

MINUTES OF THE NEVADA COMMISSION ON TOURISM  
Tuesday, March 16, 2021

**Call to order**

Lieutenant Governor Kate Marshall called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

**Commissioners Present**

Lieutenant Governor Kate Marshall  
Brian Wadsworth  
Charles Harris  
Cynthia Mun  
Edward Estipona  
Herb Santos, Jr.  
Jane Moon  
Jerry Schefcik  
Jill Lagan  
Julie Pazina  
Kristin Windbigler  
Rick Murdock  
Steve Hill

**Commissioners Absent/Excused**

Bob Stoldal

**Staff and Guests Present**

Brenda Scolari  
Christian Passink  
Chrystie Reep  
Harry Ward  
Heather Sheppard  
Jessica Grundy  
Juraj Sojka  
M.E. Kawchack  
Shari Bombard

**Meeting**

MARSHALL: It is now one o'clock. Let's call the meeting to order. Can you confirm the meeting was properly noticed and posted?

GRUNDY: Yes, it was.

MARSHALL: Okay. Thank you. And do you want to call roll?

GRUNDY: Yes, I will go ahead and do that. Lieutenant Governor, Kate Marshall?

MARSHALL: Here.

GRUNDY: Charles Harris?

HARRIS: Here.

GRUNDY: Steve Hill?

HILL: Here.

GRUNDY: Herb Santos, Jr.?

SANTOS: Here.

GRUNDY: Jill Egan?

LAGAN: Here.

GRUNDY: Jane Moon?

MOON: Here.

GRUNDY: Edward Estipona?

ESTIPONA: Here.

GRUNDY: Cynthia Mun?

MUN: Here.

GRUNDY: Rick Murdock?

MURDOCK: Here.

GRUNDY: Kristen Windbigler?

WINDBIGLER: Here.

GRUNDY: Julie Pazina?

PAZINA: Here.

GRUNDY: Hi, Julie. Bob Stoldal? Bob? Brian Wadsworth?

WADSWORTH: Present.

GRUNDY: Hi, Brian.

WADSWORTH: Hello.

GRUNDY: And Jerry Schefcik? I thought I saw him log in. Jerry? Jerry, are you here? It doesn't look like he can hear, but I do see him.

MARSHALL: Can you ask IT to help? Brenda, can you hear us now?

SCOLARI: I can. Yes. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. I'm good.

MARSHALL: Can IT help Mr. Schefcik, please?

GRUNDY: Jerry, can you hear us yet? Okay. Ron will check and see if there's anything he can do for him.

MARSHALL: Okay. Do we have a quorum?

GRUNDY: Yes, we do.

MARSHALL: All right. Let's move into agenda item B. This is the first time for public comment. As you know, there is public comment at the beginning and at the end. Do we have any public comment? Comments that were submitted in writing?

GRUNDY: I did not receive anything.

MARSHALL: Okay. And do we have anyone on the phone?

GRUNDY: No. I'm not seeing anything in the chat or otherwise.

MARSHALL: Okay. Deputy Attorney General Ward, have I covered the basics here?

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward. Yes. Madam chair. You sure have.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Okay. Moving then to agenda item C, Travel Nevada Grants. The first thing that we're talking about is a revision of marketing grant guidelines. Brenda, did you want to present that?

SCOLARI: Lieutenant Governor, I'm going to ask Christian Passink to present that item.

MARSHALL: Yes, thank you.

PASSINK: Thank you, Directors Scolari. For the record, my name is Christian Passink, and I am the director of sales and industry partners for Travel Nevada. We have two items under C. Item one is revision of marketing grant guidelines that I will cover. And then Shari Bombard, rural programs manager, will cover presentation of the FY21 rural marketing grant recommendations. I apologize right now because I have audio, but I don't have video. I will go ahead and continue on. I do believe that these both will require a motion. We will take these two items separately.

GRUNDY: Christian?

PASSINK: Yes?

GRUNDY: Would you like me to put this up on the screen for you? Or are you just going to kind of go over it?

PASSINK: I was just going to go over it.

GRUNDY: Okay, perfect.

PASSINK: Travel Nevada proposes this additional language be added to section three of the grant guidelines, which describes which applications will be considered. I will read the language for the record. The Division of Tourism will not consider applications from any entity not in compliance with the current contract, policy, or agreement with the State of Nevada department, division, or business unit. This revision is the reflection of circumstances in which a grant application is in financial arrears within the department or not in current compliance with an existing state contract or agreement. We have faced issues in which awarded projects were not completed, ad placements had not been paid for and agreements had not been met. If incorporated into the grant guidelines, this revision will give Travel Nevada staff an official means to deny grant awards until the applicant can get back into

compliance and all contracts and agreements are in good standing. We hope that the commission agrees that this is a commonsense addition to the guidelines and will make the grant process and the evaluation process easier to administer for Travel Nevada staff. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

MARSHALL: Okay. Are there any comments or questions from board members? The easiest thing to do is to either go to reactions at the bottom of your screen and raise your hand or to put something in the chat so that I can call on you. Sue Barton? I guess that's not your hand raised, huh? Okay. Are there any other questions, concerns? Herb?

