

Governor’s Tourism Advisory Board Minutes

Springhill Suites, Deadwood, South Dakota

April 12, 2017, 8:30 a.m.

Board Present Others Present

Tom Biegler Michelle Thomsen, Black Hills and Badlands Tourism (BHB)

John Brockelsby Susan Giese, BHB

Ted Hustead Mistie Caldwell, BHB

George Kessler Rosie Smith, Glacial Lakes and Prairies Tourism

Ann Lesch Jacqie Fuchs, Southeast South Dakota Tourism

Julie Ranum Bradley Block, Jewel Cave National Memorial

Carmen Schramm Blaine Kortemeyer, Mount Rushmore National Memorial

Ivan Sorbel Christine Czazasty, Badlands National Park

Frank Smith Eric Leonard, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

Kristi Wagner Tom Farrell, Wind Cave National Park

Matt Snyder, Custer State Park

Tourism Staff Present Lee Harstad, Deadwood CVB

Natasha Bothun Chuck Turbiville , Mayor of Deadwood

Thad Friedeman Susan Johnson, Black Hills Central Reservations

Wanda Goodman Erin Weinzettel, Lawrence &Schiller

Mike Gussiaas Laura Mitchell, Lawrence & Schiller

Jim Hagen Kim Lennox, MMGY Global

Kirk Hulstein Justin Farmer, MMGY Global

Cole Irwin

Harla Jessop

Nate Johnson

Austin Kaus

Stephanie Palmer

Robin Rattei

Katlyn Richter

Meeting was called to order by Vice President Ivan Sorbel. Ivan thanked the Deadwood attendees for the warm hospitality from the Deadwood community shown to the Tourism Board members on the *tours* the previous day.

Secretary Jim Hagen welcomed all attendees and thanked everyone for their support and hard work for the Tourism Industry.

Report from Board Members

Tom Biegler, Sioux Falls

* Sioux Falls is reporting record events at the Denny Sanford Premier Center.
* Pheasant Fest will be a big event in Sioux Falls and he hopes will be a statewide event.
* Lots of good things going on in Sioux Falls and looking forward to another good year.

John Brockelsby, Rapid City

* Tourism season is starting good!
* Yesterday press conference was held for Fireball Run with three stops in South Dakota with finish in Rapid City. This has potential for tremendous amount of free nationwide advertising.

Kristi Wagner

* As she travels the state sees the rural communities gearing up for tourism season by cleaning up their towns.

Julie Ranum

* Lots going on in Watertown with new facilities for the wellness and multipurpose facility, softball fields, and ice arena.
* 20th anniversary of Terry Redlin’s Art Center is June 6. Revenue and attendance is up at Redlin Arts center so looking forward to a great summer.
* The trolley in Watertown is running and gives guests free rides from hotel.

George Kessler

* George announced that he will be stepping down from Tourism Advisory Board after this meeting.

Ivan Sorbel

* Numbers are up from 2016 and tax dollars are up, too.
* Lots of activities going on in Pine Ridge and preparing for summer.

Carmen Schramm

* Yankton has a lot going on.
* Partnership with state is looking good.
* NFAA is expanding and doubling its size to handle projected numbers.
* Area is excited about canoe trail developing between Yankton and Vermillion.

Ann Lesch

* This year is 150th birthday of Laura Ingalls Wilder. This will be good for De Smet and the whole area.
* De Smet has new event and wellness center built two years ago. They are starting to see more events use the facility.
* De Smet is working on setting up Ag Tours. They hope to get something in place in next year or so.

Frank Smith

* Biologists divided Missouri River into three sections to count fish. The upper 1/3 of river looks good, middle ok, and lower not good at all.
* Looking forward to great year at Whitlock with 50 sites full for season out of 70.

Mayor Chuck Turbiville

* Mayor Turbiville welcomed the Tourism Advisory Board members to Deadwood.
* He invited everyone to attend the June 15 Grand Opening for Visitor’s Center.

Lee Harstad, Deadwood Chamber and Visitor’s Bureau

* Cool Deadwood Nights is the best event Deadwood sponsors.
* June and July are always strong months but working hard to build the other off season months.
* The Wagon downtown is popular way to get tourists local information.

Jacque Fuchs, Southeast SD Tourism

* This is 30th year for Southeast SD Tourism region.
* Visitor’s requests for area are up 17 percent from 2016.
* They have received many requests from Pennsylvania.
* May 2 is lit swap and will be bigger than before.
* Working on trip planner to help guests plan itineraries

Rosie Smith, Glacial Lakes and Prairies

* Are seeing huge increase in Facebook Fans (up 115%).
* Staffing begins at Visitor’s Center Memorial Day Weekend.
* Attended 6 travel shows.

MichelleThomson, Black Hills and Badlands

* January and February numbers were down but information request were up for March and April so encouraged by that.
* May 3 is Lit Swap.
* Survey and Strategic planning was sent out on how to move Black Hills and Badlands forward.

