



REGULAR MEETING

TRAVEL COUNCIL ADVISORY BOARD (TCAB)

Held at the Grand County Commission
Chambers 125 E Center Street

Moab, Utah 84532

MINUTES

March 13th, 2024 | 3:00 PM

****Time stamps correspond to the videos****

Members in Attendance: Lori McFarland, Sharon Kienzle, Rebecca Monceaux, Brian Hunnings, and Alex Borichevsky.

Also Present: Bega Metzner, Robert Riberia, Ben Fredregill, Melissa Stocks, Angie Book, Howard Trenholme, Forrest Rodgers, Mark Stevenett, Aaron Evans, Rachel Robertson, Luke Thompson and Brian Martinez

Call to Order - 3:00 PM

00:03:00

Opening Items:

- Welcome
 - Introductions
 - Conflicts of Interest, disclosures, ex-parte communication
 - Citizens to -be- heard

Approval Of TCAB Regular Meeting Minutes For 10.10.23, 11.14.23, 12.12.23 And 2.13.24

3:30

Sharon Kienzle makes a motion to approve the minutes of 10.10.23 Rebecca Monceaux second passes unanimously. Sharon Kienzle makes a motion to approve the minutes of 11.14.23 Alex Borichevsky second passes unanimously. Sharon Kienzle makes a motion to approve the minutes of 12.12.23 Alex Borichevsky second passes unanimously. Sharon Kienzle makes a motion to approve the minutes of 2.13.24 Rebecca Monceaux second passes unanimously.

Wedding Promotion Love Communications

5:16

Mark Stevenett, we want to talk about today driving awareness for destination weddings in Moab. We pulled some data and some research specific to what people are searching for a really looking for those opportunities.

6:01: Luke Thompson, we have been seen a sustained interest in wedding on national park, this is a prime opportunity for discovermoab.com as a wedding destination to increase traffic and visibility to discovermoab.com

First tactic will be to create a dedicate a landing page, second tactic will be to launch a google ads campaign. Create a landing page with some SEO best practices in place and increase some organic SEO and it would create a strong page traffic for our google ads campaign.

Paid Search Campaign advertising campaign: Hight Keywords, Wedding Planning resources an outdoor national park wedding.

Pull data from 34 targeted keyworks and among there we are seeing an average monthly search volume of 390 searches per month basically meaning that on average out of these 34 keywords each one has an average of 390 every month in the same set of keywords we were seeing low competition rating of 20 out of 100 with is other high authority websites that are going for this topic targeting for a SEO or Paid Search perspective. That means it is less expensive to run an advertising campaign for this type of topic and less challenges

12:30 Brian H: Do you have any metrics on the average spend of the average wedding? Luke: I do not have that readily available.

Brian H: It does it pay to have this as part of Discover site or would we better served if it was a boutique website that kind of is transparent, we are promoting weddings in Moab but it does not look like it is aligned with discovermoab.com Luke: it makes sense to approach it as an expansion of topics just we see the search interest there and we see the potential to bring more traffic but as far as branding or alignment with the rest of the web page content is a great discussion to have it.

13:46 Lori M: It seems to me that by elevating this as an experience in Moab obviously you want to lift the boat to everyone but it seems like it is going to be driving traffic to a specific site, also could we get them to buy in on that or could other people possibly piggyback and say hey we would like to elevate our little niche that we do? How does that work? Luke: That goal of this page will be to informational in nature, what we had envisioned was not necessarily promoting specific venues, broad wide-reaching resources for people who are considering a wedding in the southern Utah area.

16:02 Aaron Evans: We worked with another clients where they started a community co-op page where it was a specific landing page for events and weddings that they can reach out to different members community organizations whoever it was to them join and become part of this specific co-op lading page.

16:45 Ben F: I like what Lori said this is I thing we really need to look at what we need to do from our side which is create a vertically integrated opportunity so we become the inspire but the organizations need to market the services because they will do a better job than a County Government Website.

18:47 Sharon K: This might not be popular but I was wondering in the past Robert has done updates to our website, would our money be best spent having Robert develop the web page and we spend our money with Love for the paid search advertising campaign.

19:06: Ben F: I think we should do that.

19:09: Mark: That is the plan.

20:35 Brian H: I think a recap of this will be Robert would do the framework provided some content to him via Love and next step is to just look at overall cost for SEO optimization. Put a motion together to further pursue this with Love Communications.

25:00 Sharon K: Before we get off of this, I just want to say you know a some of the newer people might not have realized that Robert did amazing amount of work on the website. That is why I am thinking we need to keep him.

25:18 Alex B: I was thinking that doing that a safe money.

Web Posting, Airport Service, And Comparable Travel Data Sets: Robert Iberia, Economic Development

25:35

29:03 Robert R: 2021 was a banner year for everybody but because we have not really done inspirational advertising for 2 years you can see a general decline a half million visit. We are doing a very frequent blog post about new businesses and things that open up in town and putting things up on the website like that organically they rank fairly low it slowly builds up over time. Four years ago, we did some native content with Love Communications so four years later you can see that Foodies Guide is a top performer it is like every week get between one and 2,000 visit and it just purely organic at this point.