SANTOS: Thank you, Madam chair. Herb Santos for the record. Christian, I think this is an excellent addition to the requirements for any of the grant applications. I just wanted to ask, what will be the process? Will there be questions to the applicant where they have to confirm that they're in compliance or how are you and your team going to be able to go through all those applicants to make sure that they're in compliance?

PASSINK: Thank you for the question, Commissioner Santos. For the record, Christian Passink. We will add the question to both the projects relating to tourism grant guidelines and the rural marketing grant guidelines. In this particular case, as you're aware, this is a reimbursement program. They have to execute the work and then send in sufficient documentation to show that they did the work. In this case, I think it was a matter that the applicant didn't show sufficient proof that they executed the projects. In the meantime, they continued to continue to request funds. In this case, the projects themselves, they were denied purely on that reason, not because of the merits of the project. Up until now, that clause was not specifically laid out in writing. This gives the rural programs manager the opportunity to deny this just based on that purpose alone, as opposed to the merits of the project. I hope that answers your question.

SANTOS: Herb Santos for the record. It certainly does. And again, I would just say I'm hoping that all the commissioners will agree that this is a very important tool that, for us as stewards of the money that comes before this commission, we want to make sure that it's being used wisely. And so, this is a necessary component to these requirements. Great job, Christian.

PASSINK: Thank you.

MARSHALL: Cynthia?

MUN: Yes. I also agree with what has been said. I'm just curious that since it was reimbursement, some of these things are easy to identify, right? In terms of print: They've printed it, you send in a picture of what's been printed. If it's media, it's already been out there.

PASSINK: Correct.

MUN: You have a recording. It's interesting that you've had this case, and I think it's great that it's now going to be specifically in writing. But I thought, wouldn't it have already been in writing someplace prior to this?

PASSINK: For the record, Christian Passink. Just for history sake, this incident happened with previous staff. The applicant made an effort to conceal, I guess would be the best way to do it, didn't provide. A reasonable person would have looked at the invoices and wouldn't have any reason to think that this person didn't execute the work. It was only after the fact that we discovered this issue and current rural programs manager, Shari Bombard, has been working hand in hand with the organization to get them back into compliance. This is something that we really haven't had an issue within the past, just because we reconcile at the end of every fiscal year. And these are generally the same organizations that we're familiar with and that we work with on a regular basis. And again, I think that the problem was the project's requested, there was nothing really wrong with the projects. It was just that the organization hadn't completely satisfied our requests to come in compliance and execute the projects that they were reimbursed for. If that clears that up.

MUN: Got it. Cynthia Mun for the record. I understand. I guess in certain, you know, regardless of what you have written anywhere if people are going to not have the highest integrity in doing their jobs, that there's nothing we can do about it. In general,

I think this is excellent, and I'm glad that there was something in the past as well and this was just kind of a one-off. It's always nice to have it clearer.

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. Just as a point of clarification, this will require the rural programs manager to do a quick internal audit in the department, which is fairly easy, just to make sure with our sister agencies that the applicant is in good standing. And to the best of our ability, difficult with every state department, but we do have some sister departments that we work with often: SHPO, state grants. We will do the best check we can so that any lapse that is known to us will be made evident. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Any more questions, comments? Jane Moon?

MOON: Thank you, Madam chair. I'm glad you saw my hand raised. I'd like to thank Christian and Shari specifically, because there might've been some lapses in the past for, you know, past grantees. However, working hand in hand with current grantees and making sure that all grantees come to compliance and are educated is highly commendable and appreciated. Because sometimes, they're difficult to do to apply those projects. So, thank you, Christian. Thank you, Shari.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Okay. It looks like everyone who wanted to speak, had a chance to. I believe this requires action by the board. If anyone is willing, I will take a motion.

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. Madam chair, I would move to amend the Nevada Division of Tourism marketing grant guidelines by adding paragraph 3-E, which states the Division of Tourism will not consider applications from any entity not in compliance with the current contract, policy or agreement with the state of Nevada department, division or business unit.

MARSHALL: Thank you. I have a motion. Do I have a second?

MUN: Yes, Cynthia Mun, for the record. I second.

MARSHALL: Okay. I have a motion and I have a second. Any discussion? Okay. Hearing none, all those in favor, you can either raise your hand in the little thing or say aye or whatever you guys want to do.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Okay. Motion passes. Thank you, Christian. I think that the next part is a presentation of the rural marketing grant recommendations. Is that you, Shari?