Susan Johnson, Black Hills Central Reservations/South Dakota Central Reservations

* Cen Res staff are in bound travel agents.
* Susan explained how Central Reservations interacts with tourists and other entities.
* They help customers with live chat, package building and custom trip planning.

Blaine Kortemeyer, Mount Rushmore National Memorial

* May 26th will be the first lighting ceremony at memorial.
* They are in process of getting updates to sculpture studio. Will be completed in 2018.
* With Xanterra taking over the gift shop and cafeteria are seeing many improvements. They expect to see more Made in USA items and South Dakota items in gift shop.

Bradley Block, Jewel Cave National Memorial

* Last year 135,000 tours were given.
* In the 1990’s, which were the big years for the memorial, they gave 140,000 tours.
* They are in process of making new reservations system and 20 minute orientation video with new theatre.
* They are looking forward to positive season ahead.

Eric Leonard, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

* In 2014 they had 60,000 visitors.
* In 2016 had 38 percent increase.
* They hope to hit 150,000 mark this year.
* Will construct Delta 1 parking lot this year to accommodate buses.
* Right now they are taking all the tours they can handle with staff and hours they have.

Tom Farrell, Wind Cave National Park

* This year marks the 10-year anniversary of ferrets in the park.
* Discussed what they have going on in park the park this summer.

Christine Czazasty, Badlands National Park

* Two years ago they had big jump in numbers and arrived at 1 million. She expects the same this year.
* Last summer they saw ½ million in Visitor’s Center alone.
* Happy to announce they will not have a fee increase this year.

Matt Snyder, Custer State Park and Black Hills Region

* This year marks the 28th anniversary of the Mickelson trail trek.
* February and March are seeing phenomenal amount of visitors.
* They are very happy with how the Visitor’s Center is received by the guests.
* The Peter Norbeck Center will become the outdoor education center with Grand Opening hopefully this fall.
* Custer State Park has a lot of updates taking place with the buildings and landscaping throughout the campus.

Jim Hagen, New Structure,

* Secretary Hagen thanked the NPS teams who presented earlier in the meeting and relayed how fortunate the state and tourism industry is to be working with such a talented crew.
* He then informed the Board that marketing contracts are up for renewal and that a new RFP will be issued in the coming days. He will keep them informed about the process.

Jim Hagen and Wanda Goodman, New Teams and Strategic Planning Update

* Secretary Hagen discussed the new strategic plan and the new teams that are in place within the department. He is very pleased with the progress of things, the team is energized and functioning well, and he feels confident that Tourism is well structured for the next 10 years.
* Wanda shared information about the operational plan and plan management tool.
* Walked through a few specific examples of action steps being taken by the Department.
* Shared information about four open positions on the team.

Katlyn Richter, Global Media and Public Relations Update

Media Appointments

* Deskside appointments at the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade included meetings with writers from U.S. News & World Report, Lincoln Star Journal, Conde Nast Traveler, Glamour, Rolling Stone, Redbook, Shape, Men’s Journal, AAA Magazine, etc. A total of 3 appointments.
* Deskside appointments in Seattle in February included writers from AAA Journey, The Seattle Times, AllRecipes.com, Travel Channel, USA Today, CNBC. A total of 6 appointments.
* Deskside appointments in LA included writers from LA Weekly, Los Angeles Times, FoodNetwork.com, Forbes, TravelAge West, The Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, NBC News, Tastemade, Fortune. A total of 9 appointments.

Media Coverage

* Big media coverage while in Los Angeles for media appointments and Travel Massive included a live segment on KTLA. The segment included the Mount Rushmore mascots and an interview with Secretary Hagen.
  + *Broadcast segment 153,186 viewers and ad value of $23,284.00*
  + *Online UVM: 3,153,123*

Travel Massive

* In February we hosted the LA monthly meet-up of Travel Massive. More than 60 travel writers, media professionals, influencers and travel enthusiasts attended.
  + South Dakota features included Sick N Twisted brew, Mitchell Corn Palace Popcorn Balls, Chubby Chipmunk Chocolates, Mount Rushmore mascots.

Future Outreach

* Media outreach for the department will include IPW media appointments in June.
* Media appointments in Washington D.C. in June in conjunction with IPW.
* Denver/Boulder area in June/July for individual media appointments.
* New York City media outreach possibly later in the year or in November in conjunction with the Thanksgiving Day Parade.
* Family Press Trip – will host a family adventure press trip across South Dakota in May for 5 travel writers plus their children.
* Chistian Roewekamp – German travel writer who writes for dpa, similar to U.S. AP.
* Outdoor Press Trip – will host 5-6 travel writers in June for an outdoor adventure themed press trip.
* Buffalo Roundup – will host 8 domestic and 8 international travel writers for about one week.

