

**Minutes of the Nevada Commission on Tourism
Marketing Meeting | February 11, 2016**

The Nevada Commission on Tourism held a Marketing Committee meeting at 2:00 p.m. on February 11, 2016 at Nevada Commission on Tourism, Laxalt Building, 2nd Floor, 401 N. Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701.

Call to Order

Lt. Governor Hutchison called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Commission Members present:

Lieutenant Governor Mark Hutchison
John Wagnon
Don Newman

Commission Members absent excused:

Cathy Tull

Staff Present:

Claudia Vecchio, Director
Sarah Bradley, Deputy Attorney General
Greg Fine, Director of Marketing

Guests Present:

Kevin Bagger, LVCVA
Marty McDonald, Fahlgren Mortine
Jeff Scott, Fahlgren Mortine
Chris Richardson, Fahlgren Mortine
Sean Cowan, Fahlgren Mortine

VECCHIO: Hello, this is the Marketing Committee Meeting of the Nevada Commission on Tourism. Can we find out who's on the phone?

BRADLEY: Sarah Bradley.

BAGGER: Kevin Bagger in Las Vegas.

SCOTT: Jeff Scott

VECCHIO: Okay, I think Lieutenant Governor we are ready to move forward here.

Roll Call

HUTCHISON: Okay, wonderful. Thank you all for being available for this committee meeting. This is the time and place set for the Marketing Committee meeting of the Nevada

Commission on Tourism and Ms. Vecchio if you wouldn't mind calling the roll and confirm that we have a proper quorum and that we have property posted this meeting for purposes of open meeting law.

VECCHIO: Claudia Vecchio for the record, taking roll. Lieutenant Governor Hutchison?

HUTCHISON: Yes, here.

VECCHIO: John Wagnon?

WAGNON: Here.

VECCHIO: Don Newman?

NEWMAN: Here.

VECCHIO: Cathy Tull? I know she was thinking about phoning in.

BAGGER: She's in between flights, so I'm not sure if she is going to make it.

VECCHIO: Terrific, thank you. We do have a quorum, Lieutenant Governor Hutchison, and I believe this meeting has been posted according to open meeting laws, Dee could you confirm?

CHEKOWITZ-DYKES: Yes, Ms. Vecchio.

VECCHIO: We are posted and all here.

HUTCHISON: Great, all right, well thank you very much. That takes care of item, agenda item number one. Agenda item number two is now public comment.

HUTCHISON: Are there any members of the public in Carson City who would like to make comment? We will limit the comments to three minutes, and ask any speaker to please step forward and provide comment.

VECCHIO: It doesn't look like there's anyone in Carson City.

HUTCHISON: All right, anyone here in Las Vegas who would like to make public comment? Ms. Singh, would you like to make a public comment? No one in Las Vegas either.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

HUTCHISON: We will move onto agenda item number three and close out agenda item number two. That is the approval of the minutes. Have all committee members had a

chance to look at the minutes? It looks like the minutes are from our marketing meeting of February 13, 2015.

- VECCHIO: Yes. That was the last marketing committee meeting we held.
- HUTCHISON: Okay. Are there any comments or changes to the minutes? I'm hearing none. The Chair will accept a motion to approve the minutes of February 13, 2015, the last time that the Marketing Meeting Committee met.
- WAGNON: Move to approve.
- NEWMAN: Second.
- HUTCHISON: Motion to approve by Commissioner Wagnon and second by Commissioner Newman. Any comment or discussion on the motion? Hearing none, those in favor signify by saying aye?
- GROUP: Aye.
- HUTCHISON: Any opposed? No. That motion passes unanimously. We will close out agenda item number three, and move onto agenda item number four, the Spring and Summer Campaign Ideation and we will turn the time over to Ms. Vecchio.
- VECCHIO: Thank you Lieutenant Governor. This Marketing Committee is designed ideally to be one in which we are just exchanging ideas, looking at previous campaigns and how we can improve them, as we move forward into this new creative campaign.
- We'll talk a little bit about how successful it was from the Fall/Winter campaign and suggestions our agency has for moving it forward. We're in a very formal setting here, but I hope Commissioner Wagnon and Commissioner Newman and those on the phone, that you feel like we can talk about these things, and it's much more of a roll up your shirt sleeves kind of meeting than a very formal Commission meeting. That's what the ideation piece of this is all about; to look at where we've been and where we hope to go and to get the input from you all as destination marketers.
- I'm going to turn the time over to Greg and to our extraordinary agency, Fahlgren Mortine to talk about the results from the Fall/Winter campaign. They'll share some campaign effectiveness, at least initial numbers with you, so you know where things went well, and where we still have some opportunities for improvement.
- Then we'll talk about some things coming up for Spring/Summer. Greg and team, if you could take it away from this point, and provide some insights about this most recent campaign.

FINE: Good afternoon, Greg Fine, Director of Marketing for Travel Nevada, Division of Tourism. Thank you very much for being here this afternoon. Like Claudia said we are looking to give you our input as to where we've been, what's taking place so far, and then what we're looking to in the future. We'd like to get some feedback from you, and get your thoughts on a couple of specific areas.

I do want to start off with our Fall/Winter campaign results, and to use the term "results" is a bit premature, because this information was gathered and compiled as January 26. It's a very, very short snapshot, and I do want to emphasize the snapshot here because the campaign obviously broke in November. There are several new elements that were brought into the campaign that were not part of anything else we've ever done to this point, including a couple of new partnerships, and a couple of new digital advertising units.

We are just looking at where things are initially unfolding as we begin into this process, and I don't know how much you want me to belabor what is summarized on page one of the slides that are part of your package for the Fall/Winter campaign results.

HUTCHISON: You know Greg we've seen and read through it, but maybe you could highlight important elements, that may be a good way to start.

FINE: You bet. We are definitely reaching a tremendous number of people with 23 million impressions as of when this information was reported.

It's interesting that we're showing some interaction - if you look at bullet three we're comparing our new digital unit to what was being compared to in the summer. Let me explain our new digital unit.

In the summer we ran our straight TV ad, and had pretty good interaction with that TV ad as part of the digital advertising unit. If you'll recall what is being unveiled at this campaign is an entirely new beast that involves not only video but several opportunities for the audience to engage on various different levels. This digital unit advertisement is being widely seen is a micro version of our existing travelnevada.com website. It's the homepage of the website, and we're showing very good interaction.

While the video engagement is down over summer, the overall engagement with the digital ad is relatively high, and it's doing its job of driving people to travelnevada.com and creating awareness.

I think that when Fahlgren put this information together, they set their bar a little higher than they probably could have. They might be trying to compare apples to oranges, because like I said, the summer advertising of the video is different than

what is being seen here. We're looking forward to seeing how this new type of ad performs over the breath of the campaign. Fahlgren please feel free to jump in if I overlook anything here that you would like to add.

Our Facebook audience is showing a little bit of slowing. But, the action that we're getting from Facebook as far as referrals from adventures and the action on the social front has picked up considerably and we're really excited to see how that has taken place. We're working, particularly for the Spring/Summer campaign to shine a stronger light on what social can do for us as far as driving awareness and building views on travelnevada.com, particularly the adventure pages, and the highlighted adventures that are found within the website.

You know I think the report itself speaks pretty much for itself as far as where we are at this stage of game, and I'd be glad to answer questions.

HUTCHISON: Greg why don't we just pause here for questions from members of the committee. Let's start in Carson City, any questions for Greg there? No?

FINE: I think we're getting no's here Governor, no questions.

HUTCHISON: Okay, well then. I will ask you a couple questions. The message seems to be that we're getting a lot of impressions, I mean 23 million impressions, and folks are willing to interact, but they're spending actually less time on the site, then compared to the Spring/Summer campaign. Is that just a seasonal thing do you think, or do you have an explanation for that Greg?

FINE: Well, are you referring bullet number three Governor?

HUTCHISON: Yes, three and four. They're spending slightly less time interacting with the units, spending 17 seconds less, right, and the campaign is driving visitors to the site at a slightly lower rate than the Spring/Summer campaign. Just combine those for me, I'm just wondering if is it seasonal?

FINE: Particularly in relation to bullet number four Governor, again going back to when this snapshot was taken, it was fairly early in the roll out of the campaign and not all the particular media partners had fully rolled out all of their material. We weren't getting all of the traction that we would be seeing for instance now, just because of the timing of when this snapshot was taken.

You know it's a little risky to put this information out at this stage of the game, just because it isn't a full rounded picture. We have another results update due in the next two weeks. That's going to enlighten us more as to how things were performing, and how we've optimized against some of these slower performing units that perhaps weren't performing as well as we wanted them to. I hesitate to

put too much stock into this particular snapshot. I would like to have more information under our belt before we start saying something is working or not working.

HUTCHISON: Okay, all right, fair enough.

NEWMAN: This is Mr. Newman for the record. Is this timeline holiday based, or is this pre-holiday? Perhaps the lead up to the holidays was the distraction in the numbers which resulted in the decrease.

FINE: This information was given to us as of the 26th of January. I'm not exactly sure what the cutoff date was for this information Commissioner Newman. I don't know if Fahlgren... Chris are you on the line?

