

President's Report 2016

As we approach the mid-way mark of our 2016 Tourism Year, and approaching our high season, there seems to be a strong positive vibe in the air. Some would say it is the lack of snow this time this year compared to last year, and that could very well be true, however I have heard many operators say that there is a steady ringing of phones and continuing sights and sounds of emails popping up in their inboxes. Coupled with that information and comments like "we are ahead of last year" and we are "fully booked for July and 50% for August...already!" 2016 is poised for another great year!

Most recently I attended the Central Coastal Tourism Partnership Annual General Meeting in Kensington. While chatting with a few operators there, I received the same comments and positive outlook. I also heard the word "collaborate" used. As I listened to the many comments and conversations, it was very apparent that through a more collaborative effort from all stakeholders...Accommodations, Restaurants, gas stations, coffee shops, and even communities...they all have a role to play in hosting tourists throughout the year and making our tourism year a success. We as individual operators, and as individual communities, cannot do it alone.

At TIAPEI, we understand this. As some of you have already commented and have seen, we are taking on a more member-centric approach. We know that we have to and we want to work with you and as well, on your behalf. So you will see us more often, out and about, and in your operations, speaking with you, the operator. We will be stepping out of the office and engaging with you the operator, the member. Kevin, Allison and Jamie are out calling on our members and members to be...asking questions and getting to know who our members are and finding out how TIAPEI can be a benefit to you.

Over the past few months TIAPEI has been in the communities supporting our members through different activities. We had two very successful job fairs with one still to happen in Stanley Bridge later this week on Saturday, April 30th. We had great feedback on the TIAPEI Tourism Marketplace where 32 businesses attended. Each one of the 32 businesses we able to learn more about...and discover possible collaborations of the other 31 tourism related business...how great is that!. Operators meeting other operators and discovering ways they may be able to work together and collaborate. We have provided training opportunities through a program called Passport to Employment in the three communities of Kensington, Montague and Charlottetown, targeting individuals from the 55 to 64 age group.

Through this member/operator-centric approach we are promoting the many benefits of membership...HR support services, Social Media Technology analysis, and webinars to name a few.

As many of you know, last year in our Seizing Our Potential Strategy we identified that we needed to include more of our members in the operation of TIAPEI. As many of you also know...rather than a 32 member information gathering board, we now have an 11 member board with working committees. This had allowed us to be more involved within our tourism community as well as it allows many of you to be involved in OUR tourism industry and the planning of our future.

As an industry, we must continue to find ways to enhance/increased our high season of July, August, and September however with that said, we also must find ways to grow Tourism throughout the year. Sport Tourism is but one example of how we can grow late fall, winter and early spring visitation and community engagement.

We mentioned earlier in the year that TIAPEI will leading the 2021 Tourism strategy process. Along with TIAPEI, and our working group, which consists of 16 industry stakeholders including representation from industry, ACOA and the Province, we spent many hours developing the scope of work for the RFP. This RFP was then set out to 23 companies. The list of companies where from PEI, across Canada and also international. We received 5 excellent proposals. Through a selected committee and with each committee member completing a detailed numerical scoring sheet, each RFP submission was graded. We were pleased to announce that the contract has been awarded to Tourism Development International. In late April we will be meeting with TDI to begin the next steps of the process, the Stakeholder consultations. The timeline for completion of the consultations is set for June 15th. TIAPEI will be working with TDI over the summer months and into the fall with a presentation to industry at our AGM in November.

As we move through this very important exercise, many of you will be contacted by TDI, we ask that you take a few moments of your valuable time to meet with them, whether it is in person or over the phone.

This is our process... to develop our road map... for our future success.

As we move into our high season, I wish each of you, continued success in the 2016 Tourism Year

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Jourdain

President