



Governor's Tourism Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 27, 2022, 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM CST
Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center
920 East Sioux Avenue, Pierre, South Dakota

Board Members Present

Caleb Arceneaux
Ted Husted
Ann Lesch
Julie Ranum
Valentine Rausch
Frank Smith
Carmen Schramm
Ivan Sorbel
Kristi Wagner

Other Guests

Lyssa Bruzelius
Kasi Haberman
Rachel Ogelsby
Chris Peterson
Rosie Smith
Michelle Thomson
Tracy Broderick
Lauren Corna
Ivie Parker
Matthew Johnson
Samantha Rasnak
Jeremy Chase

Staff Members Present

Angie Bartel
Calvin Bloemendaal
Bailey Carlsen
Ann DeVany
Alexa Dorn
Jacey Ellsworth
Ciara Forest
Thad Friedeman
Michele Ganschow
Hallie Getz
Wanda Goodman
Mike Gussiaas
Jim Hagen
Kirk Hulstein
Harla Jessop
Cole Irwin
Steph Palmer
Katlyn Svendsen
Teresa Tople
Erin Weinzettel
Ashley Worth

President Carmen Schramm called the meeting to order and welcomed two new regional directors to the group, Kasi Haberman from Southeast South Dakota Tourism and Lyssa Bruzelius from South Dakota Missouri River Tourism.

Secretary Hagen welcomed attendees and expressed how happy he was to see so many industry members in attendance.

President Schramm asked each board member to give a brief report from their area.

Kristi Wagner

- As she travels across the state, she is hearing numbers are down from last year but much more manageable than last year.
- The marketing campaign for off-road is showing uptick especially with bus tours.
- South Dakota has great visitor experience and that is so important to guests.
- Generally, estimate down 8-10%.

Frank Smith

- Frank sold his Bob's Resort business to his kids last year and numbers are down this year like most everywhere.
- Weather is affecting their yearly numbers. It was cool on the two biggest weekends of the year so reflecting in the numbers they are seeing.
- Fishing is overall pretty good. They expect to have a good year.

Ann Lesch

- Numbers at Ingalls Homestead are down but still very busy.
- Visitors are so happy to be here and spending money while here.
- In DeSmet lots of new projects going on,
- New Director will be hired at Director of Laura Ingalls Society. If you know anyone who might be interested, let her know.

Julie Ranum

- Having 25th Anniversary at Redlin Art Center this summer.
- Their numbers are up, and gift shop is doing well.
- They are seeing lots of Canadians and International visitors.
- Downtown park is hopping, and a new ice arena is in works.
- Hotels are doing great!

Ted Husted

- Wall Drug statistics show difference in June 21 and June 22 down 13 percent.
- Up 46% from 2019 but must consider inflation.
- Campground raised prices 3% this year.
- Fire at Cactus Café and Lounge destroyed on Main Street in Wall. Firewall in adjoining business kept fire from destroying more businesses.

Val Rausch

- Abby on Hills very popular and doing well.
- Glacial Lakes and Prairies region has been damaged with many windstorms.

Ivan Sorbel

- Pine Ridge reservation has opened back up to public.
- Had sell out of licenses this past turkey season
- Big fair first week of August have not had for two years
- Rodeo is going on this week
- Red Cloud Arts Center opened June
- Oglala Living History Center is having Grand Opening this Wednesday.

Caleb Arceneaux

- We are down 5% gross revenue from 2021.
- Deadwood down 3%.
- We are expecting strong year.
- Workforce continues to be a problem.
- Yellowstone guests are having affect in area because guests planning trips there rerouted to Black Hills.

Carmen Schramm

- I've started running a tourism related business called the Boxcar Sweet Shop in Yankton. It's going very well.
- Good things are happening in Yankton.
- Fairfield is ready to open.
- Lewis and Clark resort is doing very well.
- Brand new 2.5 million soccer field being built.

Regional Tourism Directors' Reports:

Michelle Thomson, Black Hills & Badlands Tourism Association

- Looking like an incredible summer in the Black Hills.
- Not quite as good as 2021, but level with 2019.
- Optimistic for a great summer and fall.
- We are doing our best to see that guests maximize their stay.
- Increased visitation in our area of for ATVs/off-roading. We did an impact study on it which show they are staying 5 days and are coming to see the scenery.

