



MINUTES

Date/Time: Thursday, January 18

Location: ZOOM

MISSION

Our mission is to provide Kent County hospitality related businesses an opportunity to meet professionally with a common interest to better serve our industry and community while furthering the overall tourism landscape of our region.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Welcome & Introductions: Lisa Calhoun, KCHA President

Approval of October 2023 minutes

Approved- Jane, Second-Kaky Wolfer

Treasurer's Report & Membership Report – David Jibson, KCHA Treasurer

\$3,000 -\$3,900. A lot of renewals coming in.

Board of Directors Vote (2024-2026)

Motion to table to February. Motion Approved

Featured Guest: Michelle Grinnell, MEDC / Travel Michigan

Positioned to drive the greatest drive. Championing a holistic marketing plan to “Make it in Michigan”
How do we bring accessibility in mobility, travel, etc. to the success and resources of the tourism industry.

What does success for pure mi look like in 2024?

Jobs moving up/ 27.3 bill in direct 3.2 bill in state and tax revenue

324,00 jobs supported. \$600,000 shy pre-pandemic levels.

No such thing as a successful campaign if there is a struggling industry.

Things to consider:

Are your rooms full? Restaurants full?

We are taking a “Fresh approach to Pure MI”

By that we are looking at Content/media/spending/etc. all majorly evolving and questioning how does Pure Mi evolve?

We have a greater emphasis towards cities and inclusiveness and accessibilities.

The foundation is important but evolving is the way to go.

“Keep it fresh” Is about balance between city and country. Between spending, accessibility.

December was a very hard month for outdoor/nature driven companies and hobbies.

Pure Mi is the longest running and carries the brand. The halo effect is very positive. Currently doing a new study to see how it is beneficial. Working towards one cohesive voice. Moving away from BW headshots. Full color and imagery to highlight fresh water, vibrant cities, unmatched quality of life. Using images of PURE MI in other campaigns to keep it as one.

Having travel, talent, local all work together. They can't compete for resources. Don't be nervous about the talent campaign. It is all one team working together. Whole video was locally made in GR

Regarding Dave's Retirement: Dave has been a huge voice in the industry. Kelly is the interim VP of Pure Michigan and it has been going smoothly. Will be posting that job soon. It is impossible to replace Dave. Multiple campaigns will be a part of the hiring process. Keeping us on the front lines of cutting-edge tourism.

Opened up for questions/comments:

Dianna S: Recommends sending to alumni groups and people who might want to come home. So, they can fully understand the job and the location being a former native.

Michelle noted they're not hiring a search firm but hopeful for local and non- local candidates.

Lisa: Advocacy for Travel Michigan funding

Follow the governors requested leads. Takes that position on funding. Hoping for that info in February. Multiple industries have been working on coming together for a unified look and recommendations. How can we help educate and advocate for our industries? Travel commission has a recently formed sub committee.

CONTACT INFO FOR MICHELLE: Michelle Grinnell grinnellm@michigan.org 517-763-6078 (cell)

Monthly Reports

- Experience Grand Rapids
 - Jaylyn- STD 3/19 4-5p at Frederick. Annual tourism forum. Formal invite to follow. Attraction Pass digital similar to restaurant week for front line staff-In process hoping for February launch date.
- Grand Rapids Diversity & Inclusion
 - No updates- Jordan is OOO. Savor & Soar: Students came from GRPS to engage with hospitality talent. Evening had a formal dinner to engage about jobs etc. Panel discussion about job pathways in the industry of hospitality and tourism. Hoping to offer it annually.
- West Michigan Sports Commission
 - Connor: 2023 50,000 room nights. \$94 mill in visitor spending in the area. Sticking to MI: Julie shields was promoted to director. Courtney Minor is new event coordinator. NCAA bid portal due 2/7. Working for D1 men's basketball for march madness. Golf and some smaller d3 events.
- West Michigan Tourist Association
- Women in Hospitality Leadership-Grand Rapids
- Grand Valley State University
 - Kristy: Savor and Soar was amazing!! GVSU is getting back on track post break. Networking extravaganza is moving to march instead of February. March 25th.
- Ferris State University-Kathryn Wolfer- wolferk@ferris.edu
 - Working on internship week 2nd week of February. Networking session and resume review followed by a career fair. Working with tech culinary schools to meet talented staff interested in the industry.
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association
 - Jennifer: January MRLA education foundation officially launched the HTIM. Offers training and certification in business man 12 week course. Hybrid offering additional classes on the lakeshore. Free for the first 2,000 registrants. At 1200.Set schedule Amanda Smith for specifics. Starting again in April <https://www.htim.com/stepup.html>
<https://www.htim.com/faq.html>
Bonus if they complete it \$500
- Michigan Cares for Tourism
 - Jane: Big event is May 20. They are in Belle isle and it is a joint event with MI Charter schools. 9-1230 lunch until 2pm 2-5 just industry. Reg open now or by end of the month.

Upcoming Meetings & Events (See attached for 2024 KCHA Meeting Schedule)

- Thursday, February 15 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ Canopy Hotel-Board of director votes.
- Thursday, March 21 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ West Michigan Sports Commission
- Tuesday, April 9 to Thursday, April 11 – Pure Michigan Tourism Conference in Kalamazoo
- NO APRIL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
- Thursday, May 16 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ Amway Grand Plaza's Pickleball Courts
- Monday, May 20 – Michigan Cares for Tourism @ Belle Isle, Detroit
- Thursday, June 20 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ Watermark Country Club's CORK

Round Table Discussion

Adjournment
Motion Second

Kent County Hospitality Association
P.O. Box 1046 — Grand Rapids, MI 49501

www.KentCountyHospitality.org
www.facebook.com/groups/KentCountyHospitality

Attendance:
Kathryn Wolfer FSU
Lisa Calhoun
Alyssa Bey-WMSC
Conner Hicks-WMSC
Jane Lovett-Peaches B&B
Kristy Jack
Ali Sallisbury/Amanda Zilke-Embassy Suites
Ed Wilson CIS East
Jennifer Sparrow MRLA
Qi'Shaun Coyle/ Jaylyn McCloy-Experience GR
Michelle-Guest Speaker
James Koukios
David Jibson
Kimberly ?
Ashley Cousins?
Kate Leito Experience GR
Paul Cooper