34:09 Brian: How much do we spend on boosting post in social media? Robert: Zero.

34:13: Lori: Do we spend any money on Love boosting Discover Moab? Melissa Stocks: They do not boost discovermoab, they have a media campaign, but we did in the past, we have a credit card that we can use to boost social media post.

37:59 Robert R: So, Ben made me compile some numbers on our local Air Service which actually are very interesting. This number are really shock for me Moab is under Paris is cheaper to go virtually anywhere else Disney World, Las Vegas, this is one of the challenges we are facing. It is pretty expensive to travel to Moab.

43:42 Robert R: I think is important to know that the flying campaign was agreed upon last year as part of the co-op marketing.

44:07 Brian H: I completely get that having the banner at the SLC airport, but it is not attracting anybody when it said recreate responsible. There is not an incentive for anyone to come here. Lori: But is not the goal to stop people from coming here well. Brian H: Yeah, if you look at our Grand County website it is says that we as a travel counselor are supposed to not increase tourism but increase the dollar value of the visitor that's coming here sorry folks it does not work it. Sharon: I wish our County Commissioner person was here.

ITB Report - Ben Fredregill and Brian Martinez

51:26

52:01 Ben F: They had 100,000 attendees, 5,500 exhibitors, 170 countries and 27 exhibition halls. The host city this year was Oman, next year will be Albania. Julia Simpson the CEO of the World Travel and Tourism Council said: we are right now in the world tourism market is it represents close to 8%, 7.6% world GDP. She only mentioned one US state and that was Utah. She talked about the \$2 billion Market opportunity that Utah was going after. The model there was everything that we are doing here throughout Responsible Recreation, Dark Skies and Voluntourism. He's like return Cuba you name it but it's where people go to recreate we were in this section where people were showing bike trips round trips and it was very much about not destroying the environment so we can we can look at this from a different perspective if we want to get into a worldview that we have an opportunity to take the lead we are we gold certified we've got other things we can start melting these because this is now a selling and then there were when we probably saw what 12 presentations a day on this the outdoor adventure association was all about the responsible recreation taking care of being stewards of the land.

58:45 Brian M: we were kind of fortunate that that that we didn't join up with USA branch so USA was kind of in the next hall when he says these halls I mean imagine like a Walmart superstore right and like having two levels of that so it was 27 of those models around here so it was a massive scale nice I'm so brand USA was in the next fall over we were in the adventure travel hall and we were also right next to this great big stage right so when we were at our booth we got to hear all of these people talk and it was great because we really kind of got at least I got a good sense of the market and what some people were looking for there was one talk that was given by ADA think they're called outside venture travel trade association and someone was talking about the three models that you have as a destination basically you can have one model to where the customer you know to whatever it is the customer is the most important have another model to where the people in the town are the most important or your employees are the most important but you can have a third model to where the destination is the most important right however you're not modeling that that's how you're marketing leads to customers most important whenever the customer wants that's the way that right if it's the employees that are the town that's most important you could be making sure that when you're marketing it that you're putting in you know you know protections for the town and if the destination is the most important you need to be looking for travelers that have shared bounds right which to us to me it seems that Moab is marketing as the destination is the king right and so if that's the truth we need to be looking for customers that have the same values. International market right not only has it been historically one of our strongest markets right with the fly drags and FIT but we share the same values as us right they want to see sustainability that's a big portion of what they want to see they want to see these dark skies they want our national parks they want to know what we're doing so we need to make sure that we're highlighting that when we're out there advertising. You know once we hit about July and August right that's when the international market would come in and kind of really start filling that little gap and that would stay strong and the reason for that is that the international especially in Germany is that's when it breaks are right they don't have a huge summer break they have a break in the spring they have a break in the summer and they have a break in the winter right so that July and August that's when their school break comes out so that's why we've always seen that great big bump right there in July and August.

I went and talked with Sarah who is our representative out there and you know I was just talking to her kind of about the market and a couple things and I says what's going on why are we not seeing anybody and you know and as I kind of went out she goes well I was told that people shouldn't visit go out in July and August that sink in all the time these people are going to come here to visit us when they have time

is July and August our strongest market right now historically not talking like this is our strongest market like last week or the fickle domestic market that moves in and out I'm talking through the past 40 or 50 years the international market let's put this town on the map right we're telling them not to come in July and August that's the only time that they can travel. Sarah is with the Utah office of tourism, and she is our representative for Germany Austria and Switzerland she said the exact same thing of the UTC meeting on October last year.

1:03 Lori M: July was the Italians and August was the Parisians for years that's just how it was until we told them to stop coming.

1:04 Brian H: I just want to make a comment and play devil I mean you know looking at the numbers that were presented at the chamber meeting you know we've seen a steady decline in what we're spending versus tourism that's coming in and so I would challenge those assumptions just like you challenge mine that in the past two years we've seen a 5% drop in tourism 2 years ago and now we've had another 3.7% drop in tourism in 2023 and the only messaging that we've been doing is referring responsible so if in two years we have dropped 10% combined and that has been the only message that we've been putting out that our marketing is clearly not hitting with designated regenerative tourism is hot fantastic our PR company that's all we talk about all the time dark skies get blown up certified dark skies fantastic amazing it's a totally great thing but I think there's completely a disconnect between what we're trying to do and what basically if you go on our website right ohh it kills me on our website it says that we shouldn't be attracting more people that we should be looking for higher Delaware people that's what our website (Grand County website).