Earned Media Numbers, as of February 2017

* Domestic FY17 To Date (July-February)
* 245 clips resulted
* in 2.83 billion impressions
* and $2 million in ad value.
* International FY17 To Date (July-February)
* 173 clips resulted
* in 162 million in circulation
* and 77 million in readership
* for a value of $5.6 million

Kirk Hulstein, Industry Outreach and Development Update

* Visitor spending increased 1.5% in 2016. Most of the this gain is attributed to the SE region showing 5% growth.
* Custer, Fall River, Minnehaha, Lincoln and Brookings all reported significant gains.
* January and February hotel performance was slow but March is showing significant growth in Demand and Occupancy.
* Consumer confidence reached a 15 year high in February and the outlook is positive for domestic travel this summer.
* Continuing development efforts with Agritourism, Tribal, Adventure and Sports Tourism.

Natasha Bothun, National Travel and Tourism Week

* National Travel and Tourism Week is May 7-13, 2017.
* The Governor and Jim will be holding two press conferences on May 8th; Sioux Falls at Falls Park at 10 am and Mt. Rushmore at 2 PM MT.
* We have begun a postcard program where people can write their Great Place in SD and we will then send out those postcards.

Mike Gussiaas and Thad Friedeman, Global Marketing and Brand Strategy Update

* Peak Marketing efforts launched November 21 with Vikings, Macy’s Parade, Southdale shopping Mall and the Popup mailer to Chicago on December 5.
* Efforts hit full stride with most buys launched March 13 and carrying through week of July 24, some co-op runs through August.
* Total reach goal for all paid efforts is 518 million
* Target audiences are similar to last year in Young Families, Bucket Listers and Active Couples.
* Main markets are Chicago, Denver, Minneapolis, Madison and with focused digital helping to fill in from Kansas City to North Dakota, with Spokane and Portland remaining as third-tier tester markets for the digital buys.
* Co-op program helps fill out reach, extending to 14 states, dozens of cities and into Canada.
* As part of peak promotion, we had an activation at the Mall of America on President’s Day. A six-foot, 600 lb cake of Mount Rushmore plus mascots were central to it. Cake fed 1,000 people over the course of one hour and 45 minutes.
* New homepage and website navigation launched at the end of March.

Stephanie Palmer, Social Media Update

* Peak Social Media Campaign has begun. Four influencers come the first week of May to follow the four Good Times Guides.
* Mini-Influencer marketing campaigns have produced good numbers for us.
* Social Media engagement continues to grow.

Austin Kaus, Denver Travel Show and Pheasant Fest

* Pheasant Fest in Minneapolis was a total success and featured record participation in the South Dakota Pavilion. The Dept. of Tourism has also fielded a record number of inquiries regarding the 2018 Pheasant Fest scheduled for Sioux Falls.
* Having a South Dakota presence at the first ever Travel & Adventure Show in Denver was successful. The state will be participating again next year.

Cole Irwin, Updates on Global Travel and Trade

Group Tour Shows

* ABA (37 Tour operator Appointments)
* Circle Wisconsin Midwest Marketplace (33 Travel Planner Appointments)
* OMCA  (November 5th -8th )
* NTA (National Tour Association) (December 14th–18th)

International Trade Shows

* NAJ (25 international Appointments)
* Go West Summit (75 International Appointments)

International Missions

* Benelux/ Switzerland (20 appointments/ trained 70 Tour Operators)
* Italian VUSA Showcase (58 appointments/ 100 Travel Agents and Tour Operators Trained)
* UK Sales Mission (14 Trainings/ 51 Tour operators and Journalists trained)

Publications

* 2017-2018 Group Tour Planning E-Guide
* 2017 What is New/Profile Sheets
* Japanese In-Language Guide

FY18

* Creation of new In-Language Guides
* FIT Contract Issues
  + Education Seminars with Rocky Mountain International and Rocky Mountain Holiday Tours (Receptive Operator)
  + Quarterly DMO Calls
* Chinese Market- Haybina Hao partnership and Mission to China though Brand USA

Mike Gussiaas, VEP Program Updates

* This spring, the Department of Tourism launched Visitor Engagement Program (VEP) with a long-term goal to capture and use data about SD visitor in a more strategic way.
* VEP allows the Department of Tourism to deliver more relevant content while discovering more relevant audiences.
* The impact of the program is personalized messaging, efficient media buys, maximize advertising dollars through better media mixes and increased visitor spending.
* Only a handful of Tourism organizations have begun exploring advanced data personalization while online retailers live by it. The Department’s start in this field provides a competitive advantage.

Nate Johnson, Welcome Center Updates

* The Wilmot, Valley Springs, and Vermillion welcome centers will be temporarily closed during the 2018 season for remodel/reconstruction.
* Plans are being developed to make travelers aware of these temporary closures and direct them to other sources of visitor information.

Secretary’s Recap

* The secretary informed the Board that the next Board meeting is slated for the second week in October in Sioux Falls. We are looking at conducting the meeting at the Great Plains Zoo. Looking ahead, he shared that he would like to see the Spring 2018 meeting in Hot Springs and the Fall 2018 meeting in De Smet.
* Secretary Hagen ended his comments by sharing how proud he is of the Department of Tourism team and entire industry. He shared that there are a lot of great things occurring within the industry and he is optimistic about the peak summer season.