



Annual Report 2016-2017

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2016-2017 TIA Yukon Board of Directors (Elected)

Officers

Chair – Felix Geithner

Tours and Attractions
Arctic Range/Ruby Range
Adventures
P.O. Box 30107
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5M2

First Vice-Chair – Bill Fletcher

Transportation
Holland America Line
300-Elliott Avenue West
Seattle, Washington, 98119

2nd Vice-Chair/Secretar – Jasmine Sangria

Food & Beverage
Yukon Brewing
102 Copper Rd
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2Z6

Treasurer – Joost van der Putten

Travel Services
Nature Tours of Yukon
P.O. Box 31187
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5P7

Elected Directors

Brian Stethem

Arts, Sports and Events
Box 3898
Dawson City, YT Y0B 1G0

Adam Gerle

Accommodation
Northern Vision Development

2016-2017 TIA Yukon Board of Directors (Appointed)

(All one-year terms)

Appointed Directors

Kalin Pallett

Wilderness Tourism Association of Yukon

Sherry Blake

Yukon Convention Bureau

Clint Collins

Yukon Outfitters Association

Lisa Dewhurst

Yukon First Nations Tourism & Culture

Sally Robinson

Yukon Historical & Museums Association

Paul Robitaille

Klondike Visitors Association

Staff and Contract Colleagues:

Executive Director – Blake Rogers

Office Manager – Allyn Walton

Bookkeeper – Sue Stephens – MacKay LLP Chartered Accountants

Past TIA Yukon Presidents/Chairs 1973-2017

- 1973-74 Gerry Weigand
- 1974-75 Barry Redfern
- 1975-76 Joe Becker
- 1976-77 Ron Atkinson
- 1977-78 Joe Becker
- 1978-79 Athol Retallack
- 1979-80 Reg Therrien
- 1980-81 Reg Therrien
- 1981-82 June Hampton
- 1982-83 June Hampton
- 1983-84 Bill Mueller
- 1984-85 Bill Mueller
- 1985-86 Giovanni Castellarin
- 1986-87 Steve Leonard
- 1987-88 Steve Leonard
- 1988-89 Steve Leonard
- 1989-90 David Loeks
- 1990-91 David Loeks
- 1991-92 Phil Dyke
- 1992-93 Larry Watling
- 1993-94 Garry Vander Veen
- 1994-95 Garry Vander Veen
- 1995-96 Lowry Toombs
- 1996-97 Barry Bellchambers
- 1997-98 Pat Irwin
- 1998-99 Pat Irwin
- 1999-00 Dick Van Nostrand
- 2000-01 Dick Van Nostrand
- 2001-02 Steve Leonard
- 2002-03 Nancy Huston
- 2003-04 Lael Lund
- 2004-05 Noel DeChambeau
- 2005-06 Rod Taylor
- 2006-07 Rod Taylor
- 2007-08 Rod Taylor
- 2008-09 Rod Taylor
- 2009-10 Rod Taylor
- 2010-11 Rod Taylor
- 2011-12 Neil Hartling
- 2012-13 Neil Hartling
- 2013-14 Neil Hartling
- 2014-15 Neil Hartling
- 2015-16 Felix Geithner
- 2016-17 Felix Geithner



Chair's Report

Felix has been called away with urgent business and he asked me as Past Chair to deliver his Chair's Report today.

The past year has been a positive and productive year for TIA and the TIA Board. I have to say that, in my time as Chair, this has felt like the best year for the TIA Board. Looking at our accomplishments:

- Early in the year we focused on planning. This included a multi –day retreat in early September. Board Member Bill Fletcher of Holland America graciously offered us space on the Skagway to Vancouver Cruise for 4 days for our retreat. The attendees worked hard. I know you laugh when you think of working on a cruise ship, but I can tell you that the meetings were ongoing and the group was so engaged that there were stops where no one even got off the boat due to the intense discussions.
- The work continued on after the retreat, with Board members updating TIA policy to bring it in alignment with current industry needs.
- One such policy included membership and as a result, TIA now has the best membership revenues in years and this is certain to grow. It is an indicator of our growing success as an industry that the membership is contributing to the fiscal strength of the association.
- Our continued efforts to enhance existing and build new relationships with organisations like ours brings new value to our members.
- The Team Work of the Board has been very helpful and you need to know that you have a hard working and committed board working for you and your tourism businesses. This has been the most productive year for the Board in my tenure as Chair. I want to thank all of our Board members for the great team work this year.
- The Board worked to represent TIA's priorities in the recent Territorial election.

