

Explore Minnesota Tourism Council Meeting

June 18, 2024



star of
the north*

Today's Meeting Agenda

- 10:00am Welcome
- Approval of Minutes
- 10:10am Council Business
- New Council Members
 - Review Quarterly Council Reports / Q&A
 - Council Committee Sign Up
- 10:45am Updates from Council Committees
- 11:20am Explore MN Team Updates
- Destination Marketing
 - Livability Marketing
 - Destination Development
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Legislative/Administrative
- 11:45am Open Discussion
- 12:00am Adjourn/Lunch





Welcome

- Approval of Minutes from December 5 and March 12 meetings



Updates from Council Committees

- Education/Industry Resources
- Legislative
- Livability
- Marketing
- Outdoor Recreation



Explore MN Team Updates

- Destination Marketing
- Livability Marketing
- Destination Development
- Outdoor Recreation
- Legislative/Administrative



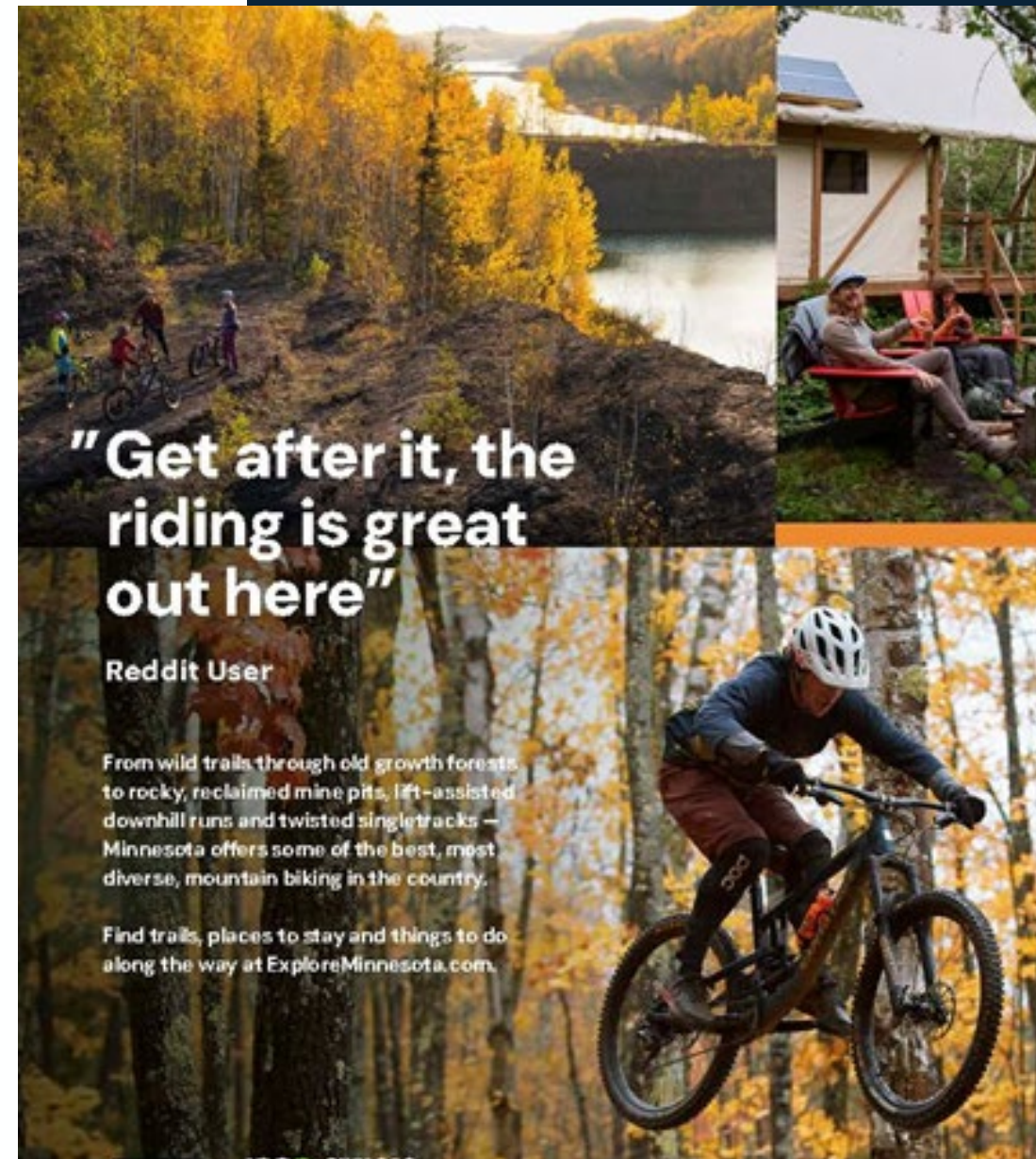
Destination Marketing

Kat Sutton

Deputy Director of Marketing

Campaign – Fall & Travel Guide

- Hiking & Mountain Biking Niches run 8/12-10/31
- Media partners include Outside Magazine (content), AllTrails In-App placements
- Travel Guide 2025 in full swing, will be revamped for Nov/Dec 2024 debut