RICHARDSON: Yes. Chris Richardson here from Fahlgren. Yes just a couple things. This information was pulled through the end of December. You would be correct, it started running for the most part in the middle of November, the Orbitz and Trip Advisor didn't start running until about the middle of December. That could be a little bit of the reason for the lag of those results.

The thing to understand is that when we start running these campaigns especially with a new partner like Orbitz, where we don't have any previous history to build from, it takes a little while for them to get up and running and optimizing. The beginning of the results snapshot, in the beginning of the campaign is always not going to be quite as good as the end result, just because they're constantly optimizing and just figuring out who the engaged audience is and optimizing towards them.

Another thing to also consider and keep in mind is that the benchmarks that we're comparing ourselves to are actually the Spring/Summer campaign benchmark from fiscal year '15. That's because we outdid the industry benchmark for Spring/Summer so much that we felt like it wasn't fair to continue comparing to the industry benchmark. We wanted to compare to past campaign performance and that was a little bit of a higher benchmark. Just because things are lower here, in all likelihood, higher than the industry benchmark, it's just made a little less off the first month and a half and it wasn't the end of the Spring/Summer campaign.

But, like I said, as the campaign progresses, we continuously up the site optimizing, so by the end of the campaign we expect that the results will be just as good as Spring/Summer, if not better.

HUTCHISON: Great, thank you very much.

BAGGER: This is Kevin at the LVCVA. Just a quick question, this is more of a definition question. On the deliverable impressions, that's just paid impressions right, that's not anything on the owned, social media channels or anything like that?

FINE: Strictly paid.

RICHARDSON: That's paid.

BAGGER: Okay, and that's based on digital media. Does that include paid search or just media units?

RICHARDSON: Just media units, the paid search is not included.

BAGGER: Okay, so the click through is also just media units right?

RICHARDSON: Right, yes.

BAGGER: Okay. Thank you very much.

WAGNON: This is John here. I get that we're looking at anywhere from six weeks or in the case of some of those channels maybe two weeks of data. It would help to see the data laid out in a way that's a little bit easier to analyze year over year to understand what's driving these impressions. How much is coming out of paid media, and how much is coming out of paid search, what the click rates are, conversion rates are, you know more laid out in that fashion. Just having five bullet points doesn't really give us the complete story.

FINE: Yes, fair enough Commissioner. I will be glad to follow up this information with a more detailed report that I can email everyone, so that you have the information with the next marketing committee meeting. I will make sure that there's more detail put into there.

HUTCHISON: Great, thank you Greg. Any other questions the Commissioners may have?

FINE: I think Commissioner Wagon had a question.

WAGNON: The reason why I bring that up is, this is the core of the campaign, this is where we spend the vast majority of our money. As it is in our business, we pay very close attention to the results on an ongoing basis, and it would be a lot easier to see how the campaign is working or not working.

FINE: Certainly. As soon as you said that, I was thinking I should have included deeper detail into that so you can see where that was. I will make sure that I email that after this meeting and include that for future meetings.

HUTCHISON: Great, thank you. Any other questions from the Commissioners for Greg before he proceeds? If not, Greg, go ahead.

FINE: Fantastic. Well, we are preparing for the launch of the Spring/Summer campaign which will kick off in May. There won't be any differences in the paid media markets this Summer, with Los Angeles, San Francisco, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Boise, Las Vegas, and Reno serving as the major video and digital markets, with digital in Sacramento and San Diego rounding out that offering.

I don't know if there's any questions regarding markets there.

WAGNON: No.

HUTCHISON: No, go ahead, Greg.

FINE: I indicated that we've introduced a couple new partners, and if you see on the page three of our Summer Media Partners, we're recommending another strong lineup of partners.

In particular we're excited to see how our relationship with Orbitz, who is our OTA partner performs and they not only have served as a booking mechanism for us through travelnevada.com, but are also providing a considerable amount of "always on" content for us. We're looking forward to seeing how that relationship comes to life, as well as with *Outside* and then *Great American Country*, our two other partners that we introduced in Winter and we'll see through in the Summer to August run of the buy.

One of the aspects that I wanted to bring up to get some feedback from those of you who have any experience with it, is cinema. We ran cinema in Spring/Summer of last year and then we ran it this year. Cinema has been the companion to our broadcast in some of the larger media markets where broadcast is extremely expensive, we augmented that video purchase with cinema so that when we go dark with broadcast, we hit the major blockbusters such Star Wars and what have you with the running of our TV ads at those various markets.

Cinema is difficult to track, because you're told to turn off your phone, and not to distract your fellow cinema goers. I'm just curious if anybody here has had experience with cinema as a buy and what type of results if any or what your expectations were if you did make a buy. I'd be curious to see what type of feedback there is.

WAGNON: We haven't only because the cost of production for a high quality spot that's going to play on a big screen like that, and a big sound system, is higher than we want to invest in.

I guess if you have a big enough buy it would make more sense to invest in the production of something that would actually play on a big screen like that. But one of things we found, if you put an amateur quality production on a massive screen in a big theater with a big sound system, it actually comes across even worse than it does looking on a 55 inch TV screen. We've actually pulled back on it just because of production costs.

FINE: As far as a performance indicator what were you expecting from that? Were you expecting the impressions like you get with a typical broadcast preview, or what were your expectations from a cinema run?

WAGNON: Yes, the same thing whether we buy TV in market, we're just trying to drive conversion to the website, and actually you know the typical response. It's pretty simple.

FINE: Okay.

WAGNON: We're very brand oriented. It's much more of a brand building buy than it is to drive actual conversions. Some people remember the URL or whether you're putting some kind of an offer up there, but the opportunity to convert them at that point is pretty limited, and then afterwards whether they remember it or not is questionable but the power of the brand building will have to be very specific in a certain market. We go into a targeted market in the Bay Area where we know exactly where our skiers are coming from and buy the top theaters in that particular market. Very highly geographically targeted, and much more brand awareness and a brand building purpose.

FINE: That was certainly an appeal for me for particularly this run when we were airing the new creative as well, to be able to expose that new material to people and to reinforce what Nevada is about, and bring home "Don't Fence Me In" just as strong as we can in a very dynamic platform.

WAGNON: Yes, I mean I think that can work. To me that environment is different. I would not take a TV ad and run it in the theater. I wouldn't just say that this ad, if it works on TV it's going to work in the theater. That actually isn't the case. It's a different unit, it's a different audience and it's a different mindset. Even when you go to the theaters and look at Coca-Cola or Pepsi ads, it's not the same thing. It's not the exact same ad they are running on TV, some of them are similar but it's definitely been produced for that particular audience and that environment.

FINE: I understand what you're saying now about make sure your quality of what you're producing is high enough.

WAGNON: Yes. It doesn't look like the film in terms of production quality.

FINE: Yes.

WAGNON: I mean that's the way we look at it, because we're trying to protect the specific brand that has a very specific audience attached to it, and expectations associated with that brand.

We don't want to actually put something out there that's substandard and have that be a reflection on a very high quality brand. When you come to a resort, you're going to get a very high quality experience, and that ad should reflect the same experience. If it comes looking like its substandard, because of the environment, then a huge screen actually reflects negatively on the brand. It has to be a Warren Miller quality production or it will come across looking less than quality.

FINE: In putting you on the spot, do you recall what type of recall you had for that?

WAGNON: We actually haven't run any, you know we pulled back on it, because of the cost of production.

FINE: Kevin, I realize this is not necessarily your end of the turf, but I'm wondering how you've done on it.

KEVIN: Yes, we have done some cinema advertising, but I would have to confirm with R&R but I think more often than not, I think it has been more added value as opposed to a dedicated buy. Accordingly the digital assets we would probably use would be existing "What Happens Here, Stays Here" ad. Or, it was scheduled with our existing Summer, and I don't believe you've given any custom ads specific to the cinema environment but I would have to confirm that's the case.

But it's been as you would expect, a smaller proportion of our effort, because it is the difficult to measure. Like John said, it is a very good brand push, a very strong brand tool, but again I'd have to confirm on some of the details of how we negotiated it. I want to say it was part of an added value where a cinema provider partnered with one of our other ad networks that we were buying ads with.

FINE: I'll follow up with you after this. I would like to hear what you have done and seen and what your results were.

KEVIN: Absolutely.

- FINE: Great.
- HUTCHISON: Okay, Greg, do you want to continue with cinema or are you ready to move on?
- FINE: No, I'm ready to move on.
- HUTCHISON: Okay, please.
- FINE: Okay, so we like I mentioned, we're preparing the Spring/Summer campaign and making those seasonal adjustments that need to be made shifting from the Winter vein into the Summer look and feel. That goes with developing new advertising as to reflect and take out the snow contingent, and replace with Summer for both travelnevada.com and our digital imprint advertising.
- As I mentioned the campaign will be breaking towards the first week or two of May. I don't know if I can answer any questions on that. I think I pretty much covered that in the agenda item.
- HUTCHISON: Yes, why don't you just go on to your next item, unless you have any other questions there in Carson City?
- VECCHIO: This is Claudia. In terms of creative updates and messaging, from your standpoint Commissioners, you've seen the ads, especially the TV ads and the messaging "More Stories than Souvenirs," are there any gaps in what you're seeing in the campaign that we should be considering for Spring/Summer? That messaging seems to be resonating, although we need to get better information about how and to what extent, but does that seem, from your standpoint based on the limited information we have, worth continuing forward with that type of message?
- This is really a critical part of what we're thinking of as we develop this campaign. How do we craft these messages? As all campaigns do, we start with what we think is going to work, we determine what is working, where people aren't getting it, and then we have an ongoing development of the messages, and that sort of thing.
- Fahlgren, from your standpoint, you're seeing some of these messages, the overall "Stories then Souvenirs" message resonating, are there things in that piece that we need to be looking at in terms of our Spring/Summer effort?
- RICHARDSON: This is Chris Richardson from Fahlgren Mortine. I wanted to just say that we definitely have seen that, we're running the adventure specific creative, the outdoor adventure on the outdoor adventure sites. Where it's surrounding a

similar content, it's a much higher engagement because the creative is in line with the content that's running around it.