BOMBARD: Yes. I'm sorry. It took me a second to unmute. This is Shari Bombard, rural programs manager, for the record. I would also like to point out, I am very under the weather and I'm on cough medicine with codeine at the moment. I wanted to apologize in advance for that. Okay. Let me pull up my presentation here. For the record, Shari Bombard. I'm the rural programs manager for Travel Nevada. Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor Marshall and members of the commission. I'm sorry. It is my pleasure to present to you—

MARSHALL: Shari! No. That's horrible. Okay. You are very ill. For goodness sakes. All right. I'm sorry you're ill. Commissioners, hopefully you've reviewed this. We have these grant recommendations. Okay? If you've had a chance to go through them. I had some questions that I had for Shari early on. She's having a coughing fit right now. It better be important if you guys are objecting, just saying. I wouldn't want anybody keeling over on the board meeting. I just wanted to know if any board members had questions or thoughts or concerns. I will just note to set it off that there is a new program in there. I think it's something to do with a new event that I thought was very, very exciting. There's some stuff to do where I think there can be dark skies. There are some new road tours that I also thought was very exciting. The questions I had were really technical things. I will open it up to you guys if there's any questions or thoughts on these grants.

MUN: Yeah. Cynthia Mun, for the record. My question, I think I might've asked before. When I go through all the grants, there are some expenses that come up over time, over and over again, from different areas, which is like the website hosting, website naming, domain fees. Things like that. I wonder, is there any opportunity for Nevada as a whole to contract with some organization to monitor that? To get discounts in terms of having it distributed rather than having the individual territories have their individual accounts? Because I see that, you know, over time it grows, and I just wonder. Same thing with prints work. If there was a preferred vendor that these territories would use and get discounts because it's part of a larger account versus it being an individual account. That's kind of an overall thought.

MARSHALL: Brenda, can you answer that maybe?

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. Yes, I can. Commissioner Mun, these are third party tourism partners, so that would be very difficult for us to offer some sort of state discount to them. However, we do pass along vetted vendors all the time. And we also encourage tourism partners to move some of these ongoing expenses into their operating budget, so they don't come up for grant awards as often. I do see the benefits of your question, but it's very difficult for us to do that. I also want to say that Shari did not tell us that she was this sick, because we do not require staff to show up under these conditions. I would have happily presented the grant recommendations. I just needed to say that. Thank you.

MARSHALL: It's not that you're an ogre, it's that she's a martyr. That's what we're understanding here? You're both very good workers. We appreciate you both. Are there other comments or concerns? One of the things that I had brought up was just that, you know, there were some things that they said, well, this isn't really to attract tourists, and I wondered if it wasn't in the long run attracting tourists. But again, realize when you're going through this that choices have to be made. There are limited resources and the Division of Tourism is really trying to build these grants across the state. So, realize that when you're going through them. If there's no other thoughts. Also, the other thing to remember is that people can apply later on. I noticed that you might've seen some grants where the dates were a little off, so they can come back. The door's not permanently closed. If people don't have any further questions or if they feel comfortable with these grant recommendations, I will take a motion.

MUN: I can make a motion. Cynthia Mun, for the record. I move to approve the -- Oh gosh, sorry.

MARSHALL: No worries.

MUN: -- the rural marketing grant's -- I'm just looking for the words.

MARSHALL: Recommendations.

MUN: Sorry.

MARSHALL: Are you making a motion to approve the fiscal year 21 rural marketing grant recommendations as provided in this agenda?

MUN: Yes.

MARSHALL: Okay, great. Do I hear a second?

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina, for the record. I'd like to second.

MARSHALL: Okay. I have a motion and a second. Do I have any discussion?

LAGAN: Lieutenant Governor, I have a quick question. I just want to make sure that those of us that are potential recipients, do we need to do any kind of a full disclosure?

MARSHALL: Yeah. If you could disclose that you are a recipient and whether or not you feel that is a conflict. I think that's what Deputy Attorney General Ward had recommended previously. Is that correct, sir?

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward. Yes, Madam chair. And likewise, to remind everyone to identify themselves on the record when they do comment, but yes, we'd need to do that.

MARSHALL: Now would be the time before the vote, if there are people on the board who may be recipients of grants.

LAGAN: I'd like to do that. This is Jill Lagan, for the record. In full disclosure, as an applicant and potential recipient of rural grant funds, I will be recusing myself from any discussion to avoid the appearance of conflict. However, I do believe I can be fair and unbiased in voting on the larger agenda item. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Are there any others? Jane Moon?

MUN: Jane Moon, for the record? If I may, I would like to recuse myself from voting from the Pony Express Territory, however, not from the general vote of recommending the overall grants.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Any others? Jessica, with respect to the Pony Express Territory, if Commissioner Jane Moon excuses herself, do we still have a quorum?

