

Visit Portland – PTDD Board

Meeting Minutes – December 17, 2025

CEO report & Minutes- December

Attendance

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

Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Board & Governance Updates

- **New Board Members:** The Board formally welcomed **Marcin Gorski** (Aloft Portland) and **Dave Largen** (Westin Portland Harborview) as newly appointed directors.
- **Upcoming Meetings:**
 - January 20 – PTDD Hotel & Board Mixer hosted by Holiday Inn by the Bay
 - January 28 – Board Meeting (Zoom)
 - February 25 – Board Meeting (In-Person)

Financial & Organizational Oversight

- **Accounting Best Practices Review:** Visit Portland engaged **Philbrook & Associates** to conduct a review of accounting and bookkeeping processes to ensure consistency, transparency, and best practices across all organizational entities.
- **FY26 Budget Snapshot:**
 - Expense savings were identified through staffing efficiencies and operational adjustments.
 - Revenue remains slightly below projections, largely due to slower partner renewals amid broader economic challenges.
- **City Administrative Funds:** The Board noted the need for further clarity from the City regarding use of administrative funds and will continue discussions.

Community Engagement & Workforce

- **Workforce Initiatives:** Visit Portland continues to collaborate with regional partners on workforce awareness and development efforts, with an emphasis on alignment rather than duplication.
- **Education Partnerships:** Outreach is underway with Junior Achievement, adult education programs, and hospitality education partners to support long-term workforce pipelines.
- **Community Conversations:** Visit Portland remains engaged in discussions related to emergency preparedness, downtown development, parks planning, and future winter programming initiatives.

Marketing & Seasonal Programs

- **Winter Weekdays:**
 - Expansion of the successful Winter Wednesdays program into **Winter Weekdays**, running January 5 – April 30, 2026.
 - Program now includes lodging offers alongside food, beverage, and entertainment promotions.

- A **\$30,000 Maine Office of Tourism Enterprise Grant** was awarded to support marketing efforts, including Boston-market advertising.
- **Visitor Guide:**
 - Print run increased to 170,000 copies.
 - Advertising revenue remains strong, with the majority of placements secured ahead of schedule.

Data, Research & Industry Trends

- **Tourism Performance:**
 - Summer visitation declined slightly year-over-year, driven primarily by reduced day-trip travel.
 - Overnight visitation remained strong, with increases in length of stay and accommodation spending.
- **Cruise Ship Economic Impact Study:**
 - Data collection concluded for the City of Portland cruise ship impact study.
 - Results are expected in January 2026.
- **Market Intelligence:**
 - Ongoing review of CoStar, Zartico, and Tourism Economics data to monitor demand, occupancy, and regional comparisons.

Meetings, Sales & Promotion

- **Meetings & Conventions Marketing:**
 - Digital campaigns targeting Boston and New York planners continue to perform above industry benchmarks.
 - Site visits and RFP activity indicate a strong pipeline for future group business.
- **Public Relations:**
 - National media coverage secured through Madden Media continues to reinforce Portland's positioning as a year-round destination.

Brand & Website Development

- **Website Rebuild:**
 - The new Visit Portland website is in active development, aligned with the ongoing brand refresh.
 - Site architecture and navigation have been approved, with development progressing on schedule.
- **Brand Research:**
 - The multi-phase brand refresh continues, informed by extensive research, resident feedback, and visitor insights.

Meeting Adjourned