

AVON TOURISM

Minutes of the Meeting held on TUESDAY 13 March 2012 at the Northam Visitor Centre, Grey Street, Northam

1. Meeting Opened

By the Chair at 10.15 am

2. Present

Wendy Williams	Slater Homestead Group
Peter McClintock	Industry Representative /Brackson House Quality Accommodation
Margaret Rowles	Visitor Centre Manager/Northam Visitor Centre
Chris Pepper	Local Government Representative/Shire of Beverley
Bev Hodges	Industry Representative/Northam Caravan Park
Julie Williams	Local Government Representative/Shire of Northam
Leanne Lee	Industry Representative/The Grandhouse York
Sandra Paskett	Industry Representative/Laurelville Manor

3. In Attendance

Dina Barrett-Lennard	Avondale Farm, Beverley
Jean McGreedy	Executive Manager Community Services/Shire of Northam

4. Apologies

Erica Minarik	Museum & Art Gallery Manager/Town of New Norcia
Di Swann	Swann Lodge
Jenny Delich	York Wines
Lesley Hug	Toodyay Holiday Park & Chalets
John Maxwell	Industry Representative/Hotel Beverley

5. Confirmation of Minutes

Moved: Peter McClintock

Seconded: Leanne Lee

Motion: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Tuesday 07 February at the Northam Visitor Centre be confirmed.

The motion was carried

6. Matters arising from the Minutes

6.1 Meeting Roster: The Revised Meeting Roster allowing for some future meetings to be held in Beverley, Toodyay and York during 2012 was adopted.

6.2 Financial Support – Shire of York: Further to the establishment and appointment of Cr Denise Smythe to a York Tourism Council and support from members of the York Tourism Industry, a meeting with Council was held on Thursday 08 March. A presentation was made to Council and was well received, following which questions were put and responded to. Council were extremely supportive of the Avon Valley Holiday Planner and other promotional activities such as the Trade Shows, they were not however supportive of the Integrated Website Proposal. I feel that a positive outcome may result from the meeting with financial support for Avon Tourism on the Agenda at the next Meeting of Council to be held on Monday 19 March.

Should funding be secured and In view of Councils reluctance to support the Integrated Website Proposal, following discussion by the Board the following resolution was passed.

Moved: Bev Hodges

Seconded: Chris Pepper

That our thanks be extended to Council and the Shire of York for their financial support and confirm that the funds will be utilised for general operational costs [Non Capital Expenditure] inclusive of the Avon Valley Holiday Planner and Trade Show attendance.

The motion was carried

7. Finance Report

Moved: Bev Hodges

Seconded: Peter McClintoch

That the Finance Report as presented be adopted.

The motion was carried

8. Matters arising from the Finance Report

8.1 Invoices have been forward to Shires of Brookton and Goomalling for Local Government Financial Assistance for 2011/12

9. Correspondence

Moved: Sandra Paskett

Seconded: Chris Pepper

That the Inwards Correspondence is received and the Outwards Correspondence endorsed.

The motion was carried

10. Matters arising from the Correspondence

- 10.1 Avon Ascent:** A letter was received from Mr Alasdair Wardle expressing his concerns in relation to the Avon Ascent initiative and that in its current format has reached its use-by date. The meeting ascertained that the signage referred to in the letter fell within the scope of the Shires of Beverley and York. It was resolved that Avon Tourism correspond with them suggesting that the project be either reinvigorated or that all signage be removed. As indicated in Mr Wardle's letter the current information is confusing to new residents and visitors to the Valley.

The Board was also supportive of the concept of developing an Avon Heritage Trail and would investigate the possibility of available funding to assist with the project.

11. Marketing Report

- 11.1 Web Site Report:** To date no report has been received for the month of February, with the January reports reflecting the Avon Valley quite time over the summer months.

Further to the discussions at the February Meeting in relation to the SEO and Adwords Management of the site by RedFish Media, and that optimum results were not currently being achieved, an email was forwarded to Kandi outlining our concerns, extending an invitation to attend the March meeting to discuss these concerns with the Board. Although indications were that Kandi would be in attendance, this unfortunately did not eventuate.

Following further discussion it was resolved that quotations would be sought from other sources and that RedFish Media be advised of this and a quotation for management of the site for the coming 12 months be requested.

Moved: Sandra Paskett

Seconded: Bev Hodges

That quotations from other Management Firms be sought and that RedFish Media be requested to provide a proposal for the coming twelve months.

The Motion was carried.