GRUNDY: Yes.

MARSHALL: Okay. All right. We have a motion. We have a second. We have discussion. Is there any other discussion? All right. Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

MULTIPLE: Aye.

MARSHALL: Okay. Opposed, nay. All right. Motion passes. Please note for the record that Commissioner Mun was not voting on the Pony Express Territories and that Jill Lagan made comments with respect to her impartiality. Okay. All right. Moving then to agenda item D, we have the presentation of marketing expenditures for the fourth quarter.

SCOLARI: Lieutenant Governor, for the record, Brenda Scolari, if you'll allow me to indulge in some bragging rights before M.E. begins her marketing presentation, I'd like to congratulate the marketing department for upholding a standard of excellence in a very difficult year. The American Advertising Federation had their regional awards last Friday and Travel Nevada won gold awards for the Travel Nevada website, for the website content, as well as our consumer campaign of Discover Your Nevada campaign. I just want to say congratulations to that team. They took on more in-house work than ever and, as you know, we're working with a greatly reduced budget. I'm just very, very proud of them all.

MARSHALL: Well, thank you for stating that. That's lovely.

SCOLARI: Thanks.

MARSHALL: Shari, I hope you're going to bed, just so you know. I see that you're no longer visual. You could go to bed. You're good. All right.

KAWCHACK: Thank you. I am going to go ahead and share my screen. M.E. Kawchack, for the record. Good afternoon, commissioners. I am here to talk about the quarter four spending for marketing. Last month, we provided metrics that we'll bring to the commission on a regular basis, quarterly. As detailed in the FY-22 plan, we look to these metrics to inform us on travelers, sentiment, and readiness. You'll remember that in the approved plan, we recognized that we would begin marketing in-state. Then move on to drive and regional markets appropriately. And you've seen the reporting already for the fall/winter Discover Your Nevada campaign. For the fourth quarter or so of the year, some of it leaks into March, we have about \$4.2 million marketing spend.

This is broken out into several facets including media buying; digital implementations that includes all of our websites, not just .com, all the DTC websites; visitor outreach and engagement, which includes things like collateral distribution and fulfillment; our creative and content development costs; research and public relations. Today, we're going to break down the media buy and review the PR strategy as we move back into our drive and regional markets. For this, I'd like for you to kind of follow through on the slides because I did change a little bit from what you all received in your packets. But of the \$2.7 million allocated for media buying, you'll see that a good portion of this is dedicated to getting back into those markets to target our out of state audiences. Due to some of our great media relationships and the negotiating skills of our agency, Fahlgren Mortine, we were able to pause efforts in March of last year when travel came to a halt. We have about \$570,000 left on those contracts. We did see the value of the Discover Your Nevada campaign as we went over last month. We do plan to continue marketing to our in-state audience. We've allocated \$350,000 for those continued efforts through Q4. And then we have about \$167,000 that's applied to social media amplification and search efforts outside of the large media buy, as well as some special placements for media opportunities that pop up. We've seen those come up with Sactown Magazine and American Road. We don't want to see those kinds of things pass us by. This is where I have updated. We're going to talk about Discover Your Nevada first since you are all very familiar with that campaign. We did produce the campaign in accordance with the direction of the FY-21 recovery plan. As you saw in last month's reporting, we were very pleased. Since then our first quarter awareness results have come in and we have been seeing a continued high, positive intent to travel within the state as a result of our efforts. Now, this budget you'll see is broken down pretty simply. Our buy will be very straightforward as well. We're going to expand on the pieces that we already know worked well for us, like sponsored content, and we want to continue the TV and video portion of our buy. As we noted last month, Nevadans aware of our offerings convert at a higher level than non-Nevadans. And that awareness will keep us top of mind for in-state visitations and offerings. Since we established that solid audience, we're going to continue to hit with non-paid efforts like organic social and e-newsletters through the spring and into the summer. As a reminder, domestic markets were part of the FY-21 recovery plan approved at the beginning of the fiscal year. And we're now at a place where this part of the plan can be implemented within our known budget using sentiment research, website metrics, and learnings from CRO testing, all that were included in the quarterly metrics report. We're able to focus our domestic marketing efforts a little bit more closely. So, at this time, I'm going to introduce you-- Some of you might remember Chrystie Reep. She's executive vice president of media projections with Fahlgren Mortine. She's on the line and she will review our paid media plan on a page for our budget breakout. I'll pass this over to Chrystie.