Industry Status and Forecast Viewpoint:

- Last year was another successful year for the Industry.
- Anecdotal reports indicate that the winter numbers appear to continue to be strong.
- Anecdotal forecasts and early booking reports for the summer indicate that this will be another strong summer for the Yukon. Of course this is due to many factors, but TIA's Advocacy and support for Industry has played a role and will continue to in the future.
- We are working to maintain a healthy and productive relationship with our partners in government departments and Government leaders.

I want to wish you all best success for the upcoming season.



Executive Director's Report

It's been an eventful year in the Yukon's tourism industry since last April. At the TIA Yukon office, things have been busy.

The 2016 TIAY conference was held in Whitehorse and focused on themes such as innovation and technology. We looked at topics such as geo-mapping for tourism products, telling the stories of communities through film, some of the background of Iceland's tourism success and even space tourism. The conference attracted almost 100 delegates.

It has been an active year politically - with a federal government that was elected in October, 2015, TIA Yukon spent much of the early part of the year developing new relationships with federal decision makers. Working together with the Yukon's MP Larry Bagnell and TIAC, TIA Yukon has developed and continues to have a great working relationship with Tourism and Small Business Minister Bardish Chagger as well as other officials in Ottawa who have an influence on tourism.

In fall of 2016 the Yukon had a territorial election. TIA Yukon developed an advocacy strategy to put the needs of the tourism industry front and centre. Feedback was collected from industry and based on discussions by the board, issues were distilled and 3 priorities emerged. These included:

1. The renewal of funding for Yukon Now at \$1.8 million per year (cost shared between the federal and territorial government) and the need to make this funding permanent beyond March, 2019.
2. A face to face meeting between TIA Yukon officials, the Premier, the Tourism Minister and other key officials within the first 100 days of taking office and at least once per year henceforth to create a mechanism for better communication between industry and multiple departments.
3. The paving of the Dawson City runway.

These were raised during the election, most notably, during the Leader's forum that TIAY hosted in conjunction with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon FN Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Chamber of Mines and the Association of Yukon Communities. A new Liberal government was elected in November and TIA Yukon has been developing a solid working relationship with Minister Dendys and her colleagues. To date, two of the priorities have been fulfilled by the government, as a renewal of funding for Yukon Now was announced at the end of January with a commitment from the Yukon Government to make this funding permanent. We also met with the Premier and Minister Dendys last week to discuss some of the tourism industry's priorities. (See attached summary).

In May I participated in Tourism Advocacy on the Hill with my counterparts from across the country. This was coordinated by TIAC and consisted of meetings in Ottawa between the tourism industry and specific MPs, including the tourism parliamentary committee.

For the past year, TIAY has been busy strengthening and building partnerships, collecting information, advocating and supporting the development of products and experiences. This summer, tours were conducted of Southern Lakes, the Golden Circle and the Klondike to check in with operators as to how this year's summer season looked. The responses as a whole were overall, extremely positive.

In June, the board of the Bank of Canada came to Whitehorse and I provided an overview of the tourism industry, including the challenges and opportunities.

In July I attended the CITAP annual event in Richmond and strengthened key relationships with a number of the RTOs that work with the Yukon, such as JTB. This also started discussions with CITAP about the possibility of a Yukon FAM for CITAP members – an idea that was realized in March when TIA Yukon hosted a special FAM for 12 members of CITAP, which included tours of Whitehorse, Carcross and Dawson City, featuring a wide range of products and roundtables in Dawson and Whitehorse. These individuals represented RTOs that are active in China, Korea and Japan and the FAM was a first for CITAP in the Yukon. A full report on this event will be available in June after follow up with FAM participants.

In August TIAY organized the Yukon Culinary Festival, which we contracted Edible Canada to manage. This was a great model that resulted in a more professional event with more exposure, reduced TIAY staff time devoted to the event and for the first year ever, revenue generated. The event couldn't have taken place without the phenomenal amount of buy in from Air North, NVD, Yukon Brewing, the Yukon Government, KIAC and Parks Canada as well as other governments and many tourism operators and tourism based organizations. The Yukon Culinary Festival is scheduled to take place this year, August 11-13 – plans will be confirmed and announced in the month to come. This is an event that continues to be a great vehicle for public engagement, providing opportunities for both the tourism and agricultural industries and that helps strengthen one of the Yukon's niche tourism experiences.