- 11.2 Avon Valley Holiday Planner and Distribution:** The Avon Valley Holiday Planner continues to grow in popularity and is a highly sought after publication with consumers, a great result for the Avon Valley Brand. Distribution of the Holiday Planner is encouraging, with requests for additional supplies from major visitor centres around the state, and the International and Domestic Airports. Since the second week of January, 7,500 copies of the Avon Valley Holiday Planner have been distributed, a pleasing result.
- 11.3 Perth Holiday & Travel Expo:** Held over the weekend of 8-19 February at the Burswood with around 10,000 visitors. Although numbers were down on the previous year, there was great interest in the Avon Valley, especially from consumers with friends and family visiting from interstate or overseas who are looking for a destination close to Perth. Over 750 Avon Valley Holiday Planners and Bags were given to consumers with most wanting information on events and festivals in the Valley. The trial providing Avon Valley Special deals on offer when booked at the Expo was not successful, which was disappointing. A special thanks to Lesley, Leonie, Dina and Dee for their assistance over the weekend. Unfortunately we were again unsuccessful with the Sunday Times Best Stand Award, which again went to overseas participants, however Pat Straughan, who organizes the event advised our stand presented well and looked very professional, which was lovely to hear.
- 11.4 Perth Caravan & Camping Show:** This event will be held over 5 days at the Claremont Showground's from 15-19 March. Avon Tourism has secured a corner site, numbers 91 and 92 and will again distribute the Holiday Planner, Avon Valley Bags and town and member brochures. Upcoming Avon Valley events will be heavily promoted at the Show.
- 11.5 Membership:** The Managers Tearooms and Restaurant at Bakers Hill have joined as a Gold Member. Membership list and fee structure to be provided to the Board for the next meeting.
- 11.6 Experience Perth Report:** Take-up of the Membership Prospectus is growing with over 200 current members, with 11 from the Avon Valley Region. The 2012 Holiday Planner has been completed and is with Templar for distribution, with revenue exceeding expectation, given that it has been a very tough year for many operators throughout the region.

The Adelaide Holiday Expo 3-5 February was attended and again proved a valuable event for promoting the region.

Perth Holiday & Travel Expo 18-19 February with consumer enquiries very strong and specific, with most consumers wanting information on things to see and do close to Perth. For the first time Experience Perth attended the **Melbourne Flight Centre Expo** 18-19 February with just over 50,000 consumers visiting the show. Surveys have been conducted at both these shows to gather information on consumer's views on visiting Perth surrounds and what they are looking for.

Japan Sales Mission 10-17 February, an industry led activity. The Mission was a great success and throughout the 6 days EP presented in either a seminar format or on sales calls to individual agents offices, over 300 Japanese agents in all.

Website Statistics: Since the new website was launched on the 15 October 2011 the following results have been tracked with regard to unique browsers:

October: 13,399. **November:** 25,561. **December:** 35,143. **January:** 37,348

Summer Escapes campaign launched on 26 November with the distribution of the Magazine with member support for the campaign and resulting activities well up on the previous year.

Winter Escapes campaign has been initiated with the Sunday Times, with follow-up press ads in the Sunday Times and West with radio and digital activities. This year's focus will be on activities and experiences that are available in the region throughout the winter months.

12. General Business

- 12.1 Board Membership:** List of Board Members and contact details to be provided at the next meeting. It was suggested that we look to recruiting qualified and influential people to join the Board with a view to raising the profile of the organization.

Moved: Sandra Paskett

Seconded: Peter McClintock

That Avon Tourism approach Judy Moylan to ascertain her interest in being part of the Board structure either in 2012 or 2013 depending on workload and time available.

The motion was carried.

- 12.2 Corporate Accommodation in Perth:** Business and corporate accommodation is at a premium in the Perth metropolitan area during the week and it was suggested that the Avon Valley region could look at providing an alternative option. Prime time accommodation in the Avon Valley region is weekends with a considerable number of available beds in quality accommodation outlets during the week. The towns of Northam, Toodyay and York are only an hour's drive east of Perth Airport and could accommodate Self-drive business visitors, or perhaps even express coach travel could be provided. The suggestion to be raised with Noeleen Pearson of Experience Perth.

- 12.3** Beverley is waiting on the results of the Royalties 4 Regions funding application for the implementation of the Management Plan to commence.

- 12.4** The Heartlands WA Website was raised in relation to the tourism section and the possibility of seeking clarification on their intent concerning tourism in the Avon Valley and Wheatbelt. Concern was expressed that there may be a

conflict or duplication between the two bodies, with the Board expressing a desire to work together with Heartlands WA.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Avon Tourism will be held on Tuesday 01 May at Beverley at a venue to be advised.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 12.35 pm