

Minutes

Destination El Paso Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, October 10, 2019 4:00 p.m.

Judson Williams Convention Center – El Paso Room

Board Members Present

Katherine Brennand
Ismael Legarreta
Katie Scott
Elvira Galindo
Gracie Viramontes
Bernie Olivas

Board Members Absent

Krista Snow
Rose Lucero

Destination EP Staff

Bryan Crowe
Brooke Underwood
Trudy Sweeten
Veronica Castro
Pavlova Sheffield

I. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes by Katherine Brennand
- Seconded by Bernie Olivas

III. General Manager's Update: Bryan Crowe

- We have finished the first phase of the Convention Center's renovation with the new carpet and paint.
- All the new improvements that are being made are thought to elevate the experience and services provided and in general to be at a higher level in order to attract more and larger conventions.
- The merger of 2 very significant companies in the industry (AEG Facilities and SMG) was completed to create a new management and services company, ASM Global. The first day of the new company was October 1st.

IV. Department Updates

- **Financials: Bryan Crowe**
- Total revenue for the month of August 2019 was \$605,488 bringing total YTD revenue to \$7,439,044.
- Total expenses for El Paso Live for the month of August 2019 were \$926,916 bringing YTD expenses to \$8,823,911.
- Total expenses for Visit El Paso for the month of August 2019 were \$476,250 bringing YTD expenses to \$3,961,506.
- YTD we are experiencing a negative variance of \$378,385.
- YTD after the influx of City of El Paso funding there is an Adjusted Net profit of \$260,877.
- August was the last month of our 18/19 Fiscal Year.

V. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro

- We are converting from print to digital advertising and hence the marketing and advertising goals for FY2019-20 have shifted to a conversion rate percentage based on total impressions. Conversion rate for September was .51%.
- In October we will host the Society of American Travel Writers Convention and we have 294 travel writers coming to El Paso.
- Advertising campaign in Mexico started on October 1st and we are focused in promoting the Visitor Information Center in Chihuahua. Visitors will be able to book hotels and buy tickets to our shows.
- Our metrics for Mexico advertising will be based on bookings and visitor interactions.
- Gracie asked what the strategy is behind the "El Paso es Tuyo" campaign. Bryan said that people from Chihuahua were already familiar with El Paso, but the City has been changing fast, so we wanted to focus on increasing the length of their visit and the # of times they come visit.
- You will be receiving an invitation for the Visitors Information Center "Ribbon Cutting" happening in November.

VI. Convention Development: Brooke Underwood

- We have a guest today, Drew Mayer-Oakes, our Film Commissioner. He started in the company as Coordinator with Susie Gaines. He has worked in the San Antonio and Houston Film Commissions.
- Goals for the Film Commission are structured differently. We are looking forward to a constant increase of TV productions and documentaries.
- Drew explained what El Paso 2 Day Movie Challenge is and how it works.
- Gracie Viramontes asked about the permitting process. Drew answered that it is in general an easy process. One step of the process that might be more complicated is the production insurance, but in order to make it easier, we connect smaller filmmakers to local production companies.
- For Convention Development, we increased our leads goal to 190 based on the prospecting per week, per manager and considering the new marketing strategies that will be employed once the new hotels open.
- In September our team generated 17 leads from several events that we attended while closing the year.
- We attended the annual IMEX Tradeshow and Conference in Las Vegas and we had 12 one on one appointments.
- For Sports Development travel will ramp up in fall and winter and we will start seeing the results of this in January.
- We started working with a national digital advertising company based in Austin to target meeting planners.
- Campaigns started on September 9th for Convention Development.

VII. Venue and Event Management: Trudy Sweeten

- We have new carpet in the Convention Center as well as lighter paint. We will also have new furniture. We are looking at replacing all our banquet chairs for meal and meeting functions.
- We have 2 new employees that I would like to introduce:
 - Cesar Ramirez is our new Director of Events & Facility Sales. Cesar has been in the company since 2017 and served most recently in the position of Event Operations Manager.
 - Jessica Vivar is our Director of Food & Beverage. She moved from New York and most recently served as the Regional Director of Conference & Catering with Compass Group.
- We have a new goal of 160,000 for our venue attendance and 1,750 for Broadway Subscribers.
- Special events is becoming a very important part of El Paso Live and we want to start capturing the numbers for all these events. That is why we have included new attendance and revenue goals for the special events in the report.
- Sold out show for Gabriel Iglesias “Fluffy”. He donated \$40,000 to the Community Foundation.
- Chalk the Block and Way out West Fest are happening this weekend.
- Ismael Legarreta asked about the time for WinterFest setup. Trudy answered it is a 5-week process.
- Attendance for the Minor League Baseball Innovators Summit was 1,779.

***Adjourn 5:13 pm**

***The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 1:00 PM at the Destination El Paso Board Room**