That would be the one thing I would point out that has really stood out to us, is that is where that creative synchs with the type of site it is running on and content on that partner site, or publication, we're seeing the highest level of engagement which makes sense. But, that's definitively to be noted.

VECCHIO: Yes, this is Claudia. That makes total sense. For you all to know, we talked with the agency about this. Especially when it comes to ads and digital units, to make sure that the ad messaging, the imagery and the print ad matches the publication. As it was mentioned, that the digital ad matches that site or audience as closely as they can. I think we've had an issue in the past of being fairly generic, and expecting one message to marry with everybody. We all know that customization is king and we really can't do that, so we're looking at ensuring a greater connection between our ad and the audience.

If there are other messaging kind of components, you know certainly we'll add the attributional messages of "stuff to do" in the Spring/Summer, but if there are more psychographic messages or these connectivity kinds of messages that you think we ought to add, we'd definitely open to those suggestions.

HUTCHISON: Any comments by the Commissioners about Claudia's question or point?

WAGNON: This is John. I think to me it's still a little early to drill in and say yes, this is missing, or that's missing. It feels to me like we just got this thing off the ground.

You know I think that it's working. We're seeing positive results, at least so far, very early on, but I don't see anything from my perspective that says we do any kind of course correct; if there are any gaps, anything that we need to look at augment or change the campaign in any direction. I think it will be interesting to see what the results look like 30 days out from this report.

Is this campaign resonating? Is it getting the exposure? Is it driving engagement to the degree that we expect? Are we increasing our fan base and getting clicks and conversions off this? Let's wait and see what that looks like. I think that the data we have so far is a little light in that respect.

VECCHIO: Yes, this is Claudia. That's a good point. The other thing that we're looking at is the first part of this campaign. There's a tourism purchase funnel, with the dreaming to the actual booking. We're still working through the nuances of how much time we want to let people dream, and how much time we need to get them to book. Obviously, we're all here to drive business. I think there was a touch more time spent in allowing people to dream in this first phase than there

was pushing them to make a booking and that's how we message this, and how quickly we get people through the cycle. That's something that we're really looking at for Spring/Summer too, is how we guide that process. Anything you see that indicates to you that they're spending too much idle time and not enough time making a decision, we need to know about. That's why we're all here. We welcome the input, if you see anything along the way that you think is not as effective as it could be to drive the business.

WAGNON: I've always felt that the primary function of this campaign and a lot of tourism campaigns is to inspire people to move further into the process and take more and more action. I get that you want to move people through the funnel as quickly as possible.

You've got people entering at all points, so you can't really morph the creative. If I first see this ad on January 15, somebody else saw it on December 15, and I get into the website after I see the ad, you know everybody is going to be entering this process at a different point in the funnel. I think we have to stay focused on creating inspiration. Inspiring people that this is a great place to come, that there's a lot to do, and get them to look into it more.

As they get into the website, that's where they can dive in as deep as they want and then they can click out of the website and go into amazing detail if they want to go into the Vegas website, or Reno website, or Tahoe website, or go into the individual property websites. They can go as deep as they want. Our job is to get them inspired that Nevada is an awesome place to consider for vacation. Once we've done that job, we need to get them into the funnel as quickly as possible, to go deeper into that process. Let them do the work.

VECCHIO: Yes, this is Claudia. That's especially the case when they come in by television, or some of the other kind of mass marketing pieces. We're also looking at opportunities for custom outreach for people we know are already Nevada travelers, and who go through this funnel a little bit more quickly than somebody who we're inspiring. The way the agency is doing this is through our research with Ruf. Identifying where people are when they get into that funnel to be able to message out to them specifically to move them forward. It's a great challenge looking at both inspiring and moving these people forward.

WAGNON: Yes, we just had this same conversation yesterday about the concept of content. Producing content for different people in different phases of the process. When you're in any business, whether it's tourism, or in the ski business or whatever, you've got people over a continuum. In the ski business we had people that had never been to Tahoe, or they're new to the sport skiing or whatever. They're

looking for a certain type of content; much more inspirational kind of content, but also more informational.

On the other end of the spectrum, you have people that ski Heavenly 50 days a year, and all they want to know is how fast the wind's blowing at the top of the mountain and how much snow fell last night.

You have this wide range of users and need for content and it's a complex beast to try to figure out how to satisfy the needs of this broad group of users. My perspective from a tourism organization's standpoint is we need to continue to stay focused a little bit more on the "never evers" and the people that are just coming into the idea about Nevada more so than the people who are hard core Nevada visitors who come up here all the time. They already know where they're going and what they're doing. They have a pretty good sense of it.

It's really about trying to get more people in the top of the funnel, that's really where we come in I think. That's our biggest heavy lifting. Let's get people inspired to come to Nevada, and then once they made that leap of faith and say "Wow, that it would be really awesome to go to Nevada" then, they can dig into all the different opportunities out there. There's so much content available, I don't know that we need to get to far into the details.

I do think this campaign and what we're doing right now actually, I believe is doing that. I think it is an inspiration campaign and what we do here is actually getting the job done. I think we just let it play out and see how it evolves.

VECCHIO: That's great input, thank you.

HUTCHISON: All right, any other input for Claudia and her question about content and what we're doing, any changes need to be made, or any feelings about that? If not, we'll move onto the next agenda item, but if anybody else wants to jump in, please do.

NEWMAN: Yes, this is Don Newman. Just a quick question, a quick thought really as we progress with this campaign, we have our traveling couple, and we have our stories that we tell and our sub characters, Smoky and the biker buddies, are they going to or should they actually evolve and become almost a subset characters? Is there too much confusion in the background with all of the characters that we have, or do we now need to bring these characters front and center and almost develop around them a little bit more, and you know Smoky shows up everywhere? Where are we looking to take this as it evolves into the next set of spots as we go forward?

FINE: That's a great question, Don. That same question has crossed my mind. I think as John indicated, we're pretty early into the campaign itself. We're doing some concept testing now that's being produced and evaluated to see what's resonating with folks.

It will be interesting to see what type of feedback we get through the integrated marketing evaluation that takes place post campaign. We'll be able to see if the biker guys are bubbling up and trending, or is our rodeo clown trending and then we can determine if we want to take to a higher sub character and bring them to life. I think that there is an opportunity there, and we'll talk about that prior to the campaign. Do we help usher these people along and you know extend our tentacles so to speak with our various characters? I'd like to be able to have some feedback and some research under our belts to help assist us with those decisions.

Governor, before we move onto the next item for the web development, I know Bethany is going to talk about the public relations integration to tie our efforts together.

HUTCHISON: Great, Bethany is this a good time for you to intervene here and give us your report?

DRYSDALE: It is. I've been waiting to hop in because all of this does weave into what we want to do on the PR side. I shouldn't say PR side, because really it is all working together.

What we would like to do for the Spring/Summer campaign is bring in the "how." We'll continue to inspire travelers, but bring in the how do they actually take the trip once they're inspired.

We'd like to do this through "Epic Road Trips." We've identified seven routes around the state that we think are really iconic of Nevada. They also tie into things happening in the state that we need to talk about anyway.

One of the road trips is Highway 50 that is an iconic Nevada road trip. It also happens to be celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, so it gives us a really good, timely news hook about that route.

Another route that we would promote, we're calling "Arts Along 95." This is Highway 95, between Las Vegas and Tonopah. We would encourage a detour to *Seven Magic Mountains* which is slated to open in May. This gives us another timely news hook to promote this route. We would have people do the detour to *Seven Magic Mountains* then continue up to Rhyolite, Beatty, the "International Car Forest" outside of Goldfield, and then end the route in Tonopah.

There are seven routes and I can go into each of them if you're curious. These routes are the way that we are going to tell the story of how you take the trip through Nevada, how you are continued to be inspired but also once you've been inspired, how you actually can see these characters and places that you're inspired by.

With this we don't necessarily have to make the hard sell. We don't have to jump straight from phase one dreamer to phase two booking it's a much softer sell for those who are ready for it.

We think there's some really good integration here, again with things that are already going on that we need to put some of our focus on. We can develop infographics, eBooks showing the itinerary, showing the routes and things to do, the places to stay, restaurants to eat at, all of those. Create video content of these routes. Create a digital map, a microsite and then possibly in partnership with an online partner. We were looking at a site like Yonder. That's unfortunately no longer going to work. They're on their way out, I'm sad to say because it's a great website. Another similar site that really encourages people out there who are exploring to document their exploration, so that we can track what they're doing.

