

**Utah Office of Tourism
Board Meeting
Friday, August 14, 2020
Online ZOOM Meeting**

Members Present:	Lance Syrett, Brian Merrill, Dirk Clayson, Elaine Gizler, Glen Overton, Jim Powell, Kym Buttschardt, Mike Taylor, Sara Toliver, Shayne Wittwer, Greg Miller, Nathan Rafferty
Members Excused:	Dean Cox
Staff:	Vicki Varela, Dave Williams, Julia Barnhouse, Becky Keeney, Lorraine Daly, Andrew Gillman, Bianca Lyon, Kelly Day, Rachel Bremer, Denise Jordan, Jody Blaney, Emma Checketts, Melissa Kinney, Flint Timmins
Visitors:	Adam Whalen, Alison Garner, Breck Dockstader, Ciera Miller, Cody Adent, Dallas Miller, Emily Christopher, Falyn Owens, Kaitlin Eskelson, Joan Hammer, Jonathan Smithgall, Joyce Kelly, Judy Cullen, Kevin Lewis, Kylie Kullack, Lee Banov, Lesha Coltharp, Maria Twitchell, Megan Griffin, Molly O’ Niell, Monique Beeley, Nancy Volmer, Natalie Randall, Raelene Davis, Randy Rhodes, Sydnie Furton, Tess Pascua, Tom Love, Val Hale, Des Barker, Colin Greenberg, Samantha Browing, Scott Sorenson

WELCOME

Lance Syrett called the meeting to order.

MINUTES

MOTION: SHAYNE WITWTER MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 31, 2020 MEETING THAT WAS HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM. SARA TOLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Vicki Varela, Managing Director, UOT, reported on the following items:

- Thanked the UOT team, Tourism Board and partners for the continued efforts made for the industry during COVID-19.
- Recognized the leadership and of the Cooperative Marketing Committee chair, Kym Buttschardt, especially during a very trying year.
- The Utah legislature will be holding another special session on August 20, 2020. Vicki is working with the Office of Outdoor Recreation to encourage investment in infrastructure to improve the quality of visitation.
- The Governor’s Office of Economic Development has organized the following grants using CARES Act funding:
 - Shop in Utah - \$25 million program that allows businesses to apply for (through a state grant) compensation for COVID-19 generated revenue losses as long as businesses allocate 50% of the funds used back to discounts for customers. The tourism industry submitted 676 applications out of 878 in total.
- Travel Zoo platform – Becky Keeney and Love Communications are working with TravelZoo to provide a platform that tourism businesses can use in order to promote the

discounts they are offering as a requirement of receiving the Shop in Utah grant. This will be available mid-September.

- Senator Romney Town Hall – Senator Romney addressed the tourism and outdoor recreation industry as well as listened to various challenges and constraints that the industry is facing due to COVID-19. There were over 400 participants from the tourism and outdoor industry that attended the virtual town hall. This has opened up more opportunities to have discussions of this nature with Senator Romney in the future, as well as other members of congress. Vicki thanked Lance Syrett for his involvement in the discussions.

COOPERATIVE MARKETING GRANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Kym Buttschardt, Chair of the Cooperative Marketing Committee, announced that 72 total applications were received from 25 counties requesting \$5,012,961. There were 15 applications that were \$10,000 or less, which UOT staff reviewed and scored while anything higher than that amount was reviewed by the committee. Oral interviews took place via Zoom over the course of two days. The committee is recommending that all 72 applications be funded at 100%. For the first time, the committee was able to incorporate an in-state marketing option of either 15% or up to \$35,000, and a majority of the applications took advantage of this option. The award will pay out 75% initially and 25% on completion. This year there were 11 new applications from counties and non-profits.

MOTION: KYM BUTTSCHARDT MOTIONED TO AWARD APPROXIMATELY \$5,012,961 TO COOPERATIVE MARKETING APPLICANTS AS OUTLINED IN THE ATTACHED SUMMARY. MIKE TAYLOR SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NOTE - Each board member has recused themselves from approving the grants that they have a conflict of interest with. A list of the conflicts of interest are attached to this document.

MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Marketing Committee Report**
 - Update on COVID Metrics, Jonathan Smithgall, Media Buyer, Love Communications ([presentation](#)):
 - Which KPI's are we monitoring to indicate a shift in messaging:
 - Guidelines for re-opening as monitored by CDC:
 - Hospital Capacity: Bed Capacity %, ICU Capacity %
 - Risk Level: 14-day trend of COVID-19 growth, Positive Test Rate
 - Community Spread: Rate of transmission
 - Consumer optimism levels
 - Page views view TripAdvisor, Expedia, and VisitUtah.com sustain an upward trend.
 - Consumer Mindset:
 - Global Web Index: Levels of Optimism
 - Percent of respondents who say they feel optimistic that the US will overcome the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - Global Web Index: Expected Length of Outbreak