REEP: Thank you, M.E. Chrystie Reep, for the record. We're really excited to talk with you today about how we're really ready to start, you know, moving outside the state. And we know travel sentiment as people are getting excited, people are getting ready to start making travel plans. What we really want to do with our paid media efforts in this is to focus on action driven messaging. We're capturing those people who are ready to plan a trip now, and then we can get them to convert now. But we don't want to forget about those people who maybe aren't quite ready yet. We want to continue to see the Travel Nevada message continue to be in front of them with content so that when they are ready, whenever their point to being ready to travel, that we can get them to convert. Our, you know, overall sort of strategy then is that we're continuing to leverage, again, that strong road trip content, existing content partnerships that M.E. mentioned, as well as display native social video. Really, you know, a multimedia program to connect with these audiences and inspire them to take that trip when that time is right for them. Whether that's right now or in a few months. If we look at our media approach, it's really two-fold. As I mentioned, you know, looking at those who are ready to travel now and then speaking to those other audiences. Some of those tactics that we'll look out for that immediate visitation are things like our OTAs that drive to booking engines so people can, you know, book their travel right away. Leveraging retargeting, so people who are showing interest, whether they're coming to the site or that they have shown interest through social engagement, that we can re-message them and encourage them to book that trip right now. And then those kind of future visitation tactics where we're wanting to be in front of them with more of that storytelling, things like video. A lot of the successes that we saw with Discover Your Nevada. We want to leverage outside the state as well to those key markets. M.E. mentioned, you know, obviously we're ready to move outside the state and start that new phase of really the recovery planning and connecting with those people. We're expanding this to those core drive markets, but also some of the key regional air service markets. And really being specific with our tactics as to which go where. Those people that are showing travel intent and maybe those air service markets. We know that they're ready to travel so we want to capture them, where we can do more of that inspiring and storytelling and those drive markets that people can make last minute decisions a little bit more quickly. If you look at the program highlights and really looking at those recommended tactics, there's two things we're taking a look at. We're looking at successes in the past, successes from Discover Your Nevada, as well as making sure we're keeping an eye on the media landscape. And there's been a lot of changes in people's habits over the last year. Actually, one recent study from Nielsen said that a decades' worth of disruption in the media



landscape has happened in the last year, because people really moving, particularly in the streaming environments. Because they were home, they kind of started trying out a lot more of these technologies than maybe they would've. They had time to move a little faster than they would have. We're making sure to incorporate that thinking in our plans and not just assuming because it was something we did a year ago, it's the right thing to do now. I've mentioned OTAs. We'll continue to leverage their ability to drive the bookings. We'll layer paid social, which we know can get us, you know, not only strong awareness, we can leverage video. It gets us engagement through road trips and sharing all the road trip content. And then we can also capture leads through social. It kind of gives us threefold and allows us to re-message to those people through some of our own channels through e-newsletters and things like that. Our targeted TV and digital video, really, as I mentioned, ensures that we reach across all screens about how people are engaging with TV content today, but in a more efficient way than you can buy kind of traditional linear television. Because now we can leverage data, target people based on their behaviors, and also ZIP codes, down to a ZIP code level, to make sure we're really targeting the right people in those key markets. And then underlying all three of these kinds of buckets of tactics, will be all of those sorts of foundational digital elements, like native and programmatic, that have continued to be successful and we can continue to leverage. As always, our success metrics will really be focused. By tactic, there's slightly different key performance indicators depending on the tactic, but overall, we want to make sure we're continuing to drive awareness and looking ultimately at how we're seeing bookings through some of the OTAs. But also, things like e-newsletters sign-ups, visitors guide requests, road trip content. All of those show that great engagement and intent. We'll continue to monitor those for success stories. If you go to the next slide. As we look at the budget breakdown for the \$2.2 million for the regional and national buy, you'll really see how they kind of bucket into these two groupings; TV and video, which includes placements on some linear cable, sports programming, some of that high profile programming we can make sure to have a presence in. But also partners like Hulu and other streaming vendors that people are engaging with today. And then on the digital side, these tactics, you know, I mentioned natives, display, programmatic, retargeting. They all fall under that digital bucket. And some of the partners that are included under that are partners like Empowered, Adara, Epsilon as a partner, Expedia, Priceline, TripAdvisor, and then again, Facebook and Instagram. All of those fall under that digital bucket across the platform there.

**KAWCHACK:** Thank you, Chrystie. Next, I'd like to introduce Heather Sheppard, our account director from Fahlgren Mortine, to review the PR components of our spring efforts. As you saw, PR is now included in part of our marketing pay to efforts reporting. So, we continue to work together to implement a strong plan as we come back to the marketplace. Heather?