We would identify key characters and have those play in, and those could be our characters from the commercials themselves or they can be other real Nevada characters that people would meet along the way.

We'll incorporate a group press trip and small individual press trips. It's summer, so let's get people out on the road, and get them traveling. Road trips are the way that we would do that.

With social media, we'll do a "give away" promotion, asking people to design their own epic adventure, epic road trip in Nevada, and award one of those to the winner. We put together Instagram meet-ups. This is kind of a fun, a new idea. People are doing this now with Instagram, what they used to do Twitter.

Then with the marketing and content development, this is a really great way to develop more of the content on our websites. It gives us again seven routes, it's something very clear cut, something that we can really wrap our hands around and develop those seven areas without trying to overwhelm our users or ourselves with absolutely nook and cranny of the state. These routes do cover every area of the state.

We have put together road trips essentials, worked with Spotify through paid advertising, to put together a road trip play list, just some really fun things that

would allow us to cross back and forth between some of the paid aspects within the unpaid PR tactics.

That's a very cursory look at what we're thinking of how to develop this imagery that we already have in the campaign and put it into some messaging for the PR and social media.

I'll quickly just name these routes, just to give you an idea of where they are. I won't go into detail unless you'd like me to but I think they're pretty clear to most everybody here. I mentioned "Highway 50, the Extraterrestrial Highway," "Arts Along 95", "State Parks and Recreational along Highway 93", that's the chain of State Parks along 93, it's a really great start to finish route that people can take. "The Burner Byway," this would be the route going toward Black Rock Desert, incorporating Gerlach, Guru Road, start in Fernley so there's a nice and start and finish there as well. The scenic I-80 off shoot. This would go from Elko out to Lamoille. That's just a stunning drive, and that would allow people to have a reason to stop in Elko, and go take detour and hopefully stay for overnight, a second night, third night. A reason to get them off I-80 for a little while.

Then "Ghost Towns." This is one that's more of an idea, so we're working on how to make that into a real start and stop route. We do want to incorporate those towns, because that also works with what *Nevada Magazine* is doing this spring and summer. They're creating a new ghost town map off the heels of a very successful map that they uncovered in our basement and realized that it was so popular they had to print more of them. It works really well with what *Nevada Magazine* is doing as well.

And then I'll get into this later in this meeting, but I think this also ties into "Discover Your Nevada" in some ways that we can promote getting around the state to the residents through the road trip idea as well.

I welcome thoughts. I truly welcome any feedback or suggestions.

HUTCHISON:

Well, thank you very much Bethany. I think it's a great concept, and one that's very practical in terms of just how we get people into Nevada and make recommendations to them about what they can do.

I think there are people all throughout, not only the state itself who would really benefit from this kind of educational experience but in terms of all the different highway experiences they can have these road trips, but also the marketing.

I just came back from India, and we always talk about the western experience and these highways and trips that people can take. To have seven epic road trips lined up that they can choose from, I think that's a nice application of what we're

trying to do, getting people to extend their stays, get them out of Vegas and out of Reno, after they have had a great time there and extend their stays into Nevada.

To me, this sounds great. I'm interested in any other comments or feedback from my fellow Commissioners, or anyone else, staff members, those on the phone who may like to make comments as well.

WAGNON: This is John. I agree, I like that idea. It's a great platform for content and PR. I mean it's very clear, you know simple for people to get their arms around, easy for them to create story angles out of that. It covers the whole state, and it has theme to it. You know people need to have a theme to remember it. There is a very specific direction to it. I think it's a great idea, great concept.

DRYSDALE: Thank you.

VECCHIO: This is Claudia. It also ties in with the fact that we'll have our mobile app ready to roll, for the Spring/Summer campaign.

DRYSDALE: Thank you for mentioning that. I wasn't sure if it was time to mention the app, but it will up and ready, and this would be a great time to introduce it.

Again, working that into, Discover Your Nevada, internationally, thank you Governor for mentioning that. I truly believe it would repurpose what we do, there's no reason to go back to square one for everything that we do. I think this works really well with the international markets.

HUTCHISON: Thank you and are there other comments based on what Bethany has presented so far? Great work. Bethany do you have further information for us, any more to your presentation, or does that wrap it up?

DRYSDALE: Not on this agenda item, thank you.

HUTCHISON: Okay, Bethany, thank you. All right, Claudia or Greg, back to you.

FINE: Certainly, this is Greg again. Moving to the web development aspect for travelnevada.com...

VECCHIO: One second. At the end of this section, you can see item 4(f) General Approach to the Campaign Based on the Feedback from the Above Discussion, this is a for possible action item.

I just want to be 100 percent sure about the direction from this small, but august group. As we move forward with this campaign, are we on a good track and as we incorporate these various programs for Spring and Summer, do you feel the

information that you heard up to this point the right direction and should we continue as discussed? I just want to make sure that is the intent of this group.

NEWMAN: Yes, this is Commissioner Newman, I would just say yes. I think you're definitely headed in the right direction. You've put a lot of thought, time, effort and energy into the characters. I think the characters have a great opportunity to evolve.

There are a lot of directions we can go down the road with these characters. It may end up that our young traveling couple get phased out, and it's the characters that take off and run the campaign.

We just don't know where that's going to go, but I think our initial direction is the right direction and we're headed down the right path with this.

HUTCHISON: Commissioner Wagnon, any comments?

WAGNON: No, I'm good.

HUTCHISON: Great, thank you. I echo my fellow Commissioners, I'll tell you everybody that I've talked with has seen the campaign. I've seen it in the theater, family and friends have seen it in the theater, as well as our other platforms and social media. We experienced it and tested it in India.

It just seems like this really cuts across all markets, and all people and it really resonates well. I think it's a fantastic campaign. I love the PR approach that Bethany has just presented to us with the seven routes, and the epic road trips.

I think we're definitely headed in the right direction and you ought to proceed. I think we're all interested in getting more information and data about how we're doing, but I think we all feel good about where we're at.

VECCHIO: Thank you, this is Claudia, we'll take that as a direction to move forward as we are at the moment with no changes until we get any further information that requires we do so. Thank you for that.

HUTCHISON: This was noticed for possible action as you noted. Are you looking for a motion on this? Or are you looking for just feedback, like you got, and we can move on without any formal motion?

VECCHIO: Yes, we can move on without any formal motion, it's just for possible action, if the group felt as though it wanted its official stamp on this, but it certainly sounds like you're all in agreement. I appreciate that.

HUTCHISON: Okay, well then let's go ahead and close out agenda item number four and we will move to agenda number five, Web Development, and Greg, I think you were about to begin there.

FINE: Correct, thank you Governor. This is Greg Fine. To briefly go over where we are with travelnevada.com, a little bit of background. The campaign launch in November introduced a new website.

While the visual element involved all the new campaign look and feel, what really took place was a C change on the digital back end of the thing. The back end migrated from a rather complex and difficult to use format, a platform known as Drupal to one called Laravel. The only reason I bring that up is that this new platform has allowed us to have a much more facile, easy to manage website, and in exchange it's made it a considerably better user experience. That's really what we've been striving for. To make sure that when the user comes to our site, they are able to find the information they need and to get where they want to go then move into a partner referral, sign up for a newsletter, visitor guide or what have you. The new site has accomplished a considerable amount, and my hat's off to Fahlgren for being able to make this happen as they said it would.

We are moving into what we're terming phase two. I was looking for the users to provide us more feedback on what they want to see, and what would make the website better for them. There's research being put together now to determine where they stand and what the user would like to see from that.

As with anybody who is very close to the fire, we are our own harshest critics. We've developed a list of items that we want to include but don't necessarily impact the user's experience to refine the website so it lives up to our expectations. This list will be prioritized and will certainly be addressed as we move through to the end of the fiscal year.

I don't know if you've had a chance to look at the website, but I would certainly appreciate any thoughts that you've had up to this point. I don't know that we're looking for any type of motion or anything like that, but certainly feedback would be appreciated.

HUTCHISON: Well, see if anybody's got thoughts or comments on this. We'll start with the fellow Commissioners there down in Carson City. Any thoughts or comments Commissioner Wagnon or Newman?

WAGNON: None for me.

NEWMAN: No, I would just say that web development is always a forward motion, it's a process that's never ending. I just think that as we continue to draw it down, and

narrow the scope, it makes it easy for the visitor to find what they're looking for without shotgun approaches and with too much information. We need to keep it simple and vibrant if that's possible to do. But you know, it's always a work in progress so let's keep moving forward with it.

HUTCHISON: Thank you any other comments? I want to ask a couple questions. When did we complete the site enhancements, Greg?

FINE: The full new site went live the 1st of November with the break of the campaign Governor.

HUTCHISON: The website was enhanced in connection with our kick-off of our campaign. We haven't done anything since then?

FINE: Correct. Well, the enhancements that are being done now are primary backend. The visual up front has all been accomplished and now we're refining it and making sure that the bells and whistles and dots and zeros are operating as we anticipate them to.

