

## Minutes Tourism West Coast Board Meeting

10.00 am, 14 April 2011

Coleraine Motel, High Street, Greymouth

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<b>Attending:</b>	Phillip Barnett	Grey District Council Representative
	Margaret Grant	Development West Coast Representative
	Margaret Montgomery	Buller District Council Industry Representative
	Jenny Keogan	Westland District Council Representative
	Kerry Myers	Industry Representative
	Matt Ewen	General Manager

**In Attendance:** Glenda Lee                      Minute Taker

The Chair welcomed Board members, the meeting commenced at 10.00am.

### Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board moved that the Minutes of the meeting held 15 March 2011 be accepted.

Moved: Phillip Barnett  
Seconded: Margaret Grant  
Carried

### Action Items from Previous Meeting

There was further discussion around employing an independent minute taker, Board member Keogan followed up the previous suggestion of Shirley Gardiner as a possibility, the General Manager clarified that he had consulted with Shirley Gardiner and she declined our offer for various reasons.

Maxim Print was further discussed and the Chair requested a copy of the contract between TWC & Maxim Print. A copy of the contract was handed over by the General Manager to the Chair.

The Chair discussed TWC's current accounting procedures with Marshall & Heaphy and outlined the date for a proposed meeting with Fergal O'Gara to discuss the reasons why the accounting function is earmarked to come back in house, this meeting is planned for Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 11.00am & will be attended by the General Manager, the Chair & possibly Board Member Grant.

There was further discussion around the contracts with our sponsors, the chair specifically mentioned DWC & wanted clarification that our contract with DWC would still sit within the boundaries stipulated if the accounts moved in-house.

The Chair further discussed remuneration for Board members and travel – Board Member Grant discussed her involvement in attending meetings with DWC. Board Member Grant said she would discuss with DWC our proposed shift in accounting arrangements, clarification was sought by Board Member Grant over the current accounting situation – the General Manager gave an explanation over the fact that there seemed to be no lesser workload for the office, despite Marshall & Heaphy's involvement.

The Chair asked the General Manager if there was a document showing the Marketing and Advertising Analysis - the General Manger responded saying that he would like to discuss it further in his report.

The Chair asked for results of the meeting with Peter Blackwell – the board would like to see how the TWC Marketing & Advertising plan has changed from that subsequent meeting. The General Manager discussed Mainland Press which is now condensed into one instead of four publications - this will be more cost effective & that the publication targets the areas of ChCh that TWC consider our target

market. Further discussions will take place under the Advertising Marketing Plan item 4 on the Agenda.

The Chair discussed the Board Induction papers; he expressed his apologies to board members for not forwarding them on.

The Chair discussed the proposal with John Chang DWC – they discussed with DWC the possibility of DWC paying more to TWC for advertising if TWC could show that we had synergies with their role of being a funder of infrastructure here on the West Coast. The Chair asked if the GM had any feedback. The GM confirmed that on that specific point yes – but nothing in writing, this will be further discussed in the GM report.

Further discussion around the Leading Light Business Awards took place – the Chair asked Board Members if they received a copy. The Chair confirmed the GM had supplied a copy of the sponsorship document. Board members questioned the entries and the closing dates for the awards – expressing concern at the lack of marketing. The GM confirmed that TWC have been doing what they can to encourage Tourism Industry entries. The Chair expressed concern that the total entries in the Tourism Category would not reflect the success of the TWC Industry awards – being part of the TWC strategy was to showcase the industry. Board Member Grant agreed that TWC should be supporting DWC in ensuring that the Tourism Sector has sufficient entries. The Chair wants further monitoring of the leading light business awards and passing comments back to DWC – Board Member Myers commented on ways that we could increase enthusiasm for the awards.

The Chair requested further information on the BYATA Road Show – the GM confirmed Anita Gillespie had supplied a report. Board Member Myers confirmed her 2 month appointment to the Board of BYATA and asked if this was a conflict.

The Chair congratulated Board Member Myers on her appointment to BYATA. Further discussion took place; reasons were given for the cancellation of the second phase of the road show.

The GM confirmed a savings of around \$3,500 - \$4,000 was made in the cancellation of Zane Smiths involvement.

The Chair asked if Dominic Moran's presentation had been sent out by the GM – the GM confirmed it will be.

