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MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
October 28, 2010 – 9 am

NORTH TAHOE EVENT CENTER

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Deb Dudley, Bret Williams, Becky Moore, Ron Parson, Christine Horvath, Deanna Gescheider and Alex Mourelatos

RESORT ASSOCIATION STAFF: Andy Chapman, Jeremy Jacobson, Jason Neary, Kym Fabel and Emily Sullivan

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Pettit Gilwee, Mike Gelbman, Carl Ribaud, Cheri Sprenger, Alanna Crete and Cathy Davis

I. MEETING OF THE MARKETING COMMITTEE

1.0 CALL TO ORDER – ESTABLISH QUORUM

1.1 The Marketing Committee meeting was called to order at 9:05am by Chair Deb Dudley and a quorum was established.

2.0 PUBLIC FORUM

2.1 Andy introduced Mike Gelbman to the Marketing Committee. Mike is the North Shore Advertising Director for the Sierra Sun and will be replacing Ryan Slabaugh on the Chamber of Commerce Advisory Committee.

3.0 AGENDA AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL

3.1 **M/S/C (Parson/Williams) (7/0) to approve the Marketing Committee agenda as presented**

4.0 APPROVAL OF THE MARKETING COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON OCTOBER 26, 2010

4.1 Ron would like to make an amendment to the minutes from September 28th. He would like to amend motion 10.2 to read 'Lodging Committee' not 'Sub-Committee'

Revised: M/S/C (Parson/Williams) (10/0) with the knowledge that it is a 'Lodging Committee' and the recommendation of the addition of another large lodging representative

4.2 **M/S/C (Parson/Williams) (7/0) to approve the Marketing Committee minutes from September 28, 2010 minutes with the amendment of the motion 10.2 changing 'Sub Committee' to 'Committee'**

5.0 PRESENTATION ON SKI LAKE TAHOE/SIERRA SKI MARKETING COUNCIL EFFORTS-CARL RIBAUDO

- 5.1 Carl Ribaldo is here to present the continued and new efforts of the Ski Lake Tahoe/Sierra Ski Marketing Council. The Ski Lake Tahoe/Sierra Ski Marketing Council has worked diligently over the years creating national and international marketing for the Lake Tahoe skiing industry. Carl stated they have multiple ways they advertise Lake Tahoe. Now they are looking to change course and make a pronounced shift into the interactive world. They are focused on a new website targeting the Southern California market and will be producing more online media. He would like to invite the Committee to explore the new website and he welcomes any feedback. He said in the first month the new website's visits were up 8 to 10% without conducting marketing. He said there is new technology in place that produces data on visitors on the site. Carl stated that Ski Lake Tahoe still supports other opportunities such as Southwest promotions and trade shows but the focus has been shifted into the website. Andy asked Carl if he could give the Committee some information about their international efforts. Carl replied that they are still sponsoring Warren Miller's *Black Diamond Film Tour* in the UK and Ireland. He said they are looking at taking that model and duplicating it in Australia. Carl stated their efforts are for the good of the region and in a changing world he believes this destination can work together cooperatively. He thanked the NLTRA for their continuing support. Andy stated that the NLTRA funds the Ski Lake Tahoe/Sierra Ski Marketing Council to promote Lake Tahoe as destination to compete against Utah, Colorado and Mammoth. Ron said he has noticed the addition of cross country skiing in Ski Lake Tahoe/Sierra's marketing and asked if they plan to increase their efforts marketing cross country. Carl replied that their focus is alpine skiing at this time but they may increase marketing efforts concerning cross country skiing in the future.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND COMMITTEE DIRECTION ON NLTRA SPECIAL EVENT POLICY

- 6.1 Alex Mourelatos is here to present the policy for the NLTRA in regards to Special Events. Alex stated that there has been an ongoing discussion in the Marketing and Chamber of Commerce Advisory Committees regarding the role of the NLTRA/Chamber play in events. He gave a presentation to the Committee concerning the strike zones (off season). He said that the strike zones are designated as the two first weeks in January, the last two weeks of August and fall. Events in the strike zones will generate more tourism and TOT dollars during a time where tourism is normally down. Examples would include Autumn Food and Wine and the Paddle Board Series, of which both bring people to the area during the strike zones. Ron said this is a way to rebrand the NLTRA/Chamber in conjunction with events and also push current projects to completion (an example would be the Amgen Tour of California and finishing the bike paths). Alex stated the NLTRA Event Marketing Resources are the following; Performance Marketing (measuring the success of events), Marquee Support (provide money and resources to an existing event), Brand Development Marquee AND Brand (bid on an event and win then develop a future plan, also marketing local events in line with large events), Sponsorship (money given to 'mature' events gaining benefits of the event exposure), Marketing Funds (funds given to support marketing efforts/using our marketing funds to market an event), In kind services (example would be a media buy, event guidance or PR efforts). Alex explained that key events and the acquisition of new events will be focused on in this policy. The Committee discussed the Community Marketing Grant Program and how it distributes funds to grantees that apply for the grant. Brett asked if the Chamber Advisory Committee looks at the strike zones when going over the grant applications. Alex replied and said last year they constructed a grant score sheet for grant funding to ensure that grantees meet all of the grant criteria. Becky asked where funds would come from to allow the NLTRA to sponsor events. Andy replied that there are funds available to sponsor events; specifically carryover funds, that the Committee set aside for sponsorships or

