



Quarterly Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2019 • Reading, PA

Members Present: Southern Delaware Tourism (Tina Coleman), Maryland Office of Tourism (Matthew Scales), Visit Frederick (Melissa Joseph Muntz), Visit Howard County (Crystal Abrom), Visit Montgomery (Cory Van Horn), Wicomico County (Vanessa Junkin), Visit Clearfield County (Josiah Jones), Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau (Aaron Jumper), Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau (Morgan Christopher), Destination Gettysburg (Rachel Wright), Pennsylvania's Americana Region (Lisa Haggerty), Discover Lancaster (Joel Cliff), Discover Lehigh Valley (Kaitie Burger), Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau (Kelly Shannon), Visit Potter-Tioga (Morgan Christopher), Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Bureau (Rachel Riley), York County Convention & Visitors Bureau (Chrissy Tobias), Visit Fairfax (Ali Morris), Visit Loudoun (Jennifer Sigal), Lynchburg Office of Economic Development (Krista Boothby), Richmond Region Tourism (Erin Bagnell and Liana Acevedo), Visit Philadelphia (Daniel Davis)

Call to Order: Kaitie Burger

Welcome/Introductions: Lisa Haggerty

Membership Updates: Kaitie Burger

We are currently at 68 members. Visit Philly has officially joined. Orange County, VA and one other DMO are interested. Talks with people from Charlottesville, VA. Morgan Christopher has other people in PA interested in joining.

Approval of Minutes: Cory Van Horn

Motion to Approve: Morgan Christopher. Second: Chrissy Tobias.

Approval of Treasurer's Report: Kaitie Burger

Nicole Warner, Treasurer, was not able to attend the meeting. Kaitie Burger gave the update on her behalf. The budget was shared with the group as part of the agenda packet. Nicole has worked on maintain the budget and update.

- MATPRA Fiscal Year 17 taxes have been filed through Young, Oakes, Brown & Company, P.C.
- (1) Debit Card & (1) Credit Card – MATPRA has both – to assist with business related purchases. Our treasurer will be working with the Social Media Committee to get them set up to move forward with sponsored social media marketing as needed.
- (2) 12 Month CD accounts have been opened in the amount of \$15K each at a .2% interest rate with PNC Bank. A CD is a Certificate of Deposit, which is a type of savings account found at banks and credit unions, that pays a set interest rate on money deposited. In exchange, you agree to keep the full deposit in the account for a set term. Note: These CD purchases are now reflected on the budget report too.
- Budget Report Approval: FYI Only Miscellaneous items charges this quarter were for: Bank transaction fees and misc. items needed at Marketplace to include member awards, etc.

Motion to Approve: Rachel Wright. Second: Josiah Jones.

Committee Reports

Social Media Committee (Aaron Jumper): Social media committee broke down a rep for each area to have a direct contact for social media. When the group is looking for content, they are pulling directly from your website. Sometimes the photo from the site doesn't pull very well; please make sure that you and/or your team are paying attention to the OpenGraph image field. Next step will be to start posting posts through Facebook ads.

Media Committee (Cory Van Horn on behalf of Jenna French): Applications are now live on the MATPRA website. Thank you to Ali for helping post this. The media committee will meet in person the day before the April quarterly meeting to review and score all of the applications.

A new FAQ sheet is now available on the website for journalists to see before applying. We decided to try using Jot Forms for the applications this year for easier access. The form is located here: <https://form.jotform.com/90125001343136>

There are number of benefits to using Jot Forms this year:

- Minimal need for special coding on the MATPRA website.
- It's pretty easy to set-up and customize.
- Journalists will receive an automated confirmation email after they submit.
- Submissions can be organized into a single spreadsheet or into individual PDF's for each applicant, making it easier for us to review.

Professional Development Committee (Kaitie Burger): This committee is on hold right now. Looking at moving forward on how professional development happens at Marketplace. For the last couple of sessions, we have heard that journalists don't see value in the professional development. Possible idea is to host a DMO panel. There are opportunities to switch up this year but will need assistance from the broader organization.

Erin Bagnell: Professional development has always been a struggle. There was DMO feedback that wanting more feedback. Then the journalists want extra networking time. Proposal to close the whole event with a networking. PRSA Travel & Tourism always closes with a closing "meet your board."

Melissa Muntz: Suggested to have to modify the format as a networking lunch. The idea of speed dating or appointments was suggested.

Jen Sigal: PRSA has done a pitch session. Have DMO's do a pitch.

Aaron Jumper: Like a shark tank type thing. Have the editors be the pitch panel and would they submit the article.

Joel Cliff: Still bring in bigger writers at the breakfast before Marketplace. Needs to be a topic that hits both side of the coin. Checks the box for people who can't go unless there is some sort of professional development. The advantage of doing a breakfast is not talking up too much extra time.

Erin Bagnell: We should consider upping the game with a broader topic.