Rosie Smith, Glacial Lakes & Prairies Tourism Association

- Storms have damaged so much of area. Also had flooding in areas.
- Things warming up definitely help with planned summer events.
- Fort Sisseton Festival had a great weekend and cooler weather.
- It's a great family event where come back year after year.
- We merged travel counselors at Redlin Art Center and is working very well.
- Travel shows she attended showed concerns about gas prices.
- Looked for different ways to engage people and gave out gas cards.
- Working on Strategic Plan updates.

Lyssa Bruzelius, SD Missouri River Tourism Association

- It's great to be here and looks forward to building relationships with you all.
- Couple big things working on for region is internal structure and getting operations updated.
- Big project I started is our website. Robert Sharp is updating website for us. We are reviewing content making sure it represents us well. We plan to have launched middle of August.
- Working with business partners to make sure information is accurate and websites are up to date.
- Fishing reports are very important to visitors and trying to be a good resource for people.
- Water low so anxiety for boaters when they can't get on water. Game Fish has done good job to keep people notified of conditions.
- Wanting to reconnect with community so gave away bottled water at Oahe Days.

Kasi Haberman, Southeast South Dakota Tourism Association

- Cannot tell how excited I am to have this role.
- Tourism in my blood and happy to be home.
- Grateful to Tourism and this group that works so well together.
- Experience Sioux Falls reports occupancy up 80% for May.
- Getting conventions back and leisure travel up is 42%.
- Mitchell Corn Palace down somewhat.
- Built new cottages at Lewis and Clark Resort and they are beautiful.
- Couple of B&B's in region doing well similar to 2019. 2020 was too much for them.
- International travelers coming back.
- Want to restart communication with our members.
- Working on branding and connecting with people in region to get a great understanding of each area.

Secretary Hagen and President Schramm and Vice President Lesch, Meet the new marketing agencies:

President Schramm

- It was an incredible and through process to pick the new agencies.
- 15 agencies submitted proposals.
- Narrowed to full two days of presentations.
- Agencies showed so much creativity and staff asked the tough questions.
- Amazing process and happy with marketing agencies selected.

Vice President Ann Lesch

- Very inspiring and quality presentations from each group.
- Lots of good ideas and passion for our state.
- I'm very confident in agencies chosen.

Secretary Jim Hagen

- We set up a very thorough and robust process to select agencies.
- All agencies were very passionate about this state.
- Can't wait to start working with them on July 1.
- Secretary Hagen introduced the new agencies: Karsh Hagen Lou Hammond Group, Two by Four, and Love Communications who were selected through the RFP process.
- They expressed how eager they are to start working for South Dakota Tourism and presented overview of what their future plans are for the Department of Tourism.

Chris Peterson, Game, Fish and Parks update:

- Chris shared updates from the Department of Game, Fish and Parks on new one-stop website, pheasant hunting, and fishing.

Katlyn Svendsen and Stephanie Palmer, Global Media and Public Relations:

Stephanie Palmer

- International hostings are happening again and we'll be welcoming journalists from around the world at the Buffalo Roundup. We have had a few journalists in market this summer from our international target markets as well.
- Continuing to host social media influencers.
- Had approximately 45 one-on-one media appointments with primarily international media at IPW.
- Continuing to travel around the state to produce Instagram Reels, TikToks, and holiday social media content.

Katlyn Svendsen

- Numbers for public relations for the fiscal year are coming in strong with more than 620 placements, 24 million in ad value, and 1.2B impressions across our placements.
- Katlyn and Ciara visited New York City in May to conduct a media tour. They met with more than 10 journalists and reported the journalists were eager to learn about what South Dakota has been doing in recent years and expressed interest in staying connected for potential story ideas.
- Katlyn and Ciara conducted a press trip hosting focused on The Wild West in mid-June with four journalists. They will stay connected and work on story development and placement.
- Epic Trails episode on South Dakota is set to be released June 27. A press release will be issued regarding the show.

Cole Irwin and Alexa Dorn, Global Travel and Trade update:

- Presented a recap of French and Nordic Missions.
- IRU Tradeshow highlights.
- IPW Tradeshow highlights.
- Familiarization tour recaps.
- Motorcoach and group tour highlights from the past 4 months.
- Great American West budget allocations and co-ops.

