

## RVV Board Meeting Minutes 9/5/2018

In attendance: Ross Allen, Ashley Cates, Chad Day, Joe Ginet, Sarah Bayer, Laurel Briggs, Eric Weisinger, Darius Price, Cal Schmidt, Laura Naumes, Steve Eadie, Scott Steingraber, Brad Niva, Emele Hibdon & Social media staff member.

Ross: we need to approve minutes from the last two board meetings. Call the meeting to order. Postpone approval of previous meeting and will send via email.

### **Treasurers Report by Chad Day**

- 18 RVV members
- 2 associate members
- Motion to approve repayment – approved
- Invoices need to go out to Schmidt and Agate.
- A check to lookout was sent in August. No other payables at this time.

Cal: Do we have a contract with Lookout?

Ashley: We currently do not have a contract with Lookout. After research analysis we can supply a contract to her. Research is moving forward.

Ross: I've met with Barbara. I'm going to introduce Brad.

Brad: Thank you for letting us come back to the table. I wanted to check in and touch base on our promotions, public relations and marketing. Introduces 2 employees: social media and PR firm from Portland. One of our feedback from clients requested more stories. A new budget opened in July so we've hired new staff to communicate these new messages. We have a robust social media platform and wine is one of our pillars of focus. Emily (PR) is very connected to writers and is pitching stories to writers. I don't know where you are in your promotions but we are here to say we're happy to do this on your behalf. With wine and tourism we can happily push out content. Have you seen our backpacks? We had custom made backpacks (500). Lyndsay from Del Rio called and wanted a backpack for a writer. We're happy to hand them out to you to give to media. Someone from Forbes and Seattle Times can through Del Rio and wanted more backpacks. We're always looking to help where tourism can fit in. Met with Sally from the Wine Board and told her we're here to help. He has funds for media, hotels and more. Sally has a heart of gold and didn't know too much about Southern Oregon. We're here to help her do her job better. At the same time, we left with a feeling that she doesn't know much about our region. She didn't know what the Oregon Wine Experience is.

Scott: She is new and she has a hard time sending people in a route for wine. She doesn't grasp our area.

Brad: we have six writers coming in, we do itineraries and hotel. Of course they are here for wine, it lines up with us. I can't just write checks but when it comes to media or something like that I can step in and help. Our PR campaign is really identifying who the wine conesiour is.

Emele: We've come up with 5 customer profiles. Just about all of them are wine drinkers. That's one of the stories we're going with. Willamette was Wine Region of the Year. A lot of people don't know what's going on down here. It's a new story to tell and that's the story we want to tell to our target markets.

People really into the outdoors, globe trotting couples, quaint romantic inns, suitcase adventurer, maybe a millennial, wants to stay in nicer places but want cultural experiences and the characters in the destination. There's the fun family, winery family friendly. Last is the golden age people who are in a RV, retired. One thing that sets this apart is the heart, soul, the attention you get in the wine room. In Napa and other places you are 6 or 7 people deep and you never get near the winemaker. They're learning while on vacation and I think there is a great story to tell and we're here to help you tell it. What's new. Do you have any characters in your wineries?

Sarah: Holly is bringing this to the table as well. One thing that we can do to bring value is to share this type of information with them. How do we disseminate to the tasting rooms. We need to work as a cohesive. The marketing committee would need someone like you to help relay that information. We're trying to get this started and don't have strategy to show you but this something we can communicate in the next message to wineries. You will have a seat at the table and can get your opinion.

Emele: My email is: [Emelehibdon@gmail.com](mailto:Emelehibdon@gmail.com) – PR Rep in Portland Emele Hibdon

Ross: The survey is out. Expected results in November.

Brad: I don't know if Bob has sent the survey out to his list. Great comments about where you guys are now. If something comes up, please holler at us and we're happy to help. We have software that makes itineraries automatically. It's a product we get from Travel Oregon. We can pay for hotel rooms because it's under tourism. As your group grows we can make something happen. That's a quick update on the marketing/pr.