The Chair recommended that the board clarify TWC debtors position that unless debts are paid members will not be able to participate on the website or advertise within our Regional Publications. This is more a steering for the GM & his team rather than a change to the constitution.

Moved: Phillip Barnett  
Seconded: Jenny Keogan  
Carried

## **General Managers Report**

### White Bait Festival

The Chair requested that Matt outline to Glenda Lee the minute taker the details presented to the In house Committee on the Whitebait Festival. The Chair mentioned the good news that our funding application was approved, the board look forward to hearing more from Dominic in regards to progress being made with stakeholders. Board member Keogan requested that each month Dominic presents a brief summary of the activities that have taken place the previous month, to ensure board confidence allowing the same message to be passed onto others involved.

### Earthquake Response

The GM confirmed he has attended several meetings with other RTO's one in Wellington which he described as the key meeting with TNZ, TIA & MED. The question was asked "Who will lead this" Kevin Boland confirmed that it would be collaboration between the 3 organisations. The key message

portrayed by Kevin Boland was that New Zealand is still open for business. The longer term plan is that a consistent repeated and clear message from all concerned is required moving forward. Infrastructure was also of concern an example was given – the Stadium in Christchurch needs to be up & running.

#### Online/Website

The GM confirmed that he has had a session with Cabbage Tree in CHCH – search engine optimization the latest report has come through, we will be looking at how we can de-clutter the current homepage there will be a slight cost for the changes. Board Member Myers asked that the updates from GM meetings be distributed to industry.

Board Member Keogan asked who in the office will be responsible for the overseeing of the website updates. The GM confirmed Anita has the responsibility for the Social Media & Glenda is responsible for the admin side of the website.

Board Member Myers put in a suggestion that with the number of people blogging from the Coast we should look at linking in to some of their material. The GM agreed that yes we should utilize our travel writers and get them to play in the blogging arena and gave Sarah Bond as a good example.

#### Famils

The amendment to the Famils was discussed – Board Member Myers sought confirmation on the YTD numbers – the GM confirmed 7 TWC initiated & 1 TNZ/TWC famils.

The GM confirmed the famil work has basically dried up coming out of TNZ –

Board Member Myers confirmed that inbounders & wholesalers were coming direct & not through TNZ, a big increase. Famil requests from NZ operators wanting individual famils or by pre organized through the wholesale channels groups of 8 or 10 people, for some reason they are by passing TNZ.

Board Member Myers suggested investigating whether TNZ are getting more requests for North Island Itineraries the GM agreed that he will investigate with TNZ.

Board Member Grant requested that the board be given an update as to why TNZ aren't sending any famils at the next board meeting.

#### Funding submissions

The GM updated that Warren Gilbertson DWC has confirmed the trustees have agreed to the level of funding requested, they want the latest KPI report, the GM has supplied the August one again & gave the presentation that was presented to the trustees & advisory board, the latest will be supplied by Wednesday next week.

Submissions have gone to the 3 councils – Board Member Keogan asked the GM if he had asked for speaking time with WDC, confirming that Mayor Pugh had confirmed one or two months out would be good for WDC.

The Chair made a recommendation that each of the board members go back to each of their funding partners expressing there is a lot of concern in the market place as to whether the same level of funding will be kept.

#### Visitor Guide

Board Member Grant expressed concern about the Maxim Print contract, the reason this work was outsourced was to free up TWC, she sees no reason that TWC should be chasing up bad debtors. The GM confirmed the contract has been approved by law firm Hannan & Seddon.

The Chair would like to see the contract between Maxim & TWC monitored very closely.

Board Members Keogan & Myers made positive comments about Maxim Print following up with clients in a professional manner.

#### TNZ – RTO Trade Update

The GM gave a brief update on his recent RTO event attended in Australia – Air NZ has indicated an additional 24,000 people per annum into NZ. There are 117 additional flights out of Australia into Wellington in 2011/2012 an additional 120,000 seats. The challenges around the Australian market is the intense competition with such low fares offered to other destinations.