Website Committee (Krista Boothby and Ali Morris): Had a committee meeting this morning before the quarterly meeting. Spent time delegating the tasks and setting priorities. Focus so far has been to update the backend of the site. Through your logins, you can update your destination information. Calendar submissions can be six at any time; a rolling limit. If you have images and content ideas, make sure the share Ali Morris and Krista Boothby. We are finding a way to centrally collect things so that everyone can use the images as a central library.

Marketing Committee (Jen Sigal): We are looking for members to volunteer this committee. We need to produce a new brochure to send to the media and a brochure to promote MATPRA to DMO's. Share testimonials to help recruit. If you are interested, please contact Jen Sigal.

Media Marketplace: Erin Bagnell

Marketplace 2019 Preview & Updates

General overview: The Richmond region has been recently expanded. For marketplace, we will be staying in the west end of Richmond and then doing tours in the expanded part of the region. There are cool new boozy attractions, farms, and there are cute small towns. We are excited about the opening night dinner will be at the Mill at Fine Creek that will include beers, on-site tours and then dinner. Will get to do a dine around in the suburban with restaurants.

FAM Ideas:

- Spa at Hilton Short Pump
- Shopping at Town Center and then chocolate making class
- Farm tour and volunteer experience
- Family farm: Pumpkin carving with a possible brewery partner
- Walking tour in Ashland and hands on experience with beer
- Road to revolution tour in Hanover county focused on Patrick Harry
- Independence golf course in with unique experiences

We have to be careful with the message. We will not be in Richmond at all. But some of the themes will be infused on to the broader region.

General comments from the group: Make sure to be conscious on travel time and physical limitations. Trying to not be on buses for too long. Suggestions for parks for hiking and kayaking. Suggest a pre or post fam in the City of Richmond.

FYI: The state of VA will celebrate 400-year anniversary of first Africans and Women coming to America.

Working on sponsorship opportunities in February. Examples: Transport, F&B and signage. Plus offering digital presence on website and social media. Deadline for sponsorships will be distributed in late March.

Pre & Post Tours: We will like look to collect information for pre and post FAMs. When we collect the information, we are looking for a general summary. All of that information by the end of April to send media notices in early May.

First day of Marketplace: 3 pm arrival and 4 pm annual meeting. Dinner at 5 pm.

Old Business: Kaitie Burger

Policies & Procedures Document: In the packet is a very rough draft of the guidelines for new members and what the board and committees do. This is a separate piece from the bylaws to help communicate how the organization runs. Goal is to finalize the document and take it to vote in the April meeting.

New Business: Kaitie Burger

Group Release Volunteers: Looking for four volunteers to close out the fiscal year for the press releases. The process of using the Google form has cleaned up the process a lot. It is less work than it used to be. Four volunteers were confirmed.

Board Nominations: We will be looking for new board members for the next fiscal year. Nominations in late spring will be open. The first position will be secretary.

Budget Updates Through of End of FY: We as a board have been taking a hard look at maximizing the value for the membership without raising dues. The primary goal has been to make the organization sustainable financially. The board decided to eliminate the admin position. Julia's last day will be Feb. 14.

Quarterly Meetings – FY 2019-20: All meetings are scheduled through the end of the fiscal year. Looking for volunteers to host quarterly meetings in the next fiscal year. Hosting a quarterly meeting is a great way to get your colleagues out to your destination. Melissa will be putting a call out soon.

Professional Development: Representatives from The Anderson Group

Social Media & PR in 2019

Topic: The intersection of social media and public relations. The Anderson Group work with traditional and digital mediums.

Social Media Best Practices:

- Building Strong Partnerships: Takes place on and off social media. Asking them to tag and share content. And return the responses.
- Make sure your strategy is unique for each channel: Each channel has different audience and different posting frequencies.
- Have a mix of content: Good to have polished content and then have a real-world content.
- Social media can not exist in the silo: So that all the campaigns are aligned. Integrate social media along the way.
- Stay current: Social media platforms are changing all the time. Social Media Today to see what is going in the industry.
- Social media advertising is becoming a big deal. It's very much a pay to play environment. Mix of paid boosts and larger social media campaigns. Paid campaigns are a good way to run A/B campaigns.

Trends:

- Micro Influencers: Fewer than 10,000 followers and high engagement. "Real influencers" vs bigger influencers that are very heavily monetized. Followers
 - How to vet influencers: Their followers vs how many people they are following. Make sure the actual content they are sharing is relevant to their hobby and not all ads. Engagement are people actually retweeting their tweets. Are people actually commenting.
- Video content: Will continue to grow because the social media has decided is popular. They want videos to get a lot engagement and perform well. Different types of video that is both polished and grassroots approach to create a genuine presence.

- Stories: Facebook has decided that stories are the next big thing. They will continue to add extra features. Opportunity to show informal content and keep the primary polished.
- Cross channel video sharing on social media to share on both feeds to get analytics behind it.

How to use social media to pitch media: Maintain your own person for pitching. Participate in their world to give the feeling of being genuine. It's a good way to earn a reputation with the journalist.

Next Quarterly Meeting

April 12: Shenandoah County, VA. Details are in the MATPRA email blast.

Closing Comments/Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Morgan Christopher. Second: Ali Morris.