Social Rep with Travel SO: I'm here for the social connection. We can put that out through social media. We love to find out new info and put it out. We can help sustain through the slower times of the year. Send it to Brad or me.

Steve: I don't know how this media process works. How do you get an article written. We just had OWE and we killed it. The only thing I've seen is about Umpqua. How do you put that forward?

Emelee: You build relationships with media, send out a press release and send it out to a travel writer release. Send it our way and we can include in our distribution.

Brad: I was surprised that OWB is not as representative of southern Oregon. Do you guys feel like the bastard child of the state? All say yes. We've come into a new model. This year we went to \$600k this year. Central Oregon has an annual budget of \$2.2mil. When I got hired 18 months ago I realized we need more money. We're working on a tourism improvement district. We're asking for hotel to do a 2% assessment. National average is 14% and we're at 9%. The hotel industry is asking for the assessment themselves and can drive where the money goes. They were invented in Sacramento 8 years ago. They are moving up north. We have just started the process to do 3 counties. TBID. We'd work with all our hotels and work with the county to force the hotels to do this after 1 year of volunteers. We set it up for 5 years and collect 2% for every room. It only goes for tourism promotion. Doesn't go for physical things. We'll then be a legit tourism office. In a meeting in Anaheim there is a wine improvement district. There are 2 of these happening in the country. You as a group of wineries you can decide that you have a sales tax for your product. You can do a 2% tax or assessment for tourism and promotion of your industry. This is something new in the funding world. We're getting all the counties on board. Jackson Co. is on

hold. The whole idea of the wine is an interesting thing. The consultant said we could probably do one in 2-3 years.

Steve: That is interesting from a budgeting point of view.

Laura: This is a tax on tasting room sales?

Brad: yes or however you want to set it up. It happened in Portland 6 years ago. Took them from 8 to 26 million tourism budget. Klamath is working on one. Siskiyou county is working on one. We have a consultant that has positive results for this process. Once we explain it as a lodging tax with a term, they have positive results. Any time the hotel industry wants to say no, it can be resolved. We can be the recipients of the funds since we represent all. There would be an advisory panel and we'd take a cut for admin, regional promotions. We will talk on a region level but each county would have a chunk for on the ground sort of things. OWB is talking about an event in New York. Tourism could go hand in hand. We're selling similar messages. Come to the Rogue Valley. I'm going back to OWB and help them leverage those things. I like something closer to Sac or San Fran, Portland.

Steve: the beauty of NY is that \$80/bottle is a cheap bottle in NY.

Brad: I used to own a big rafting company. It took me years to get into the Safari Club. We raised our prices and.....We don't like to say no, we like to say yes.

Ross: This is a great opportunity to communicate. If RVV went out and independently and tried to hook a writer or major player the cost involved would be substantial.

Sarah: The Forbes visit was a admin nightmare. The admin support is awesome.

Ashley: We now have Laurel Briggs of CM&D, who can help with communication.

Exit Brad and crew.

Ross: Did you get a copy of the roadmap? Just to start the strategic planning. There has been a tremendous amount of work by Steve, Barbara, Cal putting this together. There's some great information. There is too much data. One of the key things is to hammer out some dates and get some more people into the group to help spread the workload out and decide who is going to participate in these. Debra is full throttle. We've got to pump the breaks a little on this. We're going to stumble and stick a leg out to make us fall. We need to be cautious.. we can do all of this but we need to look at having all this done by Feb/March.

Steve: The ultimate presentation to the public was in Jan.

Ross: Steve you're going to be out for surgery. We have harvest coming up and Cal and Barbara..... Sara, good to see you back. We're a volunteer organization and we can only do so much so fast. We can schedule the working sessions and get attendees but we really need to talk about timelines and see what will work in reality.

Cal: Two things that come to mind. There has to be a process to go through. A few key things need to happen. We need a budget of where we're going. How are we going to pay for this. We need membership and a solution to funding. Without members and funding we're dead.

