

Visit Portland – PTDD Board

Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2026

CEO Report and minutes- February...

Attendance via Zoom:

- **Board Present:** Dave Largen, Dave Turin, Casey Oakes, Michael Erickson, Matt Nolan, Marcin Gorski, Sam Brown, John Schultzel, Topaz Smith, Greg Watson
- **Board Absent:** Natalie Bogart, Sarah Dobbins
- **Staff Present:** Amy Tolk, Dave Page, Lynn Tillotson, Abby Traver

Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Guest Speaker: Todd Goldenfarb, Managing Director of Mile Marker Investments

Portland Music Hall – Project Update

Todd Goldenfarb of the RAM Companies presented an overview of the proposed Portland Music Hall, a 3,300-capacity venue planned in partnership with Uncommon Hospitality and Live Nation. The project is privately funded and designed to host approximately 125 events annually, with a focus on increasing winter activity and attracting out-of-market visitors. Economic projections estimate 266,000 annual attendees, with a majority coming from outside the region, and the creation of 500 full-time equivalent jobs.

Discussion covered the project's potential economic impact, community feedback, and questions regarding the Live Nation partnership. The development team emphasized that the venue is intended to complement Portland's existing arts ecosystem and would not limit activity at other venues. The project has been under review for over a year and meets current zoning requirements. Additional discussion addressed a proposed buffer zone between venues and the importance of a clear and consistent development process.

Board members noted the broader implications for the city and emphasized the importance of maintaining a neutral role regarding individual development projects.

Board Governance

- The board reviewed key organizational priorities and ongoing initiatives aligned with Visit Portland's strategic plan, focused on marketing the destination, strengthening partnerships, supporting the community, and maintaining organizational excellence.
- The next board meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2026 (virtual).

Financial & Organizational Updates

- Visit Portland is preparing for annual tax filings and financial reporting, including coordination across multiple accounting systems.
- Budget development is underway, with reports to be reviewed by the Finance Committee and the full board in June.
- Recent operational improvements include a transition to cloud-based systems (SharePoint and accounting software) to enhance efficiency, access, and data security.

Staffing & Operations

- Continued investment in staff development and industry engagement, including participation in national conferences.
- Ongoing organizational improvements to technology and infrastructure to support team productivity and communication.

Partnership & Community Engagement

- Visit Portland is piloting a neighborhood partnership initiative in Bayside, designed to increase local engagement, support small businesses, and test a scalable model for other neighborhoods.
- Partner revenue is tracking below annual goals, with continued focus on outreach, retention, and new partner development.
- Visit Portland remains actively engaged in community conversations, regional collaboration efforts, and workforce development initiatives.

Events & Industry Engagement

- Destination Summit (April 8, 2026) planning is underway, featuring industry insights, marketing updates, and the official brand rollout.
- Recent events included a Partner Appreciation Party and ongoing partner networking opportunities.
- Visit Portland continues participation in statewide and regional tourism events and conferences.

Marketing & Programs

- **Winter Weekdays Campaign:**
 - Expanded program continues to drive winter visitation with more than 100 participating offers statewide.
 - Marketing efforts include digital campaigns, media coverage, radio, influencer partnerships, and public relations outreach.
- **Brand & Website Development:**
 - The new destination brand is in development and will be unveiled at the Destination Summit.
 - Website redevelopment is in progress, with updated structure, design, and user experience improvements underway.
- **Content & Asset Development:**
 - New photography, video, and storytelling initiatives are in development to support future marketing campaigns.
 - A new campaign, *The Lightkeepers*, will highlight the people and stories that define Portland's character.

Data, Research & Industry Trends

- Winter data indicate continued strength in overnight visitation and visitor spending, with longer stays and strong engagement in arts, dining, and attractions.
- Key visitor markets continue to be regional drive markets, with Boston remaining the top source market (as shown in charts on pages 12–15).
- Ongoing analysis of tourism data supports marketing strategy and seasonal campaign planning.

Sales & Market Development

- **Group Sales:**
 - Strong engagement with meeting planners through trade shows, digital campaigns, and site visits.
 - Continued development of tools such as virtual hotel tours and targeted LinkedIn campaigns.
- **Leisure & Weddings Marketing:**
 - Digital campaigns continue to generate strong engagement across platforms.
 - Upcoming participation in industry events and trade shows to drive future visitation.
- **International & Cruise:**
 - Continued engagement in international markets through trade shows and media tours.
 - Cruise ship economic impact study is nearing completion, with results expected in early 2026.

Visitor Experience

- Visitor Information Centers are preparing for the upcoming season, including volunteer recruitment and facility readiness.
- The organization is assessing future operational impacts related to changes at the Portland International Jetport and other infrastructure developments.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:30am