Hiking in Minnesota



Hiking in Minnesota



Hiking in Minnesota

Campaign – Winter Creative

- Two new winter videos, highlighting multi-generational family from LA to Metro/Central MN and three friends from Toronto to Metro/Southern MN
- Livability alignment: MN as preferable to Los Angeles living, immigrant experience in MN
- November debut



Digital - Content

- **In-depth web content:** Debut of "Stars of the North"; Voyageur's Natl Park commission
- **Campaign:** Niche content optimization
- **Social:** Robust Influencer plan (ex: Dallas Dads)
- **Livability:** Merging JoinUs content into exploreminnesota.com; continued content creation for /live & /business



Digital – Web Functionality

- Since April, have improved our website lighthouse performance score from 22 to 59. We continue to make code-based improvements to elevate health
- **Web analytics will shift in-house** allowing us more real-time data to be nimble and improve our #1 KPI: time on site.
- **Google has moved to AI-assisted search** (gemini), scraping sites to generate answers. We have not seen reduced organic traffic but will continue to monitor: our website is highly authoritative with in-depth articles, so no changes to our current strategy.



Communications Media Trip

- July 17-21
- Food-Focused Trip
- **Media:** Caroline Eubanks (Travel + Leisure, USA Today), Brittany Anas (Livability, Forbes), Tentative Forbes writer
- **Highlights:** Marc Heu experience, Bde Maka Ska, Owamni, Paisley Park, Lumberjack Days



Communications FY25 Planning

- Key initiatives
 - **National Strategy:** Updated & optimized Media Room, Growing rolodex of "friendlies"
 - **Local Strategy:** Deepen relationships with local media teams
 - **Operational Excellence:** Optimize media monitoring strategy and reporting; Broaden strategic approach to in-house graphic design through standardized process and lookbooks





Livability Marketing

Lauren Bennett McGinty

Executive Director



What's next?

- Host the inaugural **Explore Minnesota for Business Council** meeting June 26.
- Begin planning phase 3 **College-Age and Resident Retention** strategy.
- Consolidate livability / talent / business attraction functions into overall marketing strategy.
- Create a more **integrated marketing structure** to better share resources and ensure more support for tactics/staff.
- Develop PR strategy that pitches Minnesota stories rather than the work as the story.



Destination Development

Beth Helle

Deputy Director of Destination Development

Industry Relations

Industry Programs

- Launch Recovery Grant Program 2025
- Close Recovery Grant Program 2024
- Launch FY2025 Co-Op Program

Events 2025

- Governor's Pheasant Opener
- Tourism Conference
- Governor's Fishing Opener

FY25 IR Department Strategic Workplan



Market Development



FY25 Strategy Planning

RMI Contract – FY25 Projects

Market Development Coordinator

Fall Planning:

- German media
- Brand USA Mega Fam Korea
- Brand USA Travel Week, UK
- IPW Chicago (2025)



Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership

Randolph Briley

Deputy Director of Outdoor Recreation



Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership

Mission: Sustainably and equitably grow Minnesota's outdoor recreation economy.

Goal: Minnesota sustains 100,000 outdoor recreation industry jobs by November 2026.



Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership

Objectives:

1. Create innovative policy tools for supporting and encouraging economic development that leverages outdoor recreation.
2. Convene stakeholders from across the outdoor recreation spectrum to build community and industry cohesion.
3. Communicate the benefits of the outdoor recreation industry and economy to civic leaders and policymakers who can base their investment decisions upon these (data-supported) benefits.



Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership

Ongoing Projects:

1. Economic Impact Report
2. Outdoor Equity Grant Program
3. State Outdoor Business Alliance
4. Annual Industry Summit
5. Podcast
6. Confluence of States



Legislative / Administrative Updates

Lauren Bennett McGinty

Executive Director



2024 Legislative Session & Administrative Updates

- Funding*
 - Explore Minnesota Film base budget:
 - \$825k in FY25 and each year thereafter
 - Covers staffing, film tax credit program, jobs program*
 - \$400k for Ka Joog cultural events in greater MN
 - \$2 million for Special Olympics USA in 2026
 - \$1.847 million to Taste of MN
 - \$100k for a film festival



2025 (FY26-27) Biennial Budget session

- Increase overall budget to include permanent funding for all onetime programs. (All funding to be placed in one larger budget rather than divided by function.)
- Considering sustainable funding options; seeking consultation
- Sports betting bill
- Other?
- Industry support & advocacy



Council meeting schedule

- ✓ Tuesday, March 12 (virtual)
- ✓ Wednesday, June 12 (in person –
Explore MN Office – 121 7th Pl. E.,
St. Paul, MN 55101)
- ☐ Tuesday, September 10 (virtual)
- ☐ Tuesday, December 10 (virtual,



Open Discussion

Thank you!



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