**SHEPPARD:** Thanks, M.E. Heather Sheppard, for the record. As Chrystie said, paid media is able to do more of the heavy lifting driving conversions, but it's starting to get into that inspiration. And earned media is kind of doing the opposite. We're focused more on actionable inspiration with an emphasis on that word actionable to really drive interest in specific activities in the state. Our strategy is to focus on immediate visitation with our in-state and regional media outlets, but also future visitation with national media outlets. As you can see within our goals, this starts with re-engaging our media contacts in-state, regionally, and nationally. As Chrystie said, the media habits have changed, but the media landscape has drastically changed as well in the last year with decreased ad spend, meaning that outlets are cutting staff, or they folded altogether. Now that the world is opening back up, and quickly, we want to remind our priority publications what Nevada has to offer and help them plan for their long lead stories in the summer and in the fall and beyond, and understand what their travel sections now look like and the different angles that they're working in post pandemic. In terms of what we're sharing with them, looking at those tactics and strategies, immediate visitation tactics will include sharing some of the what's new in Nevada; activities, attractions, developments since folks were here last, regionally and throughout this state to give them a specific point of interest to plan a trip around. And then in those drive markets, we'll build some road trip route extensions with media and influencers, so that we're connecting those out-of-state markets directly with our branded road trips, which are essentially preplanned vacations for them, again, focusing on that actionable opportunity. For future visitation, we're focusing on virtual briefings and editorial planning with our top 100 contacts and in immersive PR box. We're developing a custom curated experience tailored to select national media contacts that will use existing 360 assets and technology to refamiliarize those contacts in those publications who may have had shifts in their staffing with what Nevada has to offer in a way that is very tailored to the topics that they're writing about now and in the future. From a storyline perspective, we'll continue to share those key storylines that we've established, including health and safety, because we know that that will continue to be a priority as vaccine rollouts go on in the next couple of months; responsible recreation and stewardship; road trips; as well as some of that wide open and wondrous experiences that help travelers feel liberated, which is something they're all really looking forward to as they're getting outside of their bubbles. Because we know our efforts are focused on long lead storytelling as well as some immediate storytelling wave, we've added to our KPIs things like media engagements and meetings, some of those actionable

engagements, as well as the traditional metrics that we track like placement and reach. And the focus, again, is about driving that actionable inspiration. We're looking at things like key storyline inclusion and references to key points of interest, et cetera. That's the quick rundown of our PR program, and I will toss it back to M.E.

KAWCHACK: Thank you, Heather. That's the end of our presentation today. I'll stop sharing and we're available for any questions that you might have on marketing expenditure proposals.

MARSHALL: Thank you for the presentation. Questions? Edward Estipona?

ESTIPONA: Edward Estipona, for the record. I just had a question concerning targeting. If we're looking at one, targeting and prioritizing targeting the older demographics seeming that they were the first ones that actually got vaccinated throughout the whole United States, and then secondary, are we trying to maybe match CDC's data of vaccination per state to see which states are performing better from a vaccination standpoint, to which case that would lead us to maybe marketing to them priority-wise first before any of the other places?

KAWCHACK: Yes. Thank you, Edward. M.E. Kawchack, for the record. I'll start by saying that we are watching those vaccination numbers. They're updated daily. They're moving so quickly. We're going to keep watching, especially with Texas as they open up what their numbers are looking like, but so far vaccinations are on track. We just heard Ohioans are going to be getting theirs by the end of the month. I assume that there's going to be a lot more states seeing that. It's moving so fast that I don't see that being an issue. It's going to just be dominos. But we're definitely checking those pretty much daily at this point. And then, as far as to the older demographic, I have been seeing that as well. We do speak to them in our creative certainly, and also being on OTAs because they're able to get going as soon as possible. Chrystie, if you had anything else to add, I can turn it over to you.

REEP: Yeah, no. Chrystie Reep, for the record. I was just going to add exactly where M.E. was kind of ending there. A lot of our targeting is on that lower funnel of people who are showing intent to travel right now. They could be older or not, depending on if they're ready. That's really where our targeting focus is, is to make sure if they're raising their hand for whatever reason, whether they've been vaccinated or not, as they're ready to travel that we're in front of them. That's really the priority because as M.E. said, it's moving so fast. There are some shifts that it'll make more sense to be a little bit broader, but again, looking at those people who are raising their hand in some way.

ESTIPONA: Thank you.

MARSHALL: Herb, I think you were next and then Cynthia.

SANTOS: Thank you, Madam chair. Herb Santos, for the record. I think what I'm going to do is I'm going to provide you the benefit of a one-person focus group. I know in past meetings I was really concerned with the health and safety thinking that would be a major component in what travelers would be very concerned with in terms of wanting to travel to Nevada, and I've sort of seen with people that I'm friends with on Facebook it really has sort of shifted from health and safety to barriers or restrictions on travel. For example, if you want to go to Hawaii, the stories we've heard of the Utah family that got there with their little notes saying, "Hey, we tested negative." And they said, "Well, no, that's not from one of our providers. You got to go back to where you came from. You don't get to come into Hawaii." I think that barriers and restrictions are really a big focus of what travelers are looking at now. And I'd like to hear from you folks as to-- because, you know, that's not in one of the four things there. People going to a hotel, are they getting maid service every day? Some hotels aren't giving maid service every day. What type of restrictions getting into the place? How are we looking at those types of issues in our marketing plan because I think that may be what people are really looking at now?

