andre Zotoff assured Sue that if more groups book meetings at the CTID hotels, her property would benefit from the compression (or overflow.) Sue encouraged the Board to communicate with other hoteliers and residents so they understand how they will benefit from more group meetings at the assessed hotels. She asked if the hoteliers would share

the schedule of group meetings they have booked. She was told the hotels and most groups consider that information proprietary. Sue asked if the quantity of rooms booked could be released instead to protect the identity of the group. For those groups that do not wish to remain anonymous, David Spatafore suggested developing an outreach program that welcomes them by name throughout the City. He said that knowing the quantity of group guests would be help local restaurants better plan their inventory, menu and space.

The Board finalized the list of destinations for the Benefits Study to San Diego, Anaheim, Long Beach, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach and Carlsbad. Tourism Economics was approved for the study at a cost of \$20,500. *Motion to approve: Schwab. Second: Spatafore. Approved 7-0.*

6. Review and Approve Local Marketing Campaign. The ED said the CTID was on a bit of a deadline trying to sync up the launch of its new website, marketing message and media campaigns. He said the website is moving along, the media is tentatively set to begin November 1 and now the Board needed to focus on the creative direction.

The ED met with Ideaworks and they provided three mock-ups over Labor Day weekend that most of the Local Marketing Subcommittee reviewed on Tuesday. The ED added that each of the designs had its own strategy and for the most part, they are a new take on *Come and Play Across the Bay*. He reminded the Board the layout, photos and text were for demonstration only. Custom photography and models were included in the budget.

The first designed featured dual images, with a “still-life” (no people) photo on top to represent the things you can purchase in Coronado. The bottom photo would include people by contrast in some form of activity. The headline features Coronado, *Play Across the Bay* between the two photos.

The second design used a very large activity photo and to the left was *Play Across the Bay* headline in a very contemporary font. The ED asked Ideaworks to provide two variations on that headline: *A Bridge Away* (the CTID’s logo tagline) and a headline developed by the agency “*Your Bridge to Adventure.*” The ED was unsure “adventure” accurately portrayed Coronado compared to Mission Bay and Pacific Beach.

The third mock-up was based on a real travel theme. It featured a series of activity photos framed by a silhouette of the Coronado Bridge. Because it is the primary road to Coronado, using the Bridge is strategic, but the ED was concerned how large the silhouette was (and whether is lessened the impact of the image.)

The Local Marketing Subcommittee recommended developing the first option (with two images.) They asked to review several color options as well as some font variations. The ED asked the Board to empower the Subcommittee to approve the final artwork so the November 1st deadline can be reached.

Andre Zotoff asked who sat on the Subcommittee and was told Claudia Ludlow, Eddie Warner, Mary Ann Berta and David Spatafore. He felt the images were paramount to everything else. He asked that the photos truly represent Coronado and create an emotion. He encouraged the Subcommittee to ascertain opinions from the marketing teams at each CTID hotel. Phil Monroe questioned why the photos used in the mock-ups only featured one or two people. He said paddle boarding, for example, was often a group event. Denise Schwab felt it was important the photos reflect the off-season with accurate clothing. She also felt golf would be an activity to include. Andre Zotoff felt the ads should only feature things where Coronado excels. He questioned whether the Coronado Golf Course was excellent, compared to other courses. Claudia Ludlow asked the ED if the deadline can be reached, he was confident it could be made. The Board approved these activities for the ads: biking, kayaking, yoga on the beach, paddle boarding, boating/sailing, beach bonfires and gondola cruising. The ED added that other activities could include dining, retail shopping, live theatre and even walking downtown. Sue Gillingham asked which domain would be featured in the ads, she was told VisitCoronado.org because it was a call to action and meshed well with the CoronadoVisitorCenter.com domain. *Motion to approve dual-image campaign under the direction of the Subcommittee: Spatafore. Second: Schwab 7-0.*

7. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 2:54 pm

Denise Schwab, Secretary, Date

Todd Little, Executive Director, Date