HUTCHISON: And then my next question is - and maybe somebody from Fahlgren can jump in here. How does our enhanced site that we used when we kicked off our campaign compare with other sites that the firm is familiar with in terms of other state tourism sites or other high-end tourism sites across the country?

FINE: Sean are you on?

COWAN: This is Sean Cowan Fahlgren Mortine. I guess the first question I ask is, clarity on the term performance. As far as stats and things like that, I don't have any of the information in front of me comparing the performance of the travelnevada website to other large tourism destinations. Functionally, it's a very up to date and modern technology architecture that allows us to take the site in any direction we need to very efficiently. I don't know if that's the answer you're looking for but the bulk of that for the great efforts on the backend was an effort to get the tracking and the management of the content as streamlined as possible so that we can deliver the best experience and make the site as future friendly as possible.

HUTCHISON: No, that's good Sean, thank you. I was looking for a feel for where we are in terms of the quality and the sophistication level, you know the technology level of the site itself, and if this is the best platform that's out there for us to do what we're trying to do.

COWAN: It's built on an open source platform, and we spent a significant amount of effort coordinating with RUF which is the CRM partner, making sure that the data and

everything was trackable. We did a number of enhancements removing errors that would impact search results and things of that nature. It's very comparable, very modern and this is cutting edge as far as development platforms.

HUTCHISON: Great, thank you very much.

MCDONALD: This is Marty McDonald also from Fahlgren. I want to piggyback on and echo what Sean is saying is that I think where, from a technology sophistication standpoint, where we rise above the competitive set is in the integration of the backend. That's really where we started. Without getting too technical, in the weeds or using too much marketing speak, we did want to make sure that we created a dynamic environment so that all of our tracking technologies, the website, the mobile app and collecting leads for email newsletter signups it all speaks to the other channels.

We invested a lot on the front end of the project making sure that the technology environment was truly dynamic and I think that's something that a lot of other state tourism offices and DMOs are still struggling with. I think that's a huge accomplishment of our efforts here.

HUTCHISON: Good to hear, thank you very much. Greg, anything else on item number five our web development, phase two?

FINE: No, that's it, Governor, thank you.

HUTCHISON: Any questions on item number five, before we close it out and move on? I'm not hearing any, so let's go ahead and close item number five, and move to item number six, 2016 "Discover Your Nevada" program. I'll turn time over to Ms. Vecchio, or anyone you want to turn it over to.

VECCHIO: Yes, this is Claudia. The "Discover Your Nevada" program started, I think in 2012, if you recall, we did a vote for people to nominate and vote on their favorite attractions or things within the six territories. It was a pretty popular start to that campaign, and it's has now morphed. Bethany will go through that issue and tell us a little bit about the feedback from the last two years. It is designed to drive in-state travel, and to get people out as the Governor said, out of Las Vegas, out of the major hubs and discover what else is out there.

It is a big opportunity for us to attract and promote the state to our own visitors. It's odd because generally speaking in the state, when you look at visitations, in-state travel is quite often more than 50 percent and it's almost always more than 25 percent of visitation. In Nevada it's six percent.

We have such a great opportunity to drive in-state travel because our folks are going out of state when there are things that we can definitely help them to better understand that you know right here in Nevada. That's what this program is all about and Bethany will go through a little bit of what we've experienced in the last couple years.

DRYSDALE: For the record, Bethany Drysdale. As Claudia said the very first year we did "Discover Your Nevada," it was pretty successful. We separated the state into the territories that people are familiar with and asked for online votes.

The next year, we changed it, because quite honestly there's a lot of backend effort that had to go into the website voting. It was a very manual process on our end taking a lot of hours and work. We wanted to try something different to see if maybe we could take that same voting approach and do something different with it. We took it to Facebook, and we had people vote there. The response to that was lukewarm, and not everybody in Nevada that we're trying to reach is on Facebook. It was an app on Facebook, which requested that you allow the app to access to your profile, which many people are still uncomfortable with. It's standard practice, but it does make people somewhat uncomfortable.

The next year I believe we asked for adventures. We wanted people to help us populate our site with adventures. The feedback we got was good, strong feedback, but low numbers. The strength of adventures was good but it was low numbers.

We also worked with *Nevada Magazine* last year to incorporate their "Silver State Scavenger Hunt." To do a more straight PR push on that; we combined the two.

We are in the fifth year. What we found this year, and what I really struggled with this year, and I will preface this with, I truly welcome input and your ideas. What I struggled with this year is trying to figure out how to get people engaged, without taking away or competing with these other programs that are out there encouraging people to travel the state.

BLM has come to us and presented a really cool "Geocache" program. It's a wonderful program but they're already doing it. *Nevada Magazine* "Silver State Scavenger Hunt" is a great scavenger hunt. They do it really well. They get a lot of participation so we don't want to compete with that. We don't want to dilute what they're doing and also diluting what we're doing.

What I've been struggling with is trying to figure out how to incentivize our residents for traveling in the state, without trampling on what's already been done or diluting our own efforts. What I've come up with so far and again, I

welcome your input on this, is taking what's already existing out there, including our Spring/Summer campaign which will have launched at the time, and bring it all together into one place. There are several avenues, several incentives for traveling the state, but they're run through *Nevada Magazine*, or through BLM or through our Spring/Summer campaign. It would really focus around one landing page, or one microsite, where we would bring all of these things together and push all the information from there.

We have some interest from a media partner in the south. We would also try to secure a media partner in the north to go on their news programs and talk about this and encourage people to go to the "Scavenger Hunt" or to the geocache program through BLM.

We would also probably have some paid placements and paid posts on in-state websites. "This is Reno," is a really strong one up in the north, we would investigate one in the south, to find a really strong community website, that people look at and they would get their information there.

We would also incorporate social media, featuring one route a week. We could do Instagram takeovers, prize giveaways, but again bringing people back to that "Discover Your Nevada" site. We need to be a clearing house for these programs that already exist.

We could build maps and itineraries, again a lot of this will be done through the Spring/Summer campaign anyway, which makes it work really well together.

Then we'll have featured adventures on our website that also correlates to "Discover Your Nevada." It's not a competition that we've done in the past, and so I think that's where the disconnect is for me. I'm not quite sure how to get people, instead of just knowing about Nevada, or knowing about this program, how to get them to actually do something that we can track and say at the end of this that it works.

That's the general concept. I welcome ideas or feedback.

NEWMAN:

Funny, you should mention that. I shared with both Greg and you, I believe, Sydney's work that she sent me on the "Top 50 Reasons Not to Go to Elko", or 17 reasons not to - which is dangerous at first glance, but was such an impact to me, it was a beautiful piece of work.

I have this horrible thing for "a best-kept secret," I hate that. Nothing should be a best-kept secret, unless it's really a secret.

Under “Discover Your Nevada”, the top 15 reasons not to go to Lake Mead Recreational Area, 15 reasons not to go to Lake Tahoe and play on that. We could engage the visitor with tell us your 15 or 12 or 10, whatever the number is going to be, reasons not to, falls in line with this best-kept secret thing that I hate so much. It’s kind of saying, you discovered this, it’s your secret place, but you’re going to share it now.

We can engage our visitors to share their little hole in the wall that they’ve discovered with the rest of the world, so that they too can now have their 12 reasons not to go - the flip side of what it’s meant to be.

So that you understand Governor, I think maybe if we could get Sydney to send that off to everybody, so people are saying what is he talking about? It’s a fantastic piece of work that she did, and very creative.

HUTCHISON: Yes, it would be great.

FINE: It’s awesome and I think maybe that would fall in line with this “Discover Your Nevada” very much.

HUTCHISON: Commissioner Newman, let me just follow up and ask a question. This technique is something at first that makes no sense, but I assume this is a pretty effective marketing tool.

NEWMAN: Yes.

HUTCHISON: Kind of like the “I hate Steven Singer” idea and you think that’s a terrible slogan for a company to adopt. That’s been wildly successful for that jeweler.

NEWMAN: Yes, I think once you get it, once you see it, it will be clear what I’m talking about. It’s very effective and I’m just so impressed by what she put together that it really needs to expand and become a project within a lot of areas throughout the state.

HUTCHISON: Yes, that would be good to see that.

DRYSDALE: That tactic is pretty successful. There’s a video that went viral several years ago about “Why I Hate Lake Tahoe,” do you remember that, John.

WAGNON: Oh yes.

DRYSDALE: It was absolutely hilarious. You know, riding the ski lifts, “it’s so cold here, and you know I just hate this place because you know all this blue sky, and who likes blue anyway.” It was just went viral. I think that tactic does work. Would your suggestion be then that we are asking residents and travelers to submit their own negative ideas, and maybe we’d reward the most clever or the funniest?

