

Board of Directors

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



Advisory Board

Victoria Anton, Oroville
Melanie Bassett, Chico
Evie Feldman, Paradise
Chris Constantin, Chico
Jennifer Leonard, Unincorporated
Ben North, Oroville
Melissa Schuster, Paradise
Audrey Taylor, Unincorporated
Heather Ugie, countywide

EXPLORE BUTTE COUNTY REGULAR BOARD MEETING

May 14, 2020

Time: 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Call in information

Dial in: 669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 815 4595 3246

AGENDA

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 – virtual meeting, all voting board members will be asked to report individually.

2. **CONSENT AGENDA**

2.1 Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2020 and Special Board Meeting of March 23, 2020.

2.2 Approval of March and April 2020 Financial Reports

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.

4. **REGULAR AGENDA**

4.1 CONSIDERATION OF ANALISE UHLRIG TO FILL CHICO LODGING BOARD SEAT

Board member, Dori Franklin, representing Oxford Suites for one of three Chico lodging board seats, is no longer working at Oxford and had to resign from the Explore Butte County board of directors. Dori has recommended that Director of Sales for Oxford Suites, Analise Uhlrig, be considered by the board of directors to fill the now-vacant seat.

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Recommendation: *To appoint Analise Uhrig, representing Chico lodging, to Dori’s vacated seat. Her term will begin immediately and end March of 2022.*

4.2 CONSIDERATION OF CHICO ZONE MARKETING PROPOSAL BY CHICOSTART

Chicostart submitted a proposal for \$50,000 for Chico zone marketing funds to support various projects for the current year. The funding would support multiple projects in 2020 including: growTECH Fest, expanding Grow with Google workshops with promotional videos, creation of a poker run-style tech tour, and downtown crawl centered around start-up companies. Funding the proposal would allow Chicostart to reach a broader audience and elevate the experiences participants would have and associate with Chico and Butte County.

Recommendation: *To consider the proposal as written and allocate Chico Zone marketing funds to all or a portion of the Chicostart proposal, not to exceed \$50,000.*

4.3 FINANCIAL UPDATE DUE TO COVID-19

Effective March 23 all EBC marketing efforts were paused as more information regarding COVID-19 was being reported and the State issued a stay-at-home order. This board made the decision to quickly adjust the operating budget based on a worse-case scenario with the understanding that if our lodging properties did not have visitors, the TBID budget would be significantly impacted. Conversations were had at the jurisdiction level regarding deferments of TOT, which did not take place in any jurisdiction, and the potential for adjusting the current management district plan should there be a need to defer TBID payments, which did not happen. Based on reduced expenditures and reduces income, this is a review item of our current cash flow and cash assets.

Recommendation: *No recommendation, reporting purposes only.*

4.4 MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT AND CONSIDERATION OF ALLOCATING \$300,000 TO FUTURE RECOVERY CAMPAIGNS

The marketing committee reviewed potential pivots for marketing plans when it is time to begin advertising Butte County again. The current marketing plan, and allocated budget, have been stopped and the committee reviewed different ideas that would drive overnight stays directly. With reduced income to EBC this year, the new activations and campaigns would require \$300,000 be allocated from reserve funds.

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Recommendation: *To allocate \$300,000 of reserve funds to recovery initiatives that will include immediate, mid-term, and long-term campaigns and to be directed by the marketing committee.*

4.5 AD HOC TBID RENEWAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The updated management district plan was submitted to Butte County for County Counsel to review. Counsel review took longer than expected because of shifting priorities due to COVID-19. On Friday, May 8, the management district plan was approved, and the petition drive can commence. The proposed renewal timeline has been extended because of the extra time at the County. The district renewal is still scheduled to take place prior to the November termination date.

Recommendation: *No recommendation, reporting purposes only.*

4.6 CALIFORNIA TOURISM MONTH AND 2019 ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

May is California Tourism Month, a time when tourism leaders remind local leaders of the economic impact travel and tourism has on our local communities. This year is it more important than ever as travel and tourism is one of the most hard-hit sectors of the economy due to COVID-19. The total direct travel spending in Butte County in 2019 was \$338.7 million, up from \$312.2 million in 2018; transient occupancy tax collected was \$4.75 million, up from \$3.85 million in 2018 (23% increase). Infographic information of the 2019 impact can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/economic-impact?sort=county®ion=Butte>

Recommendation: *No recommendation, reporting purposes only.*

4.7 CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

EBC is currently funded solely by the BCTBID; all funding comes from Butte County lodging properties. As occupancy rates dropped dramatically as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the operating budget was also dramatically reduced. Fortunately, EBC has reserve funds that will allow the organization to maintain operations and create recovery campaigns in the near future. It has been recommended by industry leaders that DMOs secure multiple funding sources to strengthen revenue streams and not be as vulnerable to changing markets. As a non-profit organization, EBC may have opportunity to secure sponsorships as well as grant funding for specific projects. Currently, the Economic Development Administration has amended the Economic Adjustment Assistance program to allow non-profits to apply for funding that could include planning to support economic development. This could be an opportunity for long-term strategic planning as previously discussed by this board.

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If this board considers applying for additional funding, there may be a need to contract with a grant writer to apply for funds.

Recommendation: *Staff is seeking discussion and direction. Considerations for any action: would a committee be required to review opportunities; budget required for contract services; oversight of additional funding sources.*

5. **REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

5.1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT** *Carolyn Denero*

6. **CLOSED SESSION**

6.1 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Results will be reported after meeting.

7. **REPORT RESULTS OF CLOSED SESSION**

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Next regular board meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2020.