Kirk Hulstein, Industry Outreach and Development Team and Welcome Center's update and Consumer research report (Travel sentiment / YTD Travel Indicators / Forecast):

- Industry Outreach efforts continue to pay off with increased partnerships and networking with industry business, communities, and associations.
- Jacey and Calvin have been developing strong relationships across the region by making sure Tourism has a seat at the table and keeping an ear to the ground about issues, concerns, and ways we can get more involved.
- Held first kickoff meetings with BPI team who will be designing and fabricating new exhibits for the Chamberlain Welcome Center. Great team and very knowledgeable.
- Currently beginning design process and in fall will begin installation to be ready for Spring 2023.
- Wi-Fi will be getting installed at Welcome Centers but parts currently on back order.
- Covered YTD Travel Indicators, Consumer Sentiment and the two major factors that our industry is facing – labor and inflation.

Calvin Bloemendaal, South Dakota Native Tourism Alliance update

- Presented South Dakota Native Tourism Alliance update:
 - Last in person meeting was held in Lower Brule.
 - Overview of Governance Panel discussions
 - Breakout sessions for action teams to work on priority initiatives outlined in strategic plan.
 - Next in person meeting is in July 2022
 - Working on test tours to take place in July 2022

Jacey Ellsworth, Agritourism update

- Shared that the Agritourism Work Group meetings led to Senate Bill 135, that passed and was signed into law in March 2, 2022. The bill provides protection from liability to commercial agritourism activities and requires posted warning sign and a contract signed between parties.
- The AgritourismSD class continues to meet and Jacey is assisting the program on behalf of Department of Tourism. The last session Department of Tourism staff presented on marketing.
- Continues to meet with Agriculture producers and groups to share information on agritourism and provide/direct to resources for those looking to start their agritourism business.
- Working with SDSU Extension on a 1-day agritourism workshop that will take place on November 17 in Sturgis, SD.

Bailey Carlson, 2023 Tourism Conference update

- 2023 Governor's Conference on Tourism is January 17-19, 2023.
- Our keynote speakers are Scott Stratten, Shabnam Mogharabi, Clint Pulver and Terry Jones.
- 2023 Spring Hospitality Training is May 8-11, 2023. We will have trainings in Hot Springs and Spearfish (May 8), Rapid City and Ft. Pierre (May 9), Sioux Falls and Watertown (May 10), and Yankton (May 11).

Mike Gussiaas and Erin Weinzettel and Ashley Worth, Global Marketing and Brand Strategy update:

Mike Gussiaas and Ashley Worth

- Peak season performing well despite some traditional marketing performance indicators like website traffic and guide requests being down. We've consistently seen the long-tail impact of our efforts in the next year and believe we're seeing it here coming off of last year's big spend (hence why even in a busy year like last, we added to our marketing efforts).
- The department is working again with More Than Just Parks to release a series of short films this summer. A film on Badlands National Park debuted in June and was already featured by various outlets, including Outside and the Weather Channel. Other videos coming out this year will feature Wind Cave (July) and Buffalo Gap National Grasslands (September).
- Our co-op efforts are in full swing, and beyond a new community co-op partner in Visit Brookings, some other new efforts include our A La Carte Video Road Journals, Native Ads on TravelSouthDakota.com and custom content with South Dakota Magazine and 605 Magazine.

Erin Weinzettel

- The department continues to partner with Game, Fish & Parks for the third year of the Hunt the Greatest pheasant hunting campaign.
- The Hunt the Greatest campaign will include traditional, digital, social and partnerships with sponsors including Pheasants Forever, SCHEELS, DSG Outerwear and others.
- The department continues to partner with Bandwango on mobile pass development, highlighting hidden gems throughout the state.
- Mid-July the team will launch State of Create mobile pass that will incorporate galleries, murals, museums, studios, art centers and more.

Wanda Goodman, Strategic Plan, Leadership Training and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan updates:

Strategic Plan:

- Provided a reminder of the four main imperatives.
- Provided specific projects under each imperative that are currently moving forward.

Leadership Training:

- Let the Board know that the entire team would be undergoing a two-day leadership training on June 28-29.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan:

- Shared basic information about how the need for a plan came about, through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program.
- Shared that Department. of Tourism is part of a study advisory team providing input to DOT about this plan, which is due to the Federal Highway Administration by Aug. 1

Hwy 385 Construction:

- DOT is planning construction along Hwy 385 over the next two years, which will disrupt traffic for both locals and visitors.
- Jacey Ellsworth and Wanda are on a focus group, along with locals in the Black Hills area, to provide input on sequencing of the construction, how to communicate the construction to various audiences, etc.

OPEN DISCUSSION

- Secretary Hagen thanked attendees for their participation in the meeting, discussed future board meetings, shared a little about the onboarding process for the new marketing agencies, and wished everybody a Happy Fourth of July.
- We will be in touch soon on date for September Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3 pm.