Ross: We've done a little push. As far as community partners, we have Travel Ashland, Medford... those are low hanging fruit. Big players are going to be wineries for \$1000. This isn't a real big surprise that there is a lot of people in our industry that are sitting back, waiting and watching to see what RVV will do over the next 6 months, 12 months. Slowing this down, slows the payment process down. Outside of our existing commitments to Deborah and Holly..... I don't think the plan is possible. Unless Laura is going to give you 90 days sabbatical.

Steve: I agree with you, but you guys rule the roost on this. I think what this road map is intended to do is get everything thinking in the same direction. Short term forecast and long term budget. You have to build all of these pieces first. All lot of this is to open everyone's eyes. Things each committee can be working on. Everyone has to be thinking and talking about this. Biggest takeaway from this is that everyone needs to be working on their piece. Outside of Chad, Eric and Joe I don't know how is on what committees, where?

Ross: we have to build committees. It comes down to key members sitting at the table.

Laura; Are they standing committees?

Ross: they are adjunct committees. We knew we would need finance committees at some point. The marketing committee would be bigger moving forward. There is a rough draft of membership... we have to be careful not going back to people 3 and 4 times beating on the door. There is concern in the industry that this is SOWA 2.0. It's not. I don't want to do anything that stirs up past memories for folks but at the same time be able to get positive communications so that people can see the small achievements.

Sara: A big part of what we've talked about is that we need some strong leadership so we have clear organizational next steps. We have to divide and conquer. If it takes us and extra 6 months it does. The longer we wait, everyone outside views that we're failing.

Cal: People want to see something before they jump. This where we're going, how we'll get there.....

Joe: We have a document for membership we could get out now that the survey and OWE is done.

Ashley: we said we really need to determine what the benefit is of being a founding member. Is it that price only for members until Dec. 31. There has to be some sort of bite.

Steve: Strategic planning is building a roadmap but every committee needs to bring something to the table for a yes or no. We have deliverables in the map. Put it on paper and board approves. Instead of 12 people sitting at the table wondering what's being done the committees have an action plan.

Ashley: we have membership definition on our website that people are paying for.

Steve: when Deborah asked for help, we needed to define whose responsibility it is.

Sarah: Ross would you feel comfortable assigning tasks?

Ross: yes, I want to hear from those involved in the trenches, what are practical dates. We could go through this tonight and get dates lined out.

Steve: let's set dates, distribute and solicit feedback. This is a big nut to crack.

Ross: Its awesome but scary at the same time to get it all done.

Eric: we really should be looking at this as a 20 year organization. Whether we launch in Feb or March doesn't matter.

Ross: if we can get some dates for priorities. Let's hammer out what's a brief bullet point for being a member. Fixed rate, banner on site? When I was talking to Barbara this am, there's just a group of people out there that aren't going to sign up until RVV gets to the point of something really cool happens. Maybe it's a group of writers.... Or something like that. They come here, they focus on the members of RVV. It turns into a national press story. We see a direct monetary increase.... Other wineries will want to be a part of they aren't RVV members. That's just something that will happen.

Sara: our RVV report should find out what return on investment did you get from being a member.

Ross: we all have our independent marketing budgets.. if I can buy into a \$100,000 ad campaign for \$1000 then I'm in. If there's a way to explain that to members today..... there will still be folks hanging on the outside until we start rocking it. We have to have great exposure for our members.

Sara: I think that in our roadmap, Holly can help us get organized. The next big date is that strategic session where we can voice all these concerns.

Steve: On this work session, 10-15 people. Ross, Holly, Ashley, Barbara, Cal, Steve, Rep from Wine Trails, CEO's or Travel SO, Grants Pass, Travel Medford, Asante makes a great working committee.

Sarah: I'd like to come if there is a spot.

Ross: It doesn't cost us anything to have these people at the table.

Sarah: Let's look at what this meeting is all about. Its founding the RVV organization.