- NEWMAN: Yes, I think there's so much that we could take and run with this. Like I said, it's a little dangerous at first glance, but as people get into it and open it up and see what we're really trying to accomplish I think has just a tremendous potential. This is just for consideration.
- HUTCHISON: I have got a question or two here, and I think I heard Claudia right. Claudia, did you say that only six percent of Nevadans travel in state and that's way below the national average?
- VECCHIO: Yes, only six percent of our visitors in Nevada are in-state visitors and that is way below national average. Generally it's a quarter or much higher. So yes, it's a low percentage.
- HUTCHISON: That means that Nevadans aren't visiting Nevada, that's the point, right.
- VECCHIO: That is correct.
- HUTCHISON: I don't have this off the top of my head or remember, but do we have an aggressive campaign to advertise and to market to Nevadans? For example, I mean around Spring Break, or around summer time. Do we have marketing efforts in Las Vegas for example where there's 2.1 million people to get them to rural Nevada?
- VECCHIO: That's what the "Discover Your Nevada" campaign is really designed to do. Other than the small buys we have in Las Vegas and Reno on TV and digital buys, we don't have something that's speaking directly to Nevadans. That's what this whole campaign is meant to do.
- HUTCHISON: I'm just thinking in terms of TV or radio, I mean this is where I live, and I just don't get hit with [ads] in terms of just traveling within Nevada.
- VECCHIO: Right, generally speaking most state tourism offices advertise outside the state, because that's where the revenue comes from; people coming in and staying longer and spending more money than in-state travelers.
- In-state travelers generally speaking are just organically going to travel in their state. We don't have that phenomenon in Nevada. That's why this whole campaign was conceived to do that. It's been a PR driven campaign. It hasn't been an paid advertising campaign.
- We can certainly look at doing that. We're putting together some opportunities for additional advertising because of some additional funding we'll have at the end of the year. That that could be part of it. Generally speaking, the in-state audience isn't where our advertising dollars are directed.

HUTCHISON: I would rely on the professionals and you all who have got a lot more experience in that than I do in terms of where is our money best spent. How long have we been into this campaign? How long has the “Discover Your Nevada” campaign been ongoing?

VECCHIO: We started it in 2012, and it’s been going on in various forms. As Bethany said, there hasn’t been a consistent idea, and a consistent campaign, so I think we’re missing some opportunities there. I think this is our fourth year. Because I’ve only been here four years and it started after I got here.

DRYSDALE: I think so. I think it is four years and it is seasonal. We try to time it to launch in May, so that it goes into the summer travel, and we do traditionally go onto local TV shows and talk about local road trips, “staycations” and things like that.

There is an ongoing PR component of this. The program itself does have a start and finish. What we want to do is come up with a strong campaign for that start and finish between May and July/August.

The first year that we did it, the Governor, and then it was Governor Krolicki took road trips and that was part of it. That’s certainly a component that was very popular and I’d be happy to volunteer our current Lieutenant Governor and Governor to take road trips again. That earns us a lot of media coverage which is really fantastic.

HUTCHISON: That would be great.

DRYSDALE: Oh good. The point is to reach in-state residents. It is through the PR tactics more so than paid advertising and those tactics are generally articles and newspapers, social media messages and appearances on local TV stations. The theme is really what we’re grasping for? What are the overarching concepts behind those appearances, and behind those stories in the papers?

WAGNON: You could almost take a play out of the “Amazing Race” concept, it’s been overused and well examined.

If you can get a social media effort going out there, it’s the scavenger hunt concept so people have to go to different places and you can tie those places back to the campaign. It’s the Ghost Town, a bar someplace or it’s out in the Ruby Mountains you know where people would absolutely not know that it existed in the state of Nevada. Different places that you have to go and you’ve got to take your picture and send it in, and I don’t know how you would create something that would keep people engaged in it. But, if you had media partners who were involved with it who would say, “Now check this out, here’s a selfie coming in from somebody that was at the XYZ bar out in the middle of nowhere, that’s part

of the Nevada Challenge or whatever. You know that's another way to play it and give people a reason to go out in their own state, otherwise, they're packing it up and driving into California.

NEWMAN: Yes, I would agree. I think as far as media partners go, there's two or three different formats of "Face the State" shows within the state of Nevada. Maybe a three-minute, four-minute segment hosted by the Lieutenant Governor, highlighting a Nevada location. Just a real brief segment to spark interest.

You can draw a horizontal line throughout whatever point in Nevada. You have north, south, and then rural, encompassing all points in between. There is such a disconnect in the state, in this "World Within, State Apart" that south needs to go north, and north needs to go south, and perhaps some of these political state shows could set aside a brief window of opportunity to highlight today's featured location. Might be a direction we could see if we had any takers, because I would think it would be easy enough to get a sponsor for it, or sponsored by Travel Nevada or whomever.

HUTCHISON: Any other comments? I liked with both Commissioner Wagnon, and also Newman have said. I think you can really play off this, and we all like the idea of this Epic Road trip, and maybe some of us could take some of those Epic Road trips, and talk about it.

I just think that people love that kind of stuff, and I can tell you, at least speaking as somebody who's lived my entire life in southern Nevada, I think a lot of people down here, don't know about any of those kinds of things. It would be great to publicize those. If it means going on TV shows and talking about it, or being interviewed by local media, and earn media opportunities, you know I'm sure my fellow Commissioners and I would be happy to be involved in that process.

DRYSDALE: Okay, thank you. So what I'm hearing is and maybe I could do next is flesh out a couple of these ideas. I do like taking the Spring/Summer campaign road trips idea and localizing it for Nevadans, so maybe flesh out that idea and the 12 reasons why not to go somewhere and send those out to the committee again for more feedback. I don't want to put more work on your plate, but some quick thoughts, and we'll take it from there. We do want to launch in May, so there may be a timeliness issue here.

HUTCHISON: Okay, that sounds great. Does that take care of agenda item number six then, Bethany?

DRYSDALE: Yes, thank you.

HUTCHISON: Okay, unless there's any further comment or question on agenda item six, we'll close agenda item six, and move then to agenda item number seven. Claudia, please start for us.

VECCHIO: Thank you Governor. The "Nevada, A World Within State Apart" brand was launched it in April of 2012, and it's taken us a while to really put together a solid brand integration program, and I think we're ready to roll on this. Greg and his team are working on developing the collateral and the identifying marks for how all agencies throughout the state government will integrate the look and the feel of the brand.

We put together some ideas for letterhead and business cards. We really want to make our business cards less corporate and more tourism focused. It's to bring all of the look and feel of the Nevada state government and of its agencies into this brand identity.

I'll turn it over Greg, because he has some components of this in here. It's taking a look at how we're integrating the brand, look and feel into a variety of different collateral pieces. I'll give it to Greg if you want to add anything.

FINE: Sure. Thank you Claudia, this is Greg Fine again.

Yes, I think Dee sent an email to everybody, with supplemental packet that has some brand guidelines, and then I can put that on the screen.

People in the audience, you won't be able to read this. There are handouts in the back, though if you want to follow along. Just to give you the synopsis, we put together what's called a brand usage standards guide. It talks about the importance of what a brand does, then why it's important to maintain and nurture it, and to not let interpretation play into how a brand is brought to life and how it's executed over and across a variety of platforms.

I think the platform that most people are aware of is called a business system. That's your business cards, email signature, your letterhead, and your envelopes. All these other publicly facing documents that we would use in particular that portray the "Nevada World Within State Apart" logo in a very disciplined, but vibrant way.

If you look through the packet that was provided through to the final page, you'll see, Claudia mentioned, the more tourism facing business cards on the third to the last page.

Let me show you how the various departments will be approaching that with a two-sided business card. The roll-out that we're looking to do is to prioritize all

the state entities that deal with the public on a larger basis, and then gradually roll this program out so that everybody has a consistent look and feel with the Nevada logo.

We are using the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs as our starting model, in order to understand what is going to work and how it's going to work. We'll determine what we need to do to adjust when we start working with the state parks or the Department of Transportation and so on and so forth.

The overall idea is to make sure that when somebody is coming into the DMV, a state park or when they're looking at an ad from the Division of Tourism, they see a very consistent display of how the Nevada logo comes across. There needs to be a consistent and look and feel across all media and all platforms that people can engage with.

What we wanted to do here was just to make sure that you were aware of what was taking place, what our vision was and how we're going to roll out this particular program. We would like to get your input on that, and answer any questions that you may have and fill in any blanks.

I don't know if you've had a chance to absorb what was sent earlier, but feel free to take a look and please get back to us with your thoughts. I would be interested to know those of you who have experience with large scale brand migrations. On the face it seems like a very easy thing, you just hit the button and everybody's email signature changes and they get new business cards, but actual adoption can be much more challenging. If you have any wise words on how we can make sure that we get as much as buy-in and acceptance and what type of challenges we could potentially face, it would be appreciated.

HUTCHISON: Any comments or suggestions, Commissioners or any members of staff?

NEWMAN: Commissioner Newman for the record. No, I like the idea. I like the template and with slight different look for each division within, so I think this is headed down the right path.

My only comment to two-sided business cards, is you always want to make a note on the second side, and so the glossy never works. And, too much information, leave a little room for that "jog my memory" note. If you can condense whatever that back side is, that would be my only suggestion.

WAGNON: This is John, it looks pretty straight forward.

HUTCHISON: Yes, I love the concept. I think this is a big improvement from where we're at. All right, any other comments or thoughts, Greg that you want to address under agenda item number seven?

FINE: No, other than we'd be glad to provide each Commissioner with their own division tourism business card, so we'll be polling you as the process comes to life, which should be within the next 30 to 45 days. I'll be looking to get your feedback and information so we can get you cards.

You'll see a series of icons there. We'll provide you with the suite of options that you have to choose from, so that you can have cards that are your own.