other opportunities in the amount of \$50,000. Brett asked if this policy states the NLTRA should not be producing events. Andy replied yes and conversations concerning producing AFW have been going on for the last year. He said the NLTRA's role will now move to sponsorship or program development in relation to AFW. Christine asked if the amount of Judy's time spent on Autumn Food and Wine will make it difficult for her to focus on new events. Andy replied that the NLTRA will be involved with Autumn Food and Wine but is looking at not being the producers of the event in the future. Carl Ribaud stated he likes the way Alex's broke down the event process. He said he normally doesn't recommend event producers to go to visitor bureaus for funding but one way the NLTRA could assist event producers is by describing in detail the in-kind services they offer. Another important way the NLTRA could assist small events is by branding the community (example would be making this a bike destination for Amgen). Deanna stated that she has reviewed the RSCVA's special event policy in detail and their Special Event Manager would be willing to go over their policies with NLTRA staff. She would like to encourage the NLTRA to look at the RSCVA's process already in place. She suggested this policy be approved at this time but it needs to be taken one step further. Ron agreed with Deanna, and said this is not a complete plan but a good starting ground. Brett thinks the Committee needs to look at funds available and come up with a set plan in the distributions of funds instead of giving funds to a lot of little events.

6.2 M/S/C (Parson/Williams) (8/0) to approve the NLTRA Special Event Policy as presented

7.0 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON NORTH LAKE TAHOE SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL FOR 2010 SNOWFEST

7.1 Andy reported that this was a discussion at the Board Meeting last month. In the past SnowFest has always asked the NLTRA for financial support after they lost major sponsorship funding 7 years ago. Andy asked Ruth to put together a Sponsorship proposal so the NLTRA could become an official SnowFest sponsor. Andy reviewed the SnowFest Sponsorship proposal in the packet. He suggested moving forward with the sponsorship by giving SnowFest \$10,000 in cash and minimally \$15,000 in in-kind services. Andy stated there are funds available to help this event that is important to our community. Deb believes that SnowFest needs help putting together lodging packages and assistance coming up with long-term funding opportunities to sustain SnowFest. Andy said the goal is for Ruth to continue producing the event and the NLTRA will assist in marketing SnowFest. Becky believes the event needs to evolve. Christine wanted to ensure that the funds are spent appropriately on marketing if SnowFest receives \$10,000 and \$15,000 or more in-kind services. Kym asked if the NLTRA provides SnowFest with sponsorship funds will future funds donated in the future decrease over time. Andy replied yes and SnowFest will be viewed as a new event at this time. Brett stated that the Committee needs to evaluate SnowFest to ensure that it is successful, and he questioned staff's role to ensure that it will succeed. Andy replied that staff is going to provide more input and interact with Ruth to ensure the success of SnowFest. Ron is concerned that Snowfest doesn't produce Heads on Beds and he would like the Committee to come up with a plan to increase TOT funds. Deb replied that SnowFest does not only produces TOT funds it also produces beneficial media coverage. Becky asked if staff plans to create lodging packages and 'Cool Deals' specifically for SnowFest. Andy replied absolutely. Cheri stated that SnowFest is considered a non-profit and does not produce the events, they just market the festival as a whole and different businesses in the community come up with the events. She said that they are looking for new events and looking to the community to produce new events. Cherie stated that SnowFest has conducted studies in the past that prove it creates TOT funds for Placer County and locals spend more

money during SnowFest as well. She said they are looking for feedback from the community and the NLTRA for new event ideas. SnowFest is a 10 day festival in March and she believes this is the first step in the right direction. Deb stated that the Committee always relies on event producers to measure their own events and then don't always believe the results. She suggests the NLTRA conduct the studies to measure the success of each event. Brett asked if Ruth would be open to suggestions and direction from the NLTRA. Andy replied that Ruth is very interested in working with the NLTRA. Alex asked if the SnowFest board would be open to hiring an outside consultant to look at making SnowFest more successful. Cheri replied that yes they would be open to the idea.

