

Visit Portland – PTDD Board

Meeting Minutes – January 28, 2026

CEO Report and minutes- January...

Attendance

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

Meeting Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Guest Speaker

- The board heard a presentation from Tamara O’Neill of Edgestone Staffing, who shared insights on hospitality workforce trends and flexible staffing solutions for hotels and tourism-related businesses.

Industry & Community Updates

- **Local Economic Impacts:**
The board discussed recent news coverage and economic concerns related to immigration enforcement activity in the region.
 - Businesses reported varying levels of impact, particularly in the restaurant sector.
 - The board discussed whether Visit Portland should issue a public statement.
 - A vote was taken, and the board decided not to release a public statement at this time.
- **Local Development & Advocacy:**
 - The board discussed requests for support related to a proposed music hall project and broader city policy matters.
 - The board reaffirmed that Visit Portland should remain politically neutral and focus on its core role as a destination marketing organization.

Community & Partner Engagement

- **Jamaican Relief Drive:**
Visit Portland supported the Portland Regency Hotel’s relief drive, which received strong community participation. Shipment of donated goods is being coordinated.
- **Local Business Campaigns:**
Visit Portland is exploring ways to collaborate with Portland Buy Local on winter messaging that supports both residents and visitor activity.
- **PTDD Hotel Mixer:**
The January 20 mixer, hosted by the Holiday Inn by the Bay, brought together hotel general managers, board members, and staff for networking and updates.

Sales, Marketing & Programs

- **Group Sales:**
 - Visit Portland attended the Connect North conference with a strong planner interest.

- Multiple site visits were hosted, including conferences and association groups.
- Meeting planner education programs and familiarization tours are scheduled for 2026.
- **Weddings & Motorcoach:**
 - A digital wedding campaign generated more than 1,100 clicks in the first month.
 - Strong interest in Portland was reported at the American Bus Association marketplace.
- **International Marketing:**
 - Upcoming participation in Discover New England and IPW trade shows, along with an international media tour.
- **Cruise Market:**
 - The cruise ship economic impact study is nearing completion, with final results expected in early 2026.

Publications & Advertising

- **2026 Visitor Guide:**
 - Advertising sales remain strong.
 - The guide will go to print in early March.
 - New features will focus more on visitor planning tools and practical information.
- **Event Planner's Guide:**
 - The guide is being redesigned as a digital-first sales tool, supported by a targeted marketing plan.

Marketing Initiatives

- **Brand & Website Development:**
 - The new destination brand is in progress and will be unveiled at the Destination Summit on April 8.
 - The new Visit Portland website is under development and scheduled to launch before summer.
- **Winter Weekdays Campaign:**
 - More than 85 participating listings across dining, lodging, and experiences.
 - Boston radio and local advertising campaigns are active.
 - Influencer partnerships, photography, digital ads, and press coverage are underway.

Partnership & Organizational Updates

- Ongoing outreach to new partners ahead of Visitor Guide deadlines.
- Continued focus on delinquent billing, new business welcome efforts, and neighborhood engagement.
- Maine Office of Tourism grant projects and co-op campaigns are progressing as planned.

Meeting Adjourned