



Marketing and Events Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday August 8, 2017 9:00 – 10:00am

Portland Downtown, 549 Congress St

No Board members present

Others present: Susan Driscoll, Russell Butts, Michael Erickson, Emily Southard, Dawn Tully, Joyce Mongeau

Staff: Adam MacDonald, Casey Gilbert, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1. Casey opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present and asked for introductions.

Minute 2. Dawn made a motion to approve the July 11, 2017 meeting minutes. Susan seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Minute 3. Adam distributed the first of 7 walking tour brochures – Art Inside & Out. Casey explained the origin of the idea to produce self-guided walking tours, the partnership with USM, and the matching funding from a PEDPIP grant from the City of Portland.

Minute 4. 2017 - 2018 Marketing Goals – Adam: Adam distributed the attached 2017-2018 Marketing Goals overview and reviewed it. Dawn asked how the brochure will be produced. Adam will design the brochure and always tries to use a downtown printer before he looks elsewhere.

- Goal 5: indicates the hope to achieve a balance between the splashier events with all the other initiatives we are involved in.
- Casey mentioned the rebranding 2 years ago. We are being intentional about getting the Portland Downtown word out and it is being recognized and appreciated.
- Mike asked how we can get Portland Downtown awards, like the MaineBiz “Women to Watch”. Casey informed the group that she does ask the Board officers to nominate us for an award occasionally, but the organization does not currently have a specific strategy in place to seek out award nominations. Casey agreed that it is something that the board should consider and encouraged Mike to mention it at the Board meeting. Joyce mentioned a radio station is running a “Top 25 women in business” award currently and will try to forward the info to Adam.

Minute 5. Quick Google Analytics and SEO update: Dawn has offered to look into the website and make improvements for optimal Google search. Key words is one area that needs improvement.

Minute 6. Social Media Policy: First Steps:

- What sort of posts are appropriate? Posts must match the organizations’ values.
- Russell mentioned that most banks have internal social media departments
- Casey asked whether any committee member’s business has a social media policy. Susan suggested Adam ask whether the City of Portland has a policy they can share with Portland Downtown.
- Acknowledging the complaint publicly, then private messaging to follow-up is a good model

- Joyce suggested Portland Downtown should respond in a positive manner when there is an issue in downtown. Casey will address it with the Executive Committee on Thursday.
- Joyce suggested utilizing the “Maine Voices” column in the Portland Press Herald to address a particular situation

Minute 7. Other business:

- Casey described the print directory and Portland Downtown’s relationship with the Portland Press Herald for ad sales and printing of the directory.
- Joyce suggested extending the further category additions in the website business directory be added to the 2018-2019 print directory also.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder.

2017-2018 Marketing Goals

GOAL 1: Use data from Google Analytics to refine website pages and enhance user experience on portlandmaine.com

- Build out lackluster pages including “how to get around,” “parking,” and “public restrooms”
- Ensure online business directory is up-to-date and user-friendly (add filterable sub-categories to Shopping and Services sections)
- Secure a volunteer to actively research + post upcoming downtown events, creating a more “complete” events calendar
- Remind businesses and organizations about the opportunity to post their own events (create a simple “how to post your events” PDF)
- Ensure back-end of WordPress is properly optimized for Google searches (may need to bring in VONT)
- Track and evaluate website performance over time (month to month; year to year)

GOAL 2: Update and streamline email lists in Constant Contact

- Delete old/unused lists (i.e. “Twelve Days of Christmas 2010”)
- Merge lists where possible (i.e. “Census Hotels” and “PDD Hotels”)
- Continue to grow subscriber list organically (business card contacts, event attendees, program partners, sponsors, volunteers, etc.)

GOAL 3: Create an organizational brochure that showcases who we are and what we do

- Educate a wide range of stakeholders about what we do as Business Improvement District (BID) to keep downtown clean, safe, and vibrant
- Highlight not only our programs and events, but also our advocacy work (how we bring groups together to find solutions + create change)
- Clearly explain how we are funded (include a map of the downtown district, our “service area”)
- Include a call to action (volunteer, sponsor a program or event, follow us on social media, join our list)

GOAL 4: Create an Annual Report that highlights our accomplishments and “wows” our stakeholders

- Collect + crunch numbers over a one-year period (program and event stats)
- Use a mix of photos and infographics to visually communicate our impact/ROI
- Distribute the report to key constituents (property owners, board of directors, etc.)

GOAL 5: Ramp up communications about our Clean + Safe Initiatives

- Schedule regular Facebook posts (photos, branded infographics) that keep Clean + Safe “top of mind”: snow removal, litter vac, graffiti removal, plantings, cadets, Police Awards, etc.
- Continue to highlight Clean + Safe in e-newsletter
- Create a clean + safe checklist for cadets and overnight crew to leave with businesses (a positive, reassuring reminder that “we’re on it!”)
- Issue press releases announcing program news + awards

GOAL 6: Develop Operating Manuals for all events

- Priority events are Tree Lighting, Shop for a Cause Day, Merry Madness, and Old Port Festival
- Include timelines, important deadlines, who’s responsible for what, required paperwork/permitting, event layout schematics, etc.

Other Projects / Ideas / Things To Keep In Mind

- Opportunities with CTN and WMPG
- New, fun promo products (i.e. table skirt)
- One Sponsorship Guide for the whole year? (include Cadet Program and Pandora’s Winter Lights)
- Volunteer projects – brainstorm with staff