The biggest challenge NZ has is that travel agents front liners are woefully ignorant about NZ. The GM spoke about future technologies with paper printed visitor guides been replaced by digital tables in the future. Recognizing and moving with changing technology & trends is important, the GM gave an example of a reduction of teenagers 59% of who no longer utilise email, how do we as businesses take advantage of this & how do we channel messages into this market. Board Member Grant would like to see this information included in a report out to the industry here on the Coast. Overall the feedback from the wholesalers was very positive, Carnival Cruises are looking for new ports, Westport has been utilised previously, all looking for new opportunities. The Chair mentioned the NZ Winter Ski Season – is there a possibility of working with tour operators to capitalise on this market. The GM confirmed there is a package in place with Value Tours to capture the Australian Market. Board Member Myers discussed FIT nzski.com with over 100,000 visitors to their site in May alone. Board Member Grant requested that the GM list who he had appointments with so the industry can see who they could be working with to market themselves for the RWC 2011. The GM discussed the Glacier Rugby – good to see that it is up & running, it was very well received in Australia, the GM is concerned with the drop off in views. The GM confirmed that TWC's investment in Glacier Rugby was \$9,500, it needs that next push.

## Marketing

The GM discussed details of a conversation with Anna Delaney – WOTIF to target the domestic market; they have over 275,000 of New Zealanders on their database, which TWC would like to target relatively quickly. The Board expressed enthusiasm for this marketing initiative & directed the GM to enquire about securing the Trademark Internationally, the GM would like Board Member Myers to take this to the next Franz Inc meeting, Board Member Myers agreed. The Chair discussed the Grey Star offer around the West of the Alps publication; the GM was to confirm with John Goulding/Brett Kokshoorn the current offer and opportunity and to seek clarity around any costs to TWC.

Moved: Phillip Barnett  
Seconded: Jenny Keogan  
Carried

The Board put forward a motion that proceedings be moved into Committee.

Moved: Margaret Grant  
Seconded: Kerry Myers  
Carried

The Board put forward a motion that proceedings be moved out of Committee

Moved: Jenny Keoghan  
Seconded: Kerry Myers  
Carried

The Chair made an interesting point about Kiwirail pulling the passenger line from Picton to Christchurch. The Chair would like to see TWC lobby the Tourism Minister asking – where is the substance behind the decision to stop the above mentioned rail passenger service. The Chair recognizes the fact that there is a niche market of Railway Enthusiasts in the Tourism Sector & if they can close down the Coastal Pacific which is rated in the top 50 of Train Journeys, what else is on their horizon as far as infrastructure closures go? The Chair commented that it is very hard to send out the message that New Zealand is open when one of the state owned tourism ventures closes its doors.

The Chair confirmed numbers are down on the TranzAlpine by 1200 - 1400 per week. Board members asked why Kiwirail chose to close the Coastal Pacific line, the Chair stated that the line was required for freighting purposes, and based on the numbers on the Coach service it did not justify putting the train back on. Questions were raised as to how this closure would impact on the current wholesale tourism market.

Board Member Keogan made comment about the doom and gloom that the industry is experiencing, operators are getting disheartened by the negative messages, Board Member Keogan would like to TWC to spread positive messages about the opportunities that are now present. Board Member Myers agreed that it would be beneficial if TWC could publish some good news stories and to let the industry know what the reality is and what was learnt through attending the meetings. A 3 pronged approach with Industry Representation, how you expect to pull out of it & then externally to the rest of the world "say hey the weather is great come on over". Myers spoke positively about the suggested itinerary changes that TNZ put up & suggested feeding those out to the industry so they could see the opportunities to change the traction down the Coast which is a result already.

The GM responded with information on Good news stories – The RV Magazine - they have a feature on the West Coast in their next edition. Board Member Myers confirmed there will be several good news stories coming out of Franz, the Monteiths upgrade will be pushed out to the database. Board Member Myers spoke about TRENZ – the messaging to the Australian Wholesalers, Denniston & Monteiths & the main message that the West Coast is open.

Board Member Keogan spoke about the buy in by our local media – business owners are starting to be impacted on by the negatives they read in local media. RWC doom & gloom TWC needs to focus on the positives rather than the negatives.

Board Member Keogan asked that the GM forward through updated Position Descriptions for the staff in the TWC office.

The Chair expressed concern over the cycle way, can we touch base with the proponents to get clarity over the grades.

Moved: Phillip Barnett  
Seconded: Kerry Meyers  
Carried

The Chair thanked Board Members for their attendance. There being no further general business to attend to the meeting was declared closed.

Phillip Barnett  
Chair

Date: 14th April 20 2011