- Percent of respondents who say they think the COVID-19 outbreak will last 6 months or longer in the US.
- Global Web Index: Audience Measurement
- Global Web Index: Perceived Length of Outbreak
- Google Surveys: Intent to Vacation in Utah
 - Overall, we haven't seen a huge decrease in intent to vacation in Utah. This should be a positive sign given the spiking COVID-19 cases in Utah during the month of July.
- Destination Analysts: Top destinations discussed as COVID-19 hotspots.
 - Out of 112 locations, Utah ranks 27th in destinations discussed as COVID-29 hotspots. A previous study showed 47.7% of people plan to avoid areas hit hardest by the Coronavirus; and as such, maintaining a safe destination remains critical.
- Destination Analysts: Next Flight on an Airline
 - The general traveling population continues to feel that they are more likely to take a commercial flight sometime in 2021 or later. The below graph reflects a 41% increase in the amount of people who are unwilling to take a commercial flight until 2021 or later.
- Nationwide, we continue to see that air travel is at roughly 30% capacity year over year.
- Destination Analysts: Looking Back
- Destination Analysts: Excitement to Travel
 - The percentage of people expressing excitement to travel has once again surpassed 50 % this is up from our June board meeting's total of 48%.
- 42.5% of travelers will not travel until there is a vaccine.
- RRC vs Destination Analysts:
 - When we compare the general traveling population against our skiing population via Destination Analysts and RRC, you can clearly see that the skiing population is more optimistic about traveling in the upcoming months.
 - We see that our skiing population is more likely to choose a national park as their next vacation destination than the general traveling population.
- Update on Southern Utah Campaign Performance, Jonathan Smithgall:
 - What has remained paused:
 - National Connected TV
 - What we have live:
 - TripAdvisor, Kayak, Expedia, Native, Programmatic
 - Google Paid Search
 - Regional Connected TV
 - National TV
 - What is ending and starting:
 - Southern Utah+ end date: 10/31/2020
 - Winter in Southern Utah start date: 11/1/2020
 - Ski+ tentative start date: 10/15/2020
 - Current Campaign Performance
 - Visitutah.com website trends

- Since June, daily average sessions have remained strong. We are monitoring an 82% increase in daily sessions since March.
- Visitutah.com website trends all markets:
 - In our June board meeting, year-over-year sessions had only just begun to increase at a rate of 0.44%. Pictured here, you can see sessions increasing at a rate of 96% YOY since July 1.
- Visitutah.com website trends CTV markets:
 - Our CTV markets have seen an increase in sessions year over year of more than 122%. This is up significantly from the last board meeting when we were seeing a 22% increase year over year.
 - Trip Advisor: Week-over-week page view growth
 - Expedia compared to the floor of the pandemic:
 - Utah has remained one of the strongest recovering markets in the West, as monitored by year-over-year hotel searches via Expedia.
 - Top booking markets:
 - We have tracked \$3.2M in hotel revenue from May 1, August 10.
 - Website Bookings: Since May 1, people who have visited our website have gone on to book \$2.08M in hotel revenue. In the last three weeks, our website is generating an average of \$200K in booking revenue per week.
- Ski campaign strategy update: Dave Williams, Associate Managing Director, Utah Office of Tourism:
 - For the September 11, 2020 board meeting, we are planning to discuss our Ski+ and Winter in Southern Utah media campaign recommendations.
 - RRC Skier Survey:
 - The most popular months for an expected ski vacation are January, February and March.
 - Of all recent research reviewed, RRC's skier survey reflects high intent for repeat visitation, with 85% of respondents indicating a likelihood to consider the same destination.
 - The UOT team is working with SkiUtah, various DMO's, ski resorts, and partners to form a creative strategy and media buy that will be presented at the September 11, 2020 Tourism Board meeting. The media buy is targeted to release mid-October based on when partners, DMO's and ski resorts will be ready.

SALT LAKE CITY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPDATE

Nancy Volmer, Director of Communication and Marketing, Salt Lake City International Airport, announced that the first phase of the airport reopening will take place on September 15th including the new parking garage, essential terminal, and west end of concourse A. On October 27th the west end of concourse B will open. Large scale art installations have been placed throughout the airport and it represents the beauty of Utah. Three of the existing concourses will remain open between September 15th – October 27th (F, C and G). A live stream of the first unveiling of the airport will take place on August 27, 2020. Nancy thanked Vicki Varela and the UOT team for the images that will be placed in the corridor that welcomes international passengers. The first flight scheduled to depart from the new airport is scheduled on September 15, 2020 at 6:00 am to Atlanta, GA.

UTAH TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Cody Adent, UTIA Executive Director, gave the following update:

- Registration for the Tourism Conference is live. There will be three ways to participate: virtually on Zoom, a local watch party, or at the location that the keynote speakers will be presenting at.
- Zion National Park shuttle system – ticket sales have increased by 20%, and there is now a standby option being offered as well as increased operating hours. Kolob Canyon is scheduled to reopen thanks to the support of Washington County, who is funding the janitorial services required to keep the area clean. The south campground will reopen the week of August 23, 2020.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Greg Miller – Grateful to be a Utahan and to live in a state that shows tenacity, resourcefulness and community.
- Jim Powell – The new director of the Park City Chamber Bureau will be announced at 12 pm on August 14, 2020 at 12:00 pm MST.
- Joan Hammer – announced that the silent auction will take place again at the Tourism Conference.
- Kaitlin Eskelson – Downtown Salt Lake City has lost \$350M in convention business and is still struggling due to COVID-19. The Salt Palace is not scheduled to reopen until April 2021. She encouraged everyone to consider staying at a downtown SLC hotel or support a local business to help support the area.

MEETING ADJOURNED