KAWCHACK: Thank you, Herb, for the question. M.E. Kawchack, for the record. I think that's a great point and we'll continue to update our COVID page with all of that information as to what is happening. I think that by May 1st, it sounds like most counties other than Washoe and Las Vegas will be at 100%. We can keep having that in our messages, especially on the media side. I think that there's a real opportunity there as we work with journalists and influencers who are going to be coming here in market. That's

the best opportunity that we have because they can turn their content so quickly, also on social and our search efforts. I don't know if anyone from Fahlgren wants to add to that?

SHEPPARD: Heather Sheppard, for the record. That's a great point and things are changing so quickly that when this originally was submitted, health and safety was still the priority as people were starting to get out. And it's even in the last few weeks that, you know, I was just working with one of our contacts at NBC news on a story about what experiences travelers are starting to have as they get out and are feeling more comfortable post vaccine. And so, that's why one of the key tenants of our PR program is to quickly and immediately engage with those media contacts and influencers to get familiar with what they're hearing and how we can offer relevant angles and storylines about what Nevada has to offer on that path. It's going to change between now and next week again. But the quickest way and the best way for us to make sure that we're meeting the needs of both the travel writers, but ultimately the travelers, is by staying in close contact with them and that's starting right away.

MARSHALL: Cynthia?

SANTOS: Thank you. I'd knew you guys would be right on it.

MUN: Cynthia Mun, for the record. I just wanted to say that in terms of what the marketing team has presented, that it is within the April to June timeframe. And within that timeframe, I think one of the most important things is to get that excitement, which is why in the KPIs they put the engagement in terms of getting with the media outlets, the journalists, et cetera. Because the timeframe that is necessary for people to get here to Las Vegas is that they have to get that excitement out in the media. I think that's one of the main reasons for the KPI to include that. I really think the team has been thinking about it in terms of staging, in terms of all the different consumers out there in terms of age; timeframe, who got vaccinated, who didn't; the safety, and kind of looking forward and trying to get as many people to Vegas and Nevada and Reno as soon as possible. But they are doing it in a manner that is with a lot of thought.

MARSHALL: Kate Marshall, for the record. While I enjoy all the excitement and the need to travel, I do want to temper this with the fact that we are still in this pandemic. We still have people dying. We had the UK variant show up last week, I think it was, in Washoe County where someone decided to hold an event with, I don't know, 50-60 people, and 17 people came down with COVID. And so, to the extent that we are encouraging people to come here, we need to encourage with equal fervor that they come here and behave safely. Because the thing that we don't want is people going to areas which have reached certain plateaus and then having the governor have to make certain decisions because they then have a spike. As you guys know in Europe, they're having what they're calling a fifth wave. I think it's important to make sure that we tell people that you can come to Nevada and you can socially distance here since 1864 and all the things that we say. We are not there yet. We are not there yet. And the data is showing that we're still somewhere where we were last summer, which if you remember last summer, everyone was panicked. I do want to encourage that in all the marketing that we pair that with the need for safety. We certainly don't want to infect our communities inappropriately. And I don't mean to be a downer. We are moving ahead, and I want to keep that trend going positive direction, especially so we can have conventions and those kinds of things. There are discussions taking place about how we might be able to do that in a safe manner. I don't want those to derail. You know? I just want to add that, and hopefully you all don't, you know, pull out a little chair doll and start sticking it with pins. But anyway, so, there you go.

KAWCHACK: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. I think that that is something that we're definitely keeping in mind. And we're going to keep updating that COVID page. I think that the safety is going to be paramount to keep this going and the education. And also, the responsible recreation side. We don't want people polluting our state.

MARSHALL: I think there's ways to do that in rural Nevada and in our rural communities where people can travel safely, where they might not be able to do that in other states. We really have certain opportunities here. I think that's a positive. Julie?

PAZINA: Hi. This is Julie Pazina, for the record. The first thing I want to say actually, is that everyone on the marketing team has done such a beautiful job. Thank you so much for the thoughtful presentation today. Along that safety message, and I'm not certain if this is statewide or only in Clark, but vaccinations have opened up to the hospitality industry. When it comes to messaging for editorial or with influencers, that might be something to mention as well. We are one of the safer places, because when you look

at the people that are already getting vaccinated, it's the people that will be helping our vacationers have a wonderful experience. It was exciting when I saw that happen. Just, you know, here for the commission, because it is such an important part of our reopening safely. Thank you.