In September, the TIAY board and TMC, in partnership with HAL, participated in a joint retreat aboard a HAL cruise that included key Alaskan products such as Glacier Bay and Ketchikan and wrapped up with meetings in Vancouver with key partners such as Destination Canada, Destination BC, CITAP and Edible Canada. Out of this retreat came the initial phase of TIAY's strategic plan, the revitalization of the marketing committee (changing from TMC to SMAC) and TIAY's new membership strategy which was launched in October.

In October, while on personal travel I had the opportunity to attend the PM4SD summer school and sustainable tourism conference in Akureyri, Iceland. Through this experience, TIAY was able to strengthen ties and develop connections in tourism circles in other parts of the globe – some of whom may be speaking at our conference this year. Best practices in sustainable tourism were noted and will be shared at this year's conference in Dawson, City September 28-30. 2017 is the Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, so the theme of this year's conference will be in keeping with this. The Tr'ondek Klondike UNESCO bid is an exciting initiative that has been the result of years of work – we look forward to highlighting this great work during the conference as well.

TIAY's plans for 2017 largely include building on the work that we've done this past year, namely, exploring ways to enhance membership engagement, monitoring tourism labour needs and developing strategies that ensure that we have the skilled workers the industry needs. TIAY will continue to encourage innovation in the industry and enhance the voice of our industry through greater engagement of the Yukon public and highlighting the value of tourism to the Yukon's economy. We will react when needed and be proactive whenever possible. With a strong tourism year expected for 2017, new government investments and industry initiatives in growing sectors such as indigenous tourism, culinary tourism and eco-tourism and more focus on tourism overall both nationally and territorially as an economic driver and mechanism for sharing culture

and history, the future looks positive for tourism. It's more important than ever for all sectors of the industry to work together and stand united, adding more weight to TIAY's voice as the advocate for the Yukon's tourism industry.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blake Rogers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Blake" being more prominent than the last name "Rogers".

Blake Rogers
Executive Director, TIA Yukon

ADVOCACY

- Advocating and lobbying on behalf of industry – proactively (targeted) and reactively (as required).
 - Parks Canada product
 - Land Use Planning Processes that incorporate meaningful consultation with Yukon First Nations & the Yukon public
 - Product development
 - Tourism infrastructure (maintenance and development)
 - Supporting the development and promotion of cultural tourism
 - Air Access
 - Individual issues as they arise
 - Maintained funding to support T.V. marketing

PARTNERSHIPS

- Developing new partnerships with key stakeholders and enhancing existing relationships with current partners.
 - Encourage/support increased interdepartmental (YG) collaboration.
 - Work to develop and strengthen partnerships with key groups and sectors in the territory that have certain goals in line with those of TIA Yukon (i.e. Chambers of Commerce, Chamber of Mines, Association of Yukon Communities).
 - Develop a closer working relationship with tourism stakeholders in jurisdictions outside of the Yukon where useful to the needs of TIA Yukon (i.e. Tourism industry representatives in Alaska, BC, NWT, etc.).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to support efforts to develop cultural districts and communities.
 - Ex. Dawson (i.e. UNESCO), Whitehorse (i.e. Whitehorse Waterfront), Haines Junction.
- Creation of economic model to generate economies of scale in Yukon communities.
- Support the development of tools that may work to help tourism stakeholders share authentic Yukon experiences with visitors that includes multiple historical and social narratives
 - Ex. Educating ‘tourism ambassadors’, cultural inventories

INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY

- Developing tools and techniques to promote innovation and sustainability within the Yukon’s tourism industry.
 - Work with YG and other partners to help address current staffing challenges (i.e. training, job retention, staff housing) for businesses within the industry.
 - Monitor the development of technology trends (i.e. mobile apps, social media) as they relate to visitor habits, and work to support and facilitate industry education and increased adoption of new technologies amongst industry stakeholders.

- Explore the viability of niche products and niche markets in the Yukon and encourage growth of those with identified potential (i.e. Culinary Tourism, Port of Skagway Marketing Strategy).

ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY

- Developing tools and techniques that build a foundation for the long-term stability and vision of TIA Yukon.
 - Continue to oversee and support the work of TIA Yukon's subcommittees, including the Tourism Marketing Committee (TMC).
 - Develop staff manuals to provide a clear, written record of up-to-date policies, procedures and recent history of the organization.
 - Operate current TIA programs (YTTF, TCMF and the Giovanni Castellarin Scholarship) and explore ways to make them more effective and accessible to industry.
 - Enhance TIA Yukon's membership program in a way that provides increased value and increased engagement of the industry allowing TIA Yukon to re-engage a membership fee model.
 - Consistently work to enhance the TIA Yukon brand.