

**Board of Directors**

Bruce Spangler, President (Oroville)  
 Brooke Isenberg, Vice President (Chico)  
 Dori Franklin, Secretary (Chico)  
 John Pearson, (At Large)  
 Kiran Paragji, (Oroville)  
 Haroon Saddique, (Paradise)  
 Mohammad Billah, (Chico)  
 Nicole Johansson, (At Large)  
 Vacant, Unincorporated County

**Advisory Board**

Debbie Collins (Chico)  
 DCBA (Chico)  
 Evie Cameron (Paradise)  
 Heather MacDonald (County)  
 Jennifer Leonard (County)  
 Melissa Schuster (Paradise)  
 Chico Velo (Countywide)  
 Tony Catalano (Oroville)

## EXPLORE BUTTE COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES – October 17, 2019

### SPECIAL BOARD MEETING\*

Butte County Association of Governments, Board Room  
 326 Huss Drive, Building E Chico  
 12:00 – 2:00 PM

\*This meeting was scheduled to take the place of the regularly scheduled board meeting of October 10, 2019 due to the public safety power shutoff.

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**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this corporation shall be to promote Butte County tourism through the development and operation of a tourism business improvement district and other programs and initiatives.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call – Meeting called to order by Vice President Isenberg at 12:04 p.m.

Present: Directors Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson. Advisors Collins, Leonard. Staff Denero, Baer.

Absent: Directors Spangler, Paragji, Billah. Advisors Feldman (formerly Cameron), MacDonald, Schuster, Catalano, DCBA, Chico Velo.

Guests: Chris Constantin – City of Chico, Heather Ugie – Chico Chamber, Pat Macias – monca.

Vice President Isenberg swapped agenda 2 and 3 because there was not a quorum to take action when meeting was called to order.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public is invited to address the Board regarding any non-agenda items at this time. Time is limited to 3-minutes per speaker. The Board may not take any action on public comment.

John Pearson – let the Board know that he has resigned from Sierra Nevada Brewery and will transition into the executive director role at Chico Velo. He would like to continue his at-large seat on the EBC board. He still has a lot of connections at SNB and can continue to help facilitate media.

Nicole Johansson – thanked the Board for supporting the SOFT Passport weekend – it was successful for all of the farms. Nicole will share ticketing data with EBC for analysis of out-of-town visitors.

Debbie Collins – The City of Chico is moving to an online collection system of TOT, a letter was mailed to all lodging properties. Debbie will be retiring from the City effective December 11, Chris Constantin – Assistant City Manager – will be attending EBC board meetings once she retires.

Chris Constantin – Updated Board about a proposed \$.01 sales tax increase.

Pat Macias – New exhibit opening at monca on November 8 to include benches for Redding artist to serve as reflection benches.

2. **CONSENT AGENDA**

2.1 Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2019

2.2 Approval of August and September Financial Reports

A motion was made by Director Pearson and seconded by Director Franklin to accept the consent agenda items.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson.

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

4. **REGULAR AGENDA**

4.1 **VARIANCE REPORT**

Review variance reports for August and September.

The Board had no questions regarding the variance report.

4.2 **AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT**

August meeting:

Madden Media Campaign options were reviewed and agreed upon by the committee. This was built into the 2019 budget and is a story-telling campaign beyond the contract with Porter Co. The two stories to be “told” on our website will be a full-year season campaign told from a photographer’s perspective. The second story will be told from the perspective of a man who used to visit Butte County as a young person and wants to come visit after the Camp Fire. The campaigns will be advertised in the Central Valley and will run for 2 months.

Committee reviewed the Agritourism creative to be executed beginning September 1.

The committee agreed that EBC should lead the countywide Museum Weekend event for Feb 29 & Mar 1, 2020. This will be an EBC campaign that will be very similar to Restaurant Week in working with partners and encouraging local and visitor participation to this business type.

September meeting:

Ashley presented a monthly and quarterly report on social media followers and engagement, which are significantly lower than 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. There is no specific strategy for growing social media so a strategy will be built for 2020 to grow social media significantly.

Review of advertising campaigns through end of 2019. Strategically, EBC does not run multiple overlapping campaigns during the summer because it is typically busier than the shoulder season of November through April. In looking at analytics, the campaigns that were being run were not resonating with visitors. Traffic to the website and social media was not where it should be. Impressions are there, but not the conversion to website traffic.

Campaigns ramp up beginning mid-October; bleisure (geo-targeting people who are working in Butte county and returning home on weekends) will run 10/15-11/15, move-in (geo-fencing specific areas during events) will run immediately and finish 10/31, Madden Media campaigns will run 10/30-12/30, and active adult will run mid-November through end of year. In addition, event messaging will begin around Restaurant Week and Museum Weekend.

The EBC visitor guide will be ready end of October, but digital version will be ready mid-October.