Ross: we're forming the foundation of this and maybe having Brad is good but if we start having every travel org, if we're just building the foundation let's focus on RVV.

Cal: Asante I'll go along with and Brad's already in.

Sarah: the purpose of the meeting is to speak as an expert in southern Oregon tourism.

Ashley: TSO's have paid for things and they want to be at the table.

Sarah: Bring only 1 travel person. We have 2 strategy sessions.

Sarah: This planning sessions is 1 of 2. SWOT analysis, within our winemaker community. Strategically, how do we structure ourselves when we look at other models. What are our marketing goals? What are our guiding values? What type of leaders do we want? Do we want to become part of Asante? We will dive into the weeds of who is RVV so we can then become an organization. This will provide us information for our sales meetings. We need different voices from backgrounds. Those concerns need to be brought up in these meetings. 3-4 hour long session with a nice projector and catered lunch. 10-15 people can come, she prefers closer to 10.

Steve: Our current list of attendees: Eric; Holly, Ross, Ashley, Barb, Cal, Steve, 5 wine trail presidents, Floyd, Sara, Floyd, Brad, Joe

We're getting diversity, skills and regional breadth of what we need to cover.

Chad: People's Bank has an amazing board room upstairs. They are a banker and see if they can support.

Ross: Our conference rooms seats 14-16. We have Apple TV.

Cal: We can seat 50.

Steve: Full day working session Mid-Nov.

Ross: Nov 13, 14 or 15 is best for group.

Steve: we'll send out an email to everyone who is willing to be a part and see who is available. The second working session – morning session with same committee then afternoon with larger group. The TSO's can get involved in this group.

Sarah: We should invite the OWB to this meeting.

Ross: Tom will come down.

Steve: Dates?

Ross: the 4, 5, 6 of December is better.

Steve: I will send out a second session for those dates and we'll see what preferences are.

Laurel: we can do a Doodle poll. Steve get a hold of me.

Steve: Nov 13 and working 2 Dec 4 Day (first half--- second general public).

Laurel: I can create drafts.

Ross: When you communicate back to Deborah --- she has deadline dates to membership committee, let her know we need to be a little loose. We'll clarify membership benefits. Some of this we need to be cautious about.

Steve: I'd almost say let your membership committee build the list and bring it to you

Sarah: we need to work on a database of contacts. We should wait for membership drive until we "know who we are".

Ashley: We need to determine what a founding member gets and what the money situation is.

Scott: I think a lot of people want dribbles of information. It could be a letter to the region. Something that says "we're really excited and organized, doing a planning session, more info to follow". If we don't communicate it feels like people feel out of the loop.

Ross: I think its that we setup a monthly blog or newsletter. This fall we have the survey project and the planning session. That's a really positive process. Info on the roadmap. Something monthly, to the point and pretty.

Sarah: Relink to all this great info. Finalize as the sales/member benefits, link to our Mail Tribune article, recap of OWE. And here's who to contact.

Steve: This isn't just our money, we have partners and their financial commitment.

Ross: I'm setting up a meeting with Floyd to set up joint communications where we talk about RVV. UP to this point he's had to be cautious as to how that relationship is defined. What should we talk about and not talk about.

Sarah: one of the things I see as a member benefit is streamlined. We're all doing OWE, the Forbes, Chronicle ad... up until this point there are 5000 emails. Our golden ticket is we're going to be the one-stop-shop and here's why. I think OWE is a big part about.

Ross: It's a selling point and it circles back around to the credibility issue. Everyone knows Asante and what they do for Owe. They struggle trying to coordinate with wineries so we can provide that better communication back.

Joe: Think what was said about earlier about PR/Writers come through RVV. That's the best incentive there is.

Ross; why does Napa and Sonoma have the winery participation that they do, if you want traction through media you are a member of that organization.

Ashley: We need to make sure everyone gets fair coverage...

Ross: there needs to be something on the website how the process works with media. If your wines are going to be included they need to fall within these parameters.