County Fair Planning - Angie Book

1:21

Angie B: literally right now there's three of us working on it and I my admin is having to take family leave so she's going to be down for six weeks so it's currently the two of us I do have some good news that yeah it doesn't care you know I just want to so virtually it's my crew out at osta which I have a staff of 6 and it was something that I brought to the county administrators last year in the Commission I asked to bring the County Fair back and I was able to get it approved so I think we had about 45 days last year to pull it together and we did it we thought a lot of good feedback on the County Fair so we're at it again this year for round #2 I just had a meeting with the county administrators and got an approved to move forward with a fair board so that's something that I'm gonna take off and run with and the resolution of the bylaw started so I'm definitely gonna push for that because it's growing and it's growing quickly and it's a lot to do just department and still and a lot of big decisions to make and also the budgets has doubled this year so with that being said we have a bunch of fun things planned for this year they'll be adding some more music, inflatables the parade it will be happening but we're starting with that and then same concept as last year as far as eating contests, family games, softball tournaments, etc. It will be starting on the 4th July 4th then and six and then we'll be ending the night of the 7th with just a movie and then the film Commission will be part of the County Fair and their 75th anniversary I could keep going on all kinds of fun stuff right down to pony rides.

Marketing Team Updates Melissa Stocks and Robert Riberia

1:32

Melissa S: Monday, I attend that Tourism Day hosted by the Chamber we have approximately like 50 stakeholders, that was good. Next think commissioners approved our contract with Mark Findley, Mark is starting to communicate with Love Communications to do some videos. The phone is ringing again, the season has started! We have a lot of calls about Arches Time Entry, UTV permits, restaurants are they open.

1:33 Robert R: April 15 the assets that are required for that and translate this year we want to add more of diversity in our stock in our photography not stop photography well to get the campaign going we actually purchased some really high quality stock photos we are sharing with Love Communications will develop to do some downtown footage of people eating dinner people walking around looking tours you know just kind of showing them you know enjoying some of the downtown area that we have and things like that just to make it you know just as much of A destination as the National Park so that's pretty exciting and then in addition to that we're also gonna organize the photo shoot you know with the help of the resources from the film Commission to get more diversity photography that we can use in all of our marketing so that's kind of going forward but we'll be doing.

New Business - General Discussion

1:35

Brian H: um new business you guys at the last meeting we kind of looked at the area travel council Advisory Board bylaws I've reprinted them included them in this packet for each of you we kind of table it in the last meeting that everyone taking moments to kind of review them and if they had any changes.

1:36 Alex: I guess I was looking website and obviously on the on the what's new tab just has like 2 pictures of us on the events and it's just like a picture of the half marathon but it says like music festival.

1:41: Brian H: no alright so I'll tell you please if you can just e-mail us any suggestions before the next meeting and then we can compose a master list and then we'll add it to the agenda for the next meeting. Thanks!

Economic Development Report - Sky White, Assistant Director

1:41

Ben F: First one is the grant report we had 30 grants totaling full review and work with the County Attorney to get those to the next step so for the Commission they're able to work with that to make sure we're in compliance with the state there are I think they're working with thank you yeah they're working with the Commission for some moment memorandums of understanding to a couple businesses that need more time to complete and I think that would be on the March 19th Commission agenda if you wanna watch that on the 2024 community event grant program so they're streamlining this to work in conjunction with the intent to apply event permit processes that also is going before the Commission 319 so I know that people are taking word very hard sky and Kate so that one is very is being always continue improvement that that we are doing everything we can to support the in the dirt

screening which is March 23rd that's the Native American mountain biking movie that will be showing leave at the high school that's why Sky left, she's going to a meeting tonight just to make sure that they've got everything they need from us we have the minority mountain biking group here out for a weeklong trip out to Moab mid-April on the mountain bike community thanks to a lot of coordination by Sky it's coming together to support this visit this is a group that is a known entity they they're talking about on the outside channel quite often. See then there's planning the grand business summit in conjunction with chamber that's been a little bit of a challenge because the chamber has had two board members resign as well as their E so they are that was within hours of us giving them their grant check for \$125,000 you may have seen that picture in the paper he was also followed by the \$75,000 grant for Rob Walker Child Care.

1:47 Lori M: So that grants sources all from the state. Ben: Yeah it's the rural county and the governor's office of economic and then now let's will be planning and marketing strategies with local businesses scheduling one on ones to align the marketing opportunities so back to the Elaine Gizler model, Sky is working to take anything word having a dip the things you're asking like where are you putting these so that you can decide if you wanna piggyback that or tell us time out you need to pivot and go you're going the wrong way I mean Brian says you know why are we doing the fly campaigns and just tell her to get here or maybe we need to get a queue metric just as well this is very helpful because I'm gonna fly somewhere and then drive there so you know I always wanted like those numbers.