Committee co-chair Pearson gave verbal report of past 2 marketing committee meetings. Staff to make sure visitor guides are sent to legislators in Sacramento as part of distribution plan. Idea to include visitor centers in next iteration.

#### **4.3 CONVENE THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Each year the Board may appoint a Nominations Committee composed of at least three (3) Directors. Nominations for Directors shall be submitted in writing to the Nomination Committee not less than 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The recommendations of the Nominations Committee shall be submitted to the Board at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting, which recommendations will ensure compliance with Article V, Section 4. Election of Directors shall be conducted at the Annual Meeting. Per the motion made at the March 14, 2019 board meeting, the committee will be comprised of Directors Isenberg, Paragji, and chaired by Spangler.

Motion was made by Director Johansson and seconded by Director Pearson to convene the nominations committee to begin the nomination process for the annual meeting scheduled for March 12, 2020.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson.

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

#### **4.4 CONSIDERATION OF CONVENING AN AD HOC BUDGET COMMITTEE FOR 2020 BUDGET PREPARATION**

In preparation for the 2020 budget year, convening an ad hoc budget committee to review the 2019 budget and create the budget for 2020. Main consideration is the increased collection of TBID during the 2019 year and the amount of money in the reserve.

A motion was made by Director Pearson and seconded by Director Johansson to convene an ad hoc budget committee to prepare a draft 2020 budget to be reviewed and approved by the full board of directors. The committee will be Chaired by Director Spangler with additional members Paragji, Johansson, Billah, MacDonald, Pearson. Meeting will require noticing since a quorum of board members is on the committee.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson.

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

#### **4.5 OPEN DISCUSSION FOR 2020 BUDGET FORECASTING**

In preparation for the 2020 budget year EBC staff would like to understand how lodging is forecasting for their 2020 budget years. This is an open discussion item so the ad hoc budget committee can have a better understanding of revenue for 2020.

Open discussion from hotels about what they are projecting for 2020. All hotels present have built in growth for 2020 – they believe it is going to be another strong year. Potential for a slight dip in occupancy long term. Contractors are still taking up a lot of rooms as they work on recovery and rebuilding. Think this will be similar to the 2018 occupancy trends. Should see a strong 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

Paradise Hotel is projecting to open in February or March of 2020 if they can get water.

Long-term effects of the saturated market is that we might begin to lose repeat business travel because hotels don't have the rooms available for conferences. We should keep a close eye on this.

#### **4.6 RECOMMENDATION TO DRAFT LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR DRAG BOAT RACES AT THERMALITO NORTH FOREBAY**

Explore Butte County was asked to write a letter of support for the "Super Eliminator Shootout Drag Boat Races". The proposed date of the event to take place at the Thermalito North Forebay is May 30 & 31 or June 6 & 7, 2020. The event organizers, California Hot Boat Association, LLC, will need to work with various governmental organization to receive approval of the event and a letter of support from Explore Butte County may help with their proposal. According to their one-sheet, the event appears to draw participants and visitors from out of town, supports local vendors, and would highlight a Butte County asset. There has been no request for zone marketing funds or marketing assistance, to this point.

A motion was made by Director Franklin and seconded by Director Pearson to write a letter of support for the *Super Eliminator Shootout – Drag Boat Races* as a new event that would support travel and tourism to Butte County.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson.

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

#### **4.7 RECOMMENDATION TO DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR CAROLYN DENERO TO HOLD A VOTING SEAT ON THE SHASTA CASCADE WONDERLAND ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association (SCWA) recently reviewed their bylaws and after recalculation of the areas they represent realized that Butte County has another voting seat on the SCWA board of directors. Carolyn Denero has served as an alternate to Melissa Schuster on the SCWA board for about 6 months and was asked to have an official recommendation from the EBC board of directors to accept the voting position.

A motion was made by Director Johansson and seconded by Director Pearson to submit a letter of support for Carolyn Denero to hold the voting seat for the Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, representing Explore Butte County.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson.

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

#### **4.8 CONSIDERATION OF BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING THE 2020 OUTLOOK FORUM**

The annual Visit California Outlook Forum will be held in San Diego in February 2020. Many TBIDs send their entire board of directors to the conference and Visit California board meeting. Discussion item to determine EBC Board interest in attending the annual meeting.

A motion was made by Director Isenberg and seconded by Director Pearson that each Director could attend the Visit California Outlook Forum being held in San Diego in February of 2020 with a per person cost not to exceed \$1,451.96. Those Board members attending will report back to the entire board of directors and public.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Isenberg, Franklin, Pearson, Saddique, Johansson.

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

5. **REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

5.1 **Update on Strategic Objectives** *Nicole Johansson, Bruce Spangler, Carolyn Denero*

5.2 **Marketing Communications Report** *Ashley Baer*

5.2 **Executive Director Report** *Carolyn Denero*

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Carolyn Denero.