HUTCHISON: Listen, Greg, my mother always told me you could never have enough business cards.

FINE: We'll give you plenty Governor.

HUTCHISON: Okay, great, all right anything Greg on agenda item seven or any Commissioner, anybody on the phone, anybody want to chime on item number seven before we close out that item.

I'm not hearing anything, so we'll close agenda item number seven, and move onto agenda item number eight. Ms. Vecchio, if you could start off for us?

VECCHIO: Thank you Governor, Claudia Vecchio. We've had an Urban Sponsorship program funded at \$100,000 level for a long time. It was a program that was in place when I got here, and although we've had some starts and stops based on budget, it's always been a program that we just opened up unlike the grant program or other kinds of programs, there has been no real competitive process for it. We've provided funding out to events that seemed reasonable and that are located within Reno and within Las Vegas, although the lion's share of these funds goes to Reno's events.

We have an opportunity to grow the understanding and awareness of this program through a more concerted application process that would be better socialized among our industry and event planners, so that the availability of these dollars is well known, both in Reno and in Las Vegas. Once we open that up, the only way to evaluate those proposals is to have a set application process so we can compare each to the same benchmark requirements.

Greg is working to put together a list and again I'll turn it over to him to go through the proposal that you have in your packets. We would like to see this evolve this from an unstructured sponsorship of these events into a real

concerted application program. I think for a number of reasons, it is in the best interest of the organization. Greg, if you want to go through this program.

FINE: Thank you Claudia. As Claudia mentioned we wanted to have a more formal process for this. In particular, the idea is to not only build the existing events, but to be open to nurture and help grow those events that are new and that could use some support by way of marketing input, event assistance or in-kind assistance that we might be able to provide through Travel Nevada.

As a complement to the Urban Grant program, this sponsorship program would be to primarily build a tourism product or incrementally accentuate the tourism product, and drive the transient room occupancy, and while keeping the Nevada brand visible because of our partnership with these various events and then grow the awareness of the event itself.

As you can see on the funding availability page, there's some specific criteria that we're going to be adopting to determine and evaluate which programs can merit funding. It's not closed to any type of event, other than they have to be at least a 50 percent out of market, or out of that market event or promotion. Out of that market being primarily Reno and Las Vegas because of their larger footprints.

I don't know if you've had a chance to absorb this or have been able to wrap your arms around it, but I would like to, if there's an opportunity to get some input on criteria, as far as evaluating events, because as you know they come in all sizes and they come in all levels of sophistication. I want to make sure that as we're evaluating this, we're looking positively but critically at those events that we can definitely help and not be flashes in the pan, or that they don't necessarily merit the consideration of another event that would. I would be looking to get some input on how we can further sharpen our criteria to make sure that our evaluations are spot on and that we're doing what we need to be doing to work with those partners that deserve the opportunity.

HUTCHISON: Thank you, Greg. Go right ahead.

BAGGER: In our work with Las Vegas events we have criteria that we follow to help steer us and we and they are regularly evaluated for potential events for Las Vegas and southern Nevada. I can get a copy of those criteria that I can pass along to you just as another comparison point as something to look at.

FINE: That would be appreciated, thank you.

BAGGER: Okay.

WAGNON: Was there a specific ask for this? I mean is this something that's just been existing out there, people have been tapping into it over time, or is there a specific expectation that TravelNevada is providing \$100,000 for support of urban events? Is there a little background on that?

VECCHIO: The background is that it's been an existing pot of money for more than a decade, and it has never been organized into how we distribute those funds. It's evolving this into a more transparent kind of application of these funds.

WAGNON: Have we been distributing 100 percent of those funds every year?

VECCHIO: Generally speaking yes. There have been some years, two or three years ago I think it was \$85,000 because we just didn't have requests for additional funding. They have generally gone to the same events year over year. Having this application out there may create more awareness of it, so there might be a more competitive situation around the funding.

Nobody's said we need to put up an application process for these funds. It's just to provide a more transparent environment for that.

WAGNON: I guess the reason I'm asking is that I'm just generally opposed to this type of an approach, and I think you guys have heard that before. I'm always concerned where we take money away from the opportunity to drive awareness for the State and move that money into events of various types that may or may not really do a great job of driving awareness or inspiring people.

And sometimes these funds just become a support mechanism for events that really should be self-sustaining, and the selection criteria becomes very difficult to manage, and the more we try to be specific, the more difficult it actually becomes. To me these things they're always difficult to manage, there's always some issue around whether something does or does not meet the criteria. It just takes money from our ability to run more advertising. We've invested a lot of money in the creative and production of our advertising. We're taking \$100,000 that could go into media to inspire and excite people out there with that campaign. So, the question has more to do with what's the opportunity here. Should it be absorbed back in the media budget and not do it.

I actually support the rural piece because this is an interesting situation where the rural markets really need that support. It's harder for those guys to come up with the money to put events on, but in the urban markets, it just seems like those events should be able to find funding within their own urban market if it makes sense. Probably a not very popular comment.

HUTCHISON: You know Commissioner Wagon, all good points. Let me ask Claudia this. This is not mandated by legislation right, this has just historically been part of the budget?

VECCHIO: That's correct, it's part of our category 31 budget. This particular activity is not legislatively mandated. There are some other Commissioners who have a different feeling about this. If this is the direction the marketing committee is suggesting, that we take this back to a full commission meeting and be sure that this is copasetic with the group as a whole, I would like that to occur.

HUTCHISON: That was going to be my recommendation. I don't know that everybody knows the origin and the purpose of the Urban Sponsorship process or that the grants that are available, but it would sure be nice to revisit this. What's the lost opportunity cost? Tell us what we could buy for \$100,000 in our marketing campaign? Could we put some more money into the marketing side of this, if that makes more sense? Or, has there been some really great things that have happened with the Urban Sponsorship program, and give us a little bit of education. Have the full commission consider this and for possible action, to just take it back into our marketing budget or to continue on, and then if that's the case, build criteria what we're going to do in the future.

WAGNON: Yes, I agree with that Governor. I think that makes all the sense in the world. I actually don't know what this money has been used for over the past five years, and some of those things may be very effective and have driven tourism and created a lot of content and value. I think we really need to look at both sides of that. It's probably premature for me to say that I don't particularly like this particular program. I just don't like these kind of programs in general.

HUTCHISON: Commissioner Newman. Please.

NEWMAN: Yes, I'll just add that \$100,000 could roll into the Discover Your Nevada program, it could be a funding source for intrastate marketing that were looking for as opposed to an additional source of money for an event.

I think if we put it as an agenda item and let the whole Commission discuss it, and see what comes out of that discussion, I think that would probably be best for us at this time.

VECCHIO: At this point, we'll do that. We'll put together probably a four-year, because that's about what I know we have, overview of the funds that were spent and the ROI on those funds. Some events don't provide that kind of information. We'll do that for the next Commission meeting.

WAGNON: Yes, I think if we also include that opportunity cost. If we've got a great campaign, a very powerful campaign out there, \$100,000 can drive a lot of value.

HUTCHISON: Okay, great, thank you Claudia. Any other comments on agenda item number eight? If not, we'll go ahead and close out agenda item number 8, and we will move to agenda number nine, public relations. Bethany, I assume that's your wheelhouse.

DRYSDALE: Yes, thank you. The Public Affairs program was approved by the Commission as a whole at the last meeting, I believe, so we are moving into executing that plan, we are starting with tours of round tables around the state.

We're going to start in Pahrump in April. When we have the dates and locations for these, we'll send them out to everybody on the Commission.

The point of these is to meet with residents and decision-makers in the towns. It's not necessarily to meet with our tourism industry already there. They already know us. They know what we do. We want to meet with residents. We want to tell them the story of tourism and how it impacts their lives directly.

We want to meet with Chambers of Commerce, City Councils, Mayors, and interact with them and find out what their concerns or thoughts might be about tourism and about what we do and share the story what we do with them.

As I said, as we get those dates and locations nailed down, we will send those around to everybody and that's really the first very visible tactic in that plan that we're going to attack. Some of the other tactics, we'll be meeting with stake holders, decision-makers, legislators, where appropriate. All of these tactics as they concern the Commission we'll definitely let everybody know about those.

HUTCHISON: Bethany. Let me just interrupt you before you go on. I think I've told you before that my office and I've done several of these business roundtables in different rural communities. They've been very, very effective, usually very well received, and good attendance. I would just suggest that if you have any questions about how we set that up, I mean the importance is getting the right people there to hear the message that we'd certainly be happy in our office to help. You know Swati Singh, Deputy Chief of Staff here with me, set all those up for me and continues to. I just offer up Swati as a good resource for your Bethany.

DRYSDALE: Thank you, I appreciate that. We definitely will. Does anybody else have any comment on that first item? Okay, moving on.

The international media relations update. We have a new person on our staff, Yennifer Reyes-Callen, she came from the hotel industry in Reno. She's taken on a

lot of international fams that we just were strapped for time to do. She's helping us with that. She's also doing a lot of our Brand USA cooperative work that we're doing with them. She's our liaison with them in executing the work that we've already agreed to with them. We're moving right ahead with international media relations.

