

## City of Coronado



### Coronado Tourism Improvement District Advisory Board Meeting **Minutes from Meeting of October 7, 2010**

1. Call to Order. Meeting was called to order at approximately 2:02pm in Council Chambers. Present at the meeting were the following CTID Board Members: Todd Shallan, Kathleen Cochran, Tim Herrmann, Courtenay McGowan, Dave Landon, Eddie Warner, David Spatafore and Mary Ann Berta.

City staff present included Tom Ritter, Assistant City Manager, and Jerome Torres, Senior Management Analyst.

Also in attendance were:

- Rita Sarich, Executive Director of Coronado Mainstreet
- Karen Finch, Executive Director of Coronado Chamber of Commerce
- Susan Enowitz, Executive Director of Coronado Historical Association
- David Axelson, Coronado Eagle Journal
- Steve Johnson, eCoronado.com
- Denise Schwab, Coronado Ferry Landing
- Leslie Crawford, WelcomeToCoronado.com
- Robb Huff, The Meeting Strategy Group

2. Approval of Minutes. Motion from Courtenay McGowen to approve the draft minutes of the meetings of September 2, 2010, second came from David Spatafore.
3. Glorietta Bay Inn (GBI) Representation on Board Since the September meeting, a management shift at Glorietta Bay Inn necessitated a change within the Advisory Board. Claudia Ludlow and Camille Gustafson represented GBI during this transition. It was determined that Camille will replace Holly Ansley on the Board. Camille will be sworn in once the City Clerk receives an official notice from Girard Capital and she completes an ethics training session.
4. Branding Update After several meetings between ConVis, MeringCarson, the Administrator and the CTID Branding Subcommittee, the Advisory Board was presented with recommended artwork. Paul Whitbeck and Rob Petrie from MeringCarson outlined the differentiating product messages from two research projects, their internal creative process, MeringCarson's "inspiration board" as well as the ensuing refinements prescribed by the Subcommittee.

It was necessary to again outline how the brand will be used in the future: inspiring San Diegans to visit Coronado for more day-trips more often (or perhaps for the first time.) Their visits directly impact the revenues of local businesses and merchants.

As indicated by research, Coronado is blessed with many attributes that visitors value...but none as iconic as the Coronado Bay Bridge. The bridge represents more than just a means of transportation; it has become an inspiring symbol for San Diegans who visit.

The recommended artwork features the curve of the bridge forming the letter C. In a temporary font, Coronado was spelled out in the same blue font color used on the bridge. While final color decisions will come much later, the use of a yellow font for the taglines was used deliberately to help it stand out during this presentation. The working taglines included “*Arrive in Another World*” and “*A Place Set Apart.*” The tagline “*A Bridge Away*” was conditionally preferred by the Subcommittee, indicating it required more creative development.

Among the questions from the Board and Community:

- Why is Island not included?
- If the branding is not approved, can MeringCarson start anew?
- Can the community provide their comments and direction?
- Were sun, fun, beach and crown considered?

Island was considered but later disqualified. Although it is a strong keyword search term and the football team is named the “Islanders,” the word does not appear in the name of the city and using the term is polarizing because the Silver Strand and bridge no longer make Coronado a true island.

If necessary MeringCarson could “go back to the drawing board,” but the Branding Subcommittee was empowered to monitor (and streamline) the decision-making process on behalf of the Board, local merchants and the community.

Each CTID meeting is a public forum and the community is welcome to provide their opinion on a variety of topics. Because artwork is subjective, the Subcommittee was established as to avoid having too many opinions diluting the effectiveness of the new branding.

The two research projects provided a wealth of differentiating product messages but a general beach image was something Coronado could not call its own. Del Mar, Imperial Beach and La Jolla offer as much beach fun. The crown is very much a Coronado image but it isn’t likely to motivate potential San Diego visitors.

MeringCarson was asked to continue the development of the bridge artwork and weave the Board’s sentiments into some fresh taglines (as well as an enhanced version of “A

*Bridge Away.*”) The Branding Subcommittee will meet again on October 25<sup>th</sup> to offer a verbal update during the November 4<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

5. Hotel Marketing. The Administrator recommended the approval of a proposal to market the CTID hotels during Q4 of 2010 without using much of the allotted \$150,000 budget. The strategy leaves about \$135,000 of the budget for impacting Spring visits.

The proposal recommended a combination of banner ads and digital newsletter/email blasts via TripAdvisor.com, LA Magazine and Texas Monthly. Over 350,000 impressions will be delivered between November 1 and December 15, 2010 for a net cost of \$10,895.98. MeringCarson is waving their creative design costs for this campaign.

In addition to special room rates the ads in LA Magazine and Texas Monthly will feature a sweepstakes to win a three-night vacation in Coronado. Loews Coronado Bay Resort has offered to comp the total of six rooms and Nadolife has provided dinner certificates. Other Coronado partners will provide prizes as well.

The ads and banners will link to a special landing page of sandiego.org/Coronado so we may collect contact data for future outreach and to measure the response/success of this strategy.

The proposal was approved by the Advisory Board.

6. MemberNet training The Administrator held a second training session for tourism-based businesses in Coronado to upload their profiles on sandiego.org/Coronado. Because this website will be used in the Fall marketing strategy, more information and tourist-friendly events need to be uploaded. ConVis provides a complimentary webinar each month and the Administrator has asked the Chamber, Mainstreet and Historical Association to share this news with the tourism-based businesses they partner with. The Administrator will send updated copy to them for the next webinar scheduled for October 22, 2010.
7. General Budget Update. The Administrator updated the Board on August revenues that were approximately \$3,000 less than projected. July revenues were minimally adjusted to reflect the City’s administration fee.

It is the goal of the Administrator and Advisory Board to be self-sufficient in paying for campaigns and invoices without utilizing the line of credit afforded to the Board by the City.

Only the Administrator’s compensation and expenses were paid in September. No invoices have been received from ConVis or MeringCarson.

8. Granting Procedure: After reviewing the original guidelines for using CTID funds to support Coronado events that encourage overnight hotel stays and growth for local businesses, the Administrator recommended a very conservative program for its debut.

Although the Board anticipates a surplus of approximately \$52,000, the Administrator recommends earmarking just \$15,000 for grants during fiscal year 2010-2011. Additionally, it was recommended that only two levels of grants exist so the process is streamlined.

A number of conditions were discussed:

- The Board cannot directly provide grants; the Board will review the Administrator's recommendations and present them to City Council December 21, 2010.
- The Administrator will accept, review and qualify applications based on a point system based on defined goals. He will be available for presentations and applicants who are declined will be given rebuttal time December 2, 2010.
- Applicants are free to present their positions verbally to the Administrator and members of the Advisory Board, but the conversations cannot intersect or be discussed between members.
- Because raising awareness and tourism in Coronado is the goal of the CTID, all grants will be used towards reimbursing qualifying applicants for the event advertising, promotion and marketing costs they incur. They must provide proof of their expenses in addition to a record of last year's financials.
- Before any funds are distributed, grantees must secure and provide required City permits and insurance coverage.
- Grants will only be provided for events that have an economic impact within CTID boundaries. Applicants can submit for their events each fiscal year regardless of previous outcomes.
- Both for profit and non-profit organizations are free to apply but any grants cannot supplant previous determined budget items. Whether they currently receive funding from the City is irrelevant.
- This granting process will be advertised in the Coronado Eagle Journal and other media platforms.

With these specifications, granting was approved and the Administrator was instructed to revise the guidelines and prepare them for distribution.

9. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:10 pm.