UNKNOWN: Thank you.

MARSHALL: Okay. Are there any other thoughts or questions? Hospitality market is qualifying Nye County as well. Hello, Tonopah. All right. If not, I will take a motion. I think we need a motion for this, don't we?

GRUNDY: Yes.

MARSHALL: Okay. Yeah.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward. Yes, Madam chair, we need a motion.

MARSHALL: Thank you. A motion to approve the marketing expenditures for April, May, and June?

MUN: Madam chair. Jane Moon, for the record. I'd like to make a motion to approve the marketing expenditures for the fourth quarter. Is that correct?

MARSHALL: Fourth quarter, fiscal year 21, I think. Yes.

MUN: Thank you.

MARSHALL: Do I hear a second?

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina. I'll second.

MARSHALL: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion. Okay. I just want to make sure so M.E. that you kind of heard that people want to open, but open safely, right? And attract. Okay.

KAWCHACK: Yes, thank you.

MARSHALL: All right. Then, no more discussion. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? All right. Motion carries. We now go to agenda item E, and I believe, Herb, you had something you wanted to comment?

SANTOS: Thank you, Madam chair. You know, tourism partners come in many different ways, many different individuals. This past weekend, the boxing world was saddened to learn of the passing of World Champion Marvelous Marvin Hagler. Marvin was an international boxing superstar, and his impact for tourism in Nevada was substantial. During the 1980s, he fought several times in Nevada and three of his fights were considered international super fights and resulted in an incredible economic impact and exposure for the state of Nevada. The Hagler Hearns Super fight, the triple header, where the main event was Marvin's battle with Ugandan John "the beast" Mugabi, and the Hagler Sugar Ray Leonard fight. These fights helped designate Las Vegas as the true boxing capital of the world and illuminated Las Vegas as a must-see destination. When we look at tourism and the impact of these fights, which were headlined by Mr. Hagler, I would submit that Marvin was an instrumental component to tourism in Nevada and ask that we take a moment and we honor him and his family with a traditional 10 count for his memory as a true Nevadan friend. I'd ask that you just take a moment and I've got this right here. Thank you. Rest in peace Marvin. You'll be greatly missed.

PAZINA: Thank you so much, Herb. This is Julie Pazina, for the record. Thank you so much to the Travel Nevada staff for the rural marketing grants. I can say how nice it is every time I look forward to reading all the grants, because there are so many amazing programs around the state, and it's so exciting to see everything come to life. Thank you so much to Travel Nevada on behalf of your work on that. And of course, to the wonderful marketing team. I wanted to share, again, for everyone on the call that the commission on tourism's recovery committee is having our forum this Thursday from 3:00 to 5:00. I hope that all of you are able to attend. Travel Nevada has worked so hard helping put that together. Pam Robinson has been just phenomenal behind the scenes, and thank you as well to both Steve Hill and Charles Harris, who will be representing LVCVA and RSCVA on the call and to everyone on the commission who's worked on behalf of it and who's planning to attend. I hope all of you can make it. I look forward to a great attendance, and that's it for me. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Thank you, Herb. That was lovely. Thank you, Julie. Are there any other commissioner comments? Jane Moon?

MUN: Thank you, Madam chair. As rural commissioner, I feel it vital to keep up with the pulse of our more rural community partners. I'd like to thank Sue Barton and the Reno Tahoe Territory for inviting and having me on their Zoom call last week, their Zoom meeting. Thank you, Sue. Thank you RTT. I really did learn a lot. Hopefully we can continue to partner with all our rural communities and territories.

MARSHALL: Thank you. That was lovely. Thank you for saying that. I think we're kind of a good group, huh? All right. If there's no more comments? Okay. Then I'll move to public comment. This is agenda item F. Did we get any written comments in the interim?

GRUNDY: This is Jessica Grundy. No, we did not.

MARSHALL: Anyone calling in?

GRUNDY: No.

MARSHALL: Okay. All right. Then we moved to item G, which is adjournment. I would like people to note that we started at 1:00 and it's just about 2:00, so that's pretty amazing guys. Normally we're on here for God knows how long. You know, we enjoy each other for a lot longer. I will take a motion to adjourn unless you guys want to hang on for another hour, just for, you know, old time's sake?

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina, for the record.

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. I'd moved to adjourn.

PAZINA: Second.

MARSHALL: Okay. I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? We can discuss for an hour. All good? All right. All those in favor, signify by saying yay.

COMMISSION: Yay.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion passes. Thank you so much. And thank you, Shari. Please tell Shari we send our thanks and hope she gets better. Thank you, M.E. Thank you for our partners, Heather and Chrystie. Thank you very much guys for your work. Really, really appreciate it. I look forward to the recovery subcommittee, Julie. And thanks Herb for the countdown.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.