We just had a Mexican media group here in January. It was a really fun group. The point is that it was the highlight of Guadalajara to Reno flights, so they came here, and did the things that you do in Reno and Tahoe in the winter. They learned to ski at Diamond Peak, thanks to North Lake Tahoe we had a really wonderful dinner with some representatives from North Lake Tahoe at the Hyatt up there. They skied at Heavenly, had a wonderful time there too.

We learned one gentleman had no fear, and we found out later it was because he had not learned to turn, so he just went straight down the mountain, but he lived to tell about it, and we got a great story from it.

Then we have a couple more journalists from Mexico coming back in two weeks. They weren't able to make the group fam so they're coming back on their own, and they'll be doing basically the same itinerary but on their own.

We have a South Korean group here arriving next week. They'll be doing a statewide trip from Reno down to Las Vegas. I'm going across Highway 50 and down 95.

We will be working with our UK office on either a fam or cooperative program in sales, so we're still working that out but we have through the end of June to do that, and the UK has always been a really fun market to work with and they have some great ideas coming out of our office there. I'll update everyone on that when we have something in place.

Those are the big things. Oh, we are doing some international travel as well, I'm sorry, I'm kind of breezing through these because I know we're getting to the end of the agenda here. Tomorrow I leave with David Lusvardi from our sales staff to attend, to visit USA Expo in Australia. They've added a really strong media component to this already established program that they do. There are three days of tour operator expos, and then one full day of media marketplace and it's very strong media in Australia so this will be a really good event for us to be at.

In March is ITB in Berlin. That's another place that we have historically had really strong interaction with the German market. We've started attending alternating every other year because the German market knows us pretty well. It just makes more sense with how we're spending our money to not necessarily be right in

front of their face every year, but have continual contact with them. I'll be attending that in March.

We had fantastic media coverage from the sales mission and show in India. Thank you Governor for your representation of Nevada and the tourism industry there. The media pickup was wonderful here and I saw some of what's happening there, and it just looked like we were off to really, really strong start there, so thank you for that.

HUTCHISON: No, it was great. It was a good experience, and I was able to meet a lot of great people and of course Larry is an international rock star, so whenever you travel with Larry, it's always high visibility and lots of media.

DRYSDALE: Truer words were never said. That's kind of a recap of the international media relations. I'm happy to take any questions on that. Anybody?

All right, and then moving onto the LA Media mission. Los Angeles is a market obviously that we market in. We advertise there. We do media outreach there. We like to do a media mission there. We are talking about possibly rethinking having it there. There's been a lot of focus on southern California by RASC here in the north. There's the Orange County flight, that they're putting a lot of money and effort behind. We need to take a look to see if we can either amplify the efforts there or look at another market that we need to focus on more, but LA's market, we have not been to in a while, and so we'll be finalizing those plans in the coming weeks. If we do that media admission it will be in the April, early May timeframe.

Finally, the inclusion of media marketplace in the Global Tourism Summit. You all are familiar I believe with the sales marketplace that happens there. It's a wildly successful two hours of the conference. Tour operators from all over the world come here and are able to meet with our partners in Nevada one-on-one. It's a great service that we're able to provide to our partners, it's of course good for the tour operators as well, or they wouldn't come. We know that it's successful on both ends. We'd like to add a media component to that, bringing international journalists here to meet one-on-one, allow our partners to pitch stories to them and find out wherever they may be able to get some stories placed around the world. We'll be working on that as well, and expanding that marketplace function like we have the Global Tourism Summit.

That's a very quick recap of what's happening in Public Relations. I'm happy to take any questions.

HUTCHISON: Great, any questions at all from Commissioners or other staff members? I'll just say Bethany, great job and if you believe that any member of our Commission would be value added, in any of these PR items, or international media relations or the LA media mission or whatever, please let us know. I'm sure we'd be happy to think about and work with you carefully on a lot of this PR opportunity here. It just is a tremendous, it seems like it's limitless if we get our Commission involved, and people who the media want to see and talk to.

DRYSDALE: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Public Comment

HUTCHISON: Okay, great. All right, unless there is further comment or questions on agenda item number nine, I will close out agenda item number nine, and we'll move now onto agenda number ten, which is public comment.

Is there anyone in Carson City who would like to present public comment before the Committee? I don't hear anybody.

Is there anybody here in Las Vegas who would like to make public comment? I don't hear any here, either.

We will close out agenda item number ten and move on now to agenda item number 11, the Chair will accept a motion to adjourn.

NEWMAN: Real quick, before we adjourn. I've noticed a couple of times the Discover Credit Card commercial. Has anybody else seen their new campaign that features a cartoonish version of "Don't Fence Me In", but also features Lake Tahoe in their segment? Are there opportunities for us to piggy back that? Do we want to because it is kind of a cartoonish version of our famous Nevada version, or comments in general, I guess.

VECCHIO: This is Claudia. Well, we definitely have noticed it. It's huge departure from the "Don't Fence Me In" song but it certainly is in the travel space. We are reaching out to Discover Card, to see if there's a partnership opportunity. Obviously, they have a lot more marketing dollars to spend than we do. There might be some unique ways that we can collaborate but that type of brand extension, we could fight them if we wanted to, but we don't want to. I think as much as we can collaborate and say thank you for continuing this idea, we're good with that.

WAGNON: I had another comment. I think going forward I'd like to recommend that we have these meetings in more of a casual roundtable sort of format.

I think the marketing committee is really designed to be more collaborative and more you know just throwing ideas out and having discussions versus you know coming up to the podium, and turning on the microphones. I'd just like to see the marketing committee in a more casual, collaborative sort of environment, if we could do that. I don't know what the protocol is.

Also, since we were looking through the minutes of our last meeting, it was a year ago. I think we should probably be convening this committee at least every six months, if not quarterly, to stay up to date on how things are going with the campaign. We should have representation from the agency at these meetings to give us an update on how the campaign is going and any issues, problems or highlights that we want to talk about with the campaign. Or whatever else is going on and have a creative discussion, so quarterly might be a little strong, but I'm sure we should be doing this at least twice a year.

NEWMAN: Yes, I would agree, and I don't think quarterly is too strong. I think that if there's a correction that needs to be made, it gives us an opportunity to put the brakes on something and adjust midstream, as opposed to getting too far into it, and too many dollars spent on it.

I agree with the informality of it, I mean we just had our marketing meeting yesterday in Elko and we call ours the "cooking spaghetti", just throw it out there and see if it sticks. It's a good way to just stimulate what about this, and what about that, and campaigns just take off sometimes on that ability to be informal.

I'm not opposed to a quarterly, much more informal. I mean I think we can get through it a lot faster, if it was a little more informal and so quarterly may work a little bit better.

HUTCHISON: Thank you Commissioners. I think you both make great points and I think we ought to explore all of that. You know we've got to maintain the formality of course with the open meeting laws, and noticing the meeting, and making sure that the public has access to us. Keeping it more informal is certainly is something that I'm in favor of as well. Then we ought to talk about the frequency, maybe Claudia, you weigh in on this, and we can talk more about it, and see what we do, but certainly more than the once a year makes a lot of sense.

VECCHIO: Yes, and just so you know that we had every intention of having this be a more informal meeting, but with the cameras and they're going down to Las Vegas, we would have needed to gather at this table, which we probably in hindsight should have done.

We're with you 190 percent on that one. The next meeting of this is scheduled for the Fall, we do have that on our 2016 calendar for all of you. We can certainly do one sooner than that once we have the Effectiveness Study and we really understand the Fall/Winter campaign. We can meet and talk about it. The Spring/Summer campaign will be under way, but that's always going to be the case. It will increasingly be the case as we have this "always on" year round type of digital presence. We can certainly convene everybody together, once we have a better idea of that, and we'll find out from Fahlgren when that is going to happen, and we can certainly have them present for those kinds of conversations. So thank you for that input. We hear you loud and clear.

WAGNON: Yes, I'd love to just get together once before that Fall meeting. I think right after we have more concrete data on the Winter campaign, we should get together and get the download from the agency, look at what's working, what isn't working, and see if there's any course correction.

We have the Summer campaign that will already be launched, but at least we could talk about hey this isn't working, and make some changes in the course.

HUTCHISON: I agree with the sentiment. Claudia if we could just kind of look at what makes sense in terms of what we're saying as a Commission. Once we have information, and we can evaluate the different campaign cycles, it may make sense for us to space out these meetings, based on that information is available, and maybe we do it four times a year, maybe with three times a year. We're going to need the data to drive those meetings.

VECCHIO: I agree, and we'll plan accordingly.

HUTCHISON: Okay, great. Other comments, before we close out agenda number ten? I'm not hearing any. We'll go ahead and close out agenda item ten.

Adjournment

HUTCHISON: And now, agenda item 11. The Chair will accept a motion for adjournment.

WAGNON: Move to adjourn.

NEWMAN: Second.

HUTCHISON: Commissioner Wagon has moved to adjourn, Commissioner Newman has seconded that motion. Any comments or questions on the motion? Hearing none, those in favor signify by saying aye.

GROUP: Aye.

HUTCHISON: Any opposed, no? Motion carries. We are in adjournment. Thank you all very much.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Chekowitz-Dykes, Executive Assistant
Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs
Nevada Commission on Tourism