

# Huntsville Municipal Accommodation Tax Association

## MINUTES

Virtual Meeting held on **Monday June 22, 2020 @ 1:00 pm**

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**Present:** Jesse Hamilton, Jeff Suddaby, Christine Kropp, Scott Doughty, Mathew Phillips, Kaushal Gandhi, Karin Terziano

**Staff:** Bill Farnsworth, Torin Suddaby, Morgan Richter, Kirsten Maxwell

**Guests:** Brian Fox from Enterprise Canada, Lesli Martin and Craig Worden from Pollara

### 1. Welcome

Approve Agenda as presented

**Be it resolved that the agenda be accepted as presented**

**Moved by:** Jeff Suddaby

**Seconded by:** Christine Kropp

**CARRIED**

### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were brought forward.

### 3. Approval of Minutes

**Be it resolved that the minutes from the June 9, 2020 meeting be accepted as presented.**

**Moved by:** Scott Doughty

**Seconded by:** Jeff Suddaby

**CARRIED**

### 4. Presentation by Enterprise Canada and Pollara Inc. and discussion

Brian Fox from Enterprise introduced Lesli Martin and Craig Worden from Pollara. Pollara is the company Enterprise uses to conduct survey research. Pollara has worked extensively in the Ontario tourism sector. Key highlights from the presentation include:

- 2 separate surveys are being discussed. The first is a travel intentions survey that, due to privacy regulations, must be sent out by Huntsville accommodation providers through their own internal database of visitors. These previous visitors would be sent a link that would direct them to the Pollara survey. This survey would be used to evaluate current travel intentions of previous visitors.
- The second survey would be distributed by Pollara, who guarantees 900 respondents. The survey will be sent to Ontarians who say they are very or somewhat likely to travel or camp domestically. The online survey will take between 12-15 min to complete. Key findings will include travel intentions and key drivers, including impressions of Huntsville itself and some of the top drivers of decision making to come to Huntsville.
- Pollara will develop a draft survey to be reviewed with input from the Board. The suggested allocation of 900 surveys is: 200 in 416 area code, 200 in 905 Belt, 200 in Greater Ottawa area, 100 in Southwest Ontario, 100 in Eastern Ontario and 100 in

Hamilton Niagara. The number of surveys can be reduced to 600 for a cost savings of \$6,000. These numbers can be altered if the Board decides to focus more on a particular region.

- Total cost for both surveys would be \$47,000 plus HST and, provided the survey and contract can be finalized quickly, the results should be able to be returned by the end of July.

The presentation ended at 1:40pm and a short discussion ensued. It was decided that 900 surveys would be the route taken. A motion was made to move forward with the project with Pollara.

**Be it resolved that the HMATA Board move forward with the 2 surveys, as outlined by Pollara, at a cost of \$47,000 + HST.**

**Moved by:** Mathew Phillips

**Seconded by:** Jeff Suddaby

**CARRIED**

## **5. Discussion of Elements of Recovery Marketing Plan**

### **Influencers**

A discussion was held about hiring influencers as a part of the Recovery Marketing Plan. Torin Suddaby suggested micro-influencers typically cost between \$1,000-\$3,000 per post plus the cost of bringing them to the region. It was decided that the appropriate next step would be to hear an influencer pitch from an actual marketing agency, potentially the agency chosen for the Huntsville collaborative marketing initiative.

### **Holiday Travel Program**

A discussion was held about the previously suggested holiday accommodation plan. Jesse Hamilton suggested that the timing should be shifted from Christmas to perhaps November/December. It was suggested that maybe the number of nights eligible should be capped at 500 to keep costs in line. There was discussion about the potential of a tiered program for visitors staying multiple nights. Karin Terziano raised the issue about whether this program could be viewed as a conflict of interest as the majority of the HMATA Board is made up of accommodators. After discussion the Board felt that there was not a conflict of interest in this manner.

The Board agreed in principle to move forward with the program, with the next steps being the creation of a more detailed plan including budget to be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

## **6. Adjournment**

**Be it resolved to adjourn meeting at 2:30 pm**

**Moved by:** Jeff Suddaby

**Seconded by:** Christine Kropp

Next meeting date to be held virtually on Tuesday July 7 at 3:00pm.