

### Vermont Travel & Recreation Council Meeting

November 21, 2019

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**Location: Calvin Coolidge Conference Room  
One National Life Drive, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Montpelier VT 05620**

**Members Present:**

Willie Docto – Moose Meadow Lodge  
Matt Harrington – TRC Chair, Bennington/Manchester Chamber Exec. Director  
Molly Mahar Kerr – VT Ski Areas Association – President  
Paula Maynard – Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home  
Heather Pelham – Acting Commissioner, Dept. of Tourism & Marketing & CMO  
Amy Spear – Vermont Chamber of Commerce - Tourism Vice President  
Vicky Tebbetts – Owner, VT Marketing & Communications  
Steve Wright – Jay Peak General Manager & CMO

**Others Present:**

Erin Bombard - LCRCC  
Karen Ballard – VT Chamber Assoc/VT Attractions Assoc  
Sara DeFilippi – VDTM Sales and Marketing Specialist  
Nate Formalarie – VDTM Communications Director  
Lindsay Kurrle – ACCD Secretary  
Jerri Lamson – VDTM Financial Administrator  
Lauren Masseria – VAAFM Council Rep  
Laura Parette – Revitalizing Waterbury  
Tara Pereira – Vermont Fresh Network  
Chris Sluicer – Hearst Television/Digital  
Carrie Simmons – Stowe Area Association

**Actions Items from Meeting:  
Meeting Summary:**

ISSUE	OWNER	DEADLINE	ACTION
Priorities for the TRC	Matt & Heather	Next TRC Mtg in January	They will bring priorities back to the group for discussion.
Vermont Creative Networks	Jody Fried		Will share a one-page document he is sharing with Vermont Creative Networks
Data set from Charlie Kimball working with couple of economists	Amy Spear		Will share with the group
Two marketing studies wrapping up	Lauren Masseria		Once ready will share with the group
Nate Formalarie, Communications Director, has set up an ImageRelay page where tourism businesses can share photography. Also seeking video content.	Vermont Tourism Industry	Ongoing	See Agency of Commerce " <a href="#">Promote Your Business</a> " page.
Canadian Discounts Offered	VT Business	Ongoing	Let Sara know at <a href="mailto:Sara.DeFilippi@vermont.gov">Sara.DeFilippi@vermont.gov</a> .

## Meeting Summary:

### 1. Welcome – Matt Harrington

- Matt asked for a consensus to the agenda, was everyone comfortable with it? Will ask this at every meeting, welcomes discussion or dissention. Introductions were made by council members.
- Lindsay Kurrle, ACCD Secretary joined the meeting briefly. Announced VDTM new Commissioner was Heather Pelham, to the delight of the group.
- Motion to approve, as presented, summary of October 3, 2019 TRC meeting was made by Matt Harrington, and seconded by Vicky Tebbetts.

### 2. Creating a TRC Vision – Part 2 – All Attendees

What is the target for the group over the next two years? Are there some things the Council could do to assist the new Commissioner? What could we use from staff to do our work?

VDTM has a smaller staff than most agencies, clearly stated that the discussion wasn't to burden them with more things, only to assist the Commissioner and her team all the better. Heather explained the more the TRC can define its purpose and by supporting the sector overall, will make sense for folks to come to these meetings. For them to know if they want to be involved or not, they could come to the TRC.

It was discussed how VDTM cannot speak up to advocate for public sector tourism funding but members of the TRC can. VDTM was asked to submit a level funded budget again, which means a budget cut due to personal service cost increases.

Matt proposed that he and Heather to offline to create some goals and some strategies then come back to the group. He heard a focus on policies and priorities, a long-term marketing plan, might be a goal of the TRC to provide feedback. Have three policy asks for 2020. This group should create a legislative agenda each year. Maybe have a TRC panel at the tourism conference?

Another idea was to have ongoing presentations and updates from members. Not a workgroup but high-level council. What do the members want? Current

status of rural tourism is? Transition from regular travel shows, what ones should we attend?

Heather wondered if it would help to have specific themes during each meeting. Specific topics, speakers, and a white paper as a result of the meeting?

Amy liked the strategy of developing a plan.

Brian thought the traveling meetings was a good idea, but only effective if the local industry is part of it. Waterbury was a good example of this. Specialty agenda is great but have some outreach to our local industry so they can be a bit more informed. Laura Parrett did a lot of outreach to get people to the Waterbury meeting.

Paula recommended the DMO's bring more people to the table. Destination marketing. Matt wants to add the chambers that are functioning as DMOs.

Molly thought an education piece for industry members that don't understand VDTM or the budget, if the TRC could lay the groundwork. Sets the table to get more support for the ask at the legislature. Outreach needs to be focused, if they don't have a fundamental understanding won't be invested.

Moving the next TRC meeting to an off-site location was discussed. Matt thought that Paul and he could get 40 people in their area, especially if talking about the new Commissioner. Paula suggested we need to be really clear about what they will get out of the meeting.

Amy and Karen were happy to reach out to help with a meeting space.

Out of the Shires, Manchester or Bennington Matt would choose Manchester. Woodstock, Rutland corridor would work at the Calvin Coolidge site, but no wifi. Killington might be a better place.

Vicky operates the Red Clover Inn in Mendon, that would be a good place to host the next meeting.

Steve stated that if the TRC were to have a road show listening tour, it would be important to market them so that attendee expectations are met. Otherwise attendees will vent their issues, disappear, and expect the TRC to solve them. Which isn't the case. Come here to be heard. Like the Waterbury meeting, businesses were given opportunity to give an update on how the construction was affecting them. Laura also made sure the legislative representatives and the press were there.

Heather liked the idea of creating structure, manage who is there, have an additional focus to the meeting. Match up bigger themes, education components, and how VDTM relates. May this is the topic, how VDTM and TRC intersect, and let us know your feedback on that.

Matt – Visioning and goal setting will be important.

Steve – Need to be deliberate to talk about the lack of funding. TRC isn't going to impact the budget, it the voters and businesses in the community, deliver that message to them, it will pay off in the end. What our competitors funding is and how VDTM compares.

It was decided that the regularly scheduled TRC meetings will now be 10:00 – 12:00.

The meeting scheduled for January 16<sup>th</sup> will be a conference call. Jerri will get the number out to everyone. Heather and Matt will come back to the group with goals.

The next meeting will be February 6<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 – 12:00 with the location to be determined.

3. Commissioner's & VDTM Staff Report
4. Legislative Update
5. Heard around the state.
6. Meeting ended at 11:00 am.