Sarah: We need a standard formula for how we pay to play. We will provide you with an opportunity to sit at the table. As a founding member these are a bullet list.... I love the lock-in of rates.

Ross; if you sign up in the first year you lock in our membership rate for 3 years. If it's after a year you can be a member you're not a founding member. Website banner for founding members only.

Steve: when we talk about an event where we bring in an international writer, can we get travel SO to be the lead....,

Ashley: TSO wants to recreate a comeback for crush event. Have it be a full-fledged event like a Portland ice fest. Grape stomps, barrel races, food and wine. Its an event that a destination organization is interested in. These can create stronger partnerships. Its open to members only, sponsored by TSOs. These events take a long time to plan. This could be mutually beneficial.

Ross: Back to founding members... we need the hard data. We've got the founding member program, rate lock for 3 years, you're organization is part of a rolling banner ad.

Sarah: Let's not offer hard deliverables. Events, wine writers, press releases, locked in, leveraging community partners, taking our wine outside out valley, road shows. And those that have issues, we can encourage them to join a committee.

Chad: the language currently sounds like only founding members are the only ones that can vote. We need to adjust that.

Ross: We talked about having a founder's member page – special recognition.

Steve: have you considered a lifetime membership option?

Chad: it's a 20-year organization so \$20,000?

Sarah: Who is going to massage and fine tune that document? I will.

Laurel: I will send you Sarah, the draft document.

Ross: By fine turning this we can pick some more folks up.

Joe: we need hard copies in hand would be important.

Ashley: I can bring it to Upper Rogue Wine Trail.

Ross: That would be really helpful.

Sarah: What's the timeframe to become a founding member.....

Ross: we need to pick a date....-

Chad: We're going to need a 2019 membership drive.

Sarah: Need to determine a fiscal calendar.

All: Calendar year.

Ross: Make it Dec. 31... when do our rates come up?

Chad: Maybe do \$1000 to the first of June?

Sarah: Our goal when we started was 100% participating. Maybe this should just be getting people to sign on as a member not a founder.

Eric: I don't care about being a founder but I do care about paying and have that locked in.

Sarah: Big long list of being a member. Benefit to being a founder is the rate lock. Pay by June 1, 2019 and lock in your rate for 3 years.

Darius: What was the first \$1000 ask for money go toward? Some people have paid up....

Sarah: Those who signed up should get in the locked rate to 2021.

Chad; When do we send them an invoice if they already paid?

Darius: Some people have paid in '18. They would need to be asked to pay their dues in 2019. Founding members would be those who paid dues so far. This will all reset in 2019.

Eric: Those who paid in 2018 should be good through 2019.

Ross: Maybe we call those who started this thing and they are founding members. There is a founding member page on the website with link to individual wineries.

Sarah: Those founding members will pay \$1000 again in 2019.

Ross: We've decided who the founding members are. Chad will send out invoice in a few months i.e.: Jan 2019

Darius: That makes it easier for Chad since it's a calendar year.

Steve: if you want to do the payment plan you start in Jan/Feb so everyone is done Dec. 31.

Sarah: We should call Kim at Agate and see if she wants to stay in.

Ross: fall is the prep and the marketing....

Joe: there is opportunity between now and Jan to still become a founding member.

Ross: Any new business?

Sarah: I'm moving to the Bay Area to work for the American Heart Association.

Ross: Next meeting.... Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> RVV Meeting 6pm Roxy Ann Winery at Parsons. By then we'll have some survey information back and the two planning sessions will be complete.

Ross: Before we adjourn.. all of us travel but the amount of support in the industry statewide for RVV is truly impressive. TO have people from great distances that look at us like "it's about time". The balance of everything in the north to south, we actually have a cheerleading group in the north. Thanks again for everyone's hard work and dedication. It's a time sponge but its rewarding. It's really neat to be part of an organizations that's drawing such great momentum from all over the state. Doors will open.