- 7.2 M/S/C (Parson/Dudley) (8/0) to recommend to the NLTRA Board up to \$25k in cash and in-kind services, with the consideration of hiring a consultant to review the event, and that NLTRA, with the event producers' assistance, is responsible for measuring SnowFest's results**

8.0 UPDATE ON AMGEN TOUR OF CALIFORNIA 2010

- 8.1 Andy reported they have created The Amgen Tour of California Lake Tahoe Local Organizing Committee that meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month. On November 9th there will be a Host City meeting in Los Angeles. Amgen staff will be coming to Tahoe next week for a site visit (set dates are not exact). Andy reported that staff is working with Placer County and the TRPA to obtain the necessary permits for the Amgen Tour. Staff has created a video for the bid and it can be viewed at amgentourofcalifornia.com

9.0 AUTUMN FOOD AND WINE PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF PROGRAM RESULTS

- 9.1 Andy gave the Committee a brief overview of the results from the Autumn Food and Wine Festival. He stated that total ticket attendance was down 5.6%. Two cooking seminars were cancelled on Saturday due to preliminary ticket sales being down on the Monday prior to the event, event though a lot of tickets are sold on the weekend of the event. Wine tasting tickets and revenue on Saturday were up 1.5%. Andy reported that they added beer tasting this year. Sunday's ticket sales were up 4.5% and total guest overnight stays are still being measured. Andy said that Sponsor and Vendor fees were up 3% and the live and silent auctions were up 5% profit. The total revenue is up 6% and expenses are down 2%. Total expenses equaled \$74,258 and total recoup equaled \$79,657. The total estimated revenue for the event is \$5,309 (Estimate pending final numbers). Andy stated that the non-profit affiliated with the event; The Community Fund of North Lake Tahoe will receive a portion of this profit. Pettit said that the media results are about the same as last year. She said the PR alone noting that North Lake Tahoe is a place for food and wine is invaluable. The full report and written documents will be completed and distributed to the Committee in the near future. Ron said he likes the food and wine concept and people up here tend to spend money on special dining experiences. He asked the Committee if they should adopt food and wine in the fall as a branding opportunity. Pettit said she changed her date for 'Restaurant Week' to the same week as 'The Wine Walk and Shop' and she thinks fall is a great time to market food and wine. Alex talked about Squaw Valley's Oktoberfest. He said they could brand Lake Tahoe as a 'Month Long Celebration of Food, Wine and Beer Celebrations.' Brett believes that taking an event and turning it into a festival is a good idea in the fall strike zone to increase TOT funds. Jeremy stated our location and this strike zone are a part of a bigger picture (Northern California) and this is a great idea to market. Cathy believes marketing food and wine in the fall is a good idea as a marketing segment but maybe not as a core message. Alex would like to add an agenda item to the next meeting concerning branding

fall as 'Lake Tahoe's Food and Wine Destination.' Deb would like to address it after staff finds out what is going to happen with Autumn Food and Wine.

10.0 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS- The following reports were posted on www.nltra.org

10.1 Advertising-Cathy gave a report on media for October and November on Print, Internet and Outdoor. She said that the micro-site for Amgen is up and running and they will be adding a 'Cool Deals' page on the site. They are working hard on the website revamp and will be rolling out new features in the near future.

10.2 Conference Sales-Jason reported on the Conference Sales. He said they are working on a media buy promotion where they will fly meeting planners here to market our area. He said it's a good way to educate hundreds of meeting planners who bring large groups to the Reno/Tahoe area. Jason is very excited about the promotion. Andy would like to add an agenda item concerning this program. Jason then reviewed the Conference Performance Document with the Committee.

Note: We need to get the Conference Performance Document in the Marketing packet.

10.3 Leisure Sales-Jeremy reported on Leisure Sales.

10.4 Public Relations-Pettit reported that we are on the cover on Endless Vacation Magazine which is a wonderful piece of PR.

11.0 COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

13.1 None at this time

12.0 STANDING REPORTS

The following reports were posted on www.nltra.org:

- SEPTEMBER MTRiP REPORT
- AUGUST RENO TAHOE AIRPORT REPORT
- SEPTEMBER SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION REPORT
- SEPTEMBER WEB/GEO TRACKING REPORT
- SEPTEMBER LODGING REFERRAL REPORT
- FY 2009/10 JULY FINANCIAL REPORT
- FY 2010/11 AUGUST FINANCIAL REPORT

13.0 ADJOURNMENT

13.1 The Marketing Committee meeting adjourned at 11:55 pm.

Submitted By:

Emily Sullivan, Programs Assistant
North Lake Tahoe Resort Association