Carole C Thomas: Rock 'n' roll. Appreciate you joining us for this meeting, April meeting, leading up to the Easter weekend. Thank you all very much. If I have to step away from this call, we'll just keep going. I have the Comcast person coming to my home, it is my home office, and they're putting some new boxes in and upping my Internet speed. And, obviously, they were supposed to be here by two o'clock and that didn't happen. So ... If you see somebody roaming in the background, you know it's the Comcast person, so-

Bill Dunham: Carole, if Comcast doesn't behave themselves, my father's former business associate at General Foods, his son is vice president of the company, so we'll make some calls on your behalf.

Carole C Thomas: Okay, all right, thank you. Fortunately my son-in-law is downstairs, so he'll manage everything otherwise.

Bill Dunham: Oh, excellent. Oh, good.

Carole C Thomas: Okay. Thank you all so so much. Let's quickly just go around and introduce ourselves, because we do have a new member who's with us, and I'd like for her to learn who we are. So we'll start, first of all, I'll leave Aaron for the last. Donna, you take it away. Real quickly.

Donna DuPee: Okay, hello. I'm Donna DuPee, with Marriott for 35 years. Marriott Corporation. I was one of the first members of the multicultural committee back in the '90s. And so glad to still continue this journey, and looking forward to even greater heights on this committee. Really excited about the new direction that we're going in, so-

Carole C Thomas: Awesome-

Donna DuPee: Welcome.

Carole C Thomas: Thank you. Thank you so much. And, as I had said, the Comcast gentleman is here, so, Junior, you can bring him in and I'll talk to him. Thank you. I'm gonna multi-task, guys. Thank you all. All right, Bill, quickly.

Bill Dunham: Yes, Bill Dunham. Most of the last 20 years being on the government side, so I'm the person who has the ten worst words in the English language, "I am here from the government and to help you." But I also worked in the non-profit world. I've been associated with the greater Boston commission bureau since 1991. And for about the last eight years with Carole and her team. And it's a pleasure to have you on board.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Thank you so much. Guys, hang on one second. Hold on just a second. All right.

Carole C Thomas: Hold on one second, guys. Just a second, thank you.

Carole C Thomas: Okay, all right, thank you so much, Bill. Robin!

Robin Parker: Hi, welcome, my name is Robin Parker. I'm Associate Director for Information Center at Harvard University. We conduct the history tours for the university, and I have been a member, I think, three years, I think, I'm not sure. However, it's been fun, and I'm looking forward to the direction that we're going in. Welcome again.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Thank you. Thank you very much. Glenn.

Glenn McGibbons: Hi there. Glenn McGibbon here. I am the Web Marketing Manager for the Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau. And I've been working with the multicultural committee for about a year. And last year we instituted our cross-cultural page, and was very pleased to work with the multicultural committee to get their feedback. Working with Pam Frechette, who also introduced herself. But together we all worked toward [inaudible 00:04:47] that cross-cultural page and also dispersing that throughout our site. And, actually launched that at the meet-and-greet last year at this time.

Carole C Thomas: That's right. A year ago, literally.

Bill Dunham: Yeah, wow.

Glenn McGibbons: It was.

Bill Dunham: Yeah.

Glenn McGibbons: It's a pleasure to be working with the group.

Carole C Thomas: Super. Thank you, Glenn. You're doing a great job, too. Appreciate it. Thank you very much. Bonnie, I know, is in a meeting until three o'clock. She's gonna join us after she concludes her meeting. You may see the Comcast gentleman again. He's gotta swap out boxes; that may not happen until after our meeting concludes. But that's where we stand. All right. Tiffany.

Tiffany Prob.: Hi everyone. I'm Tiffany Probasco. I joined the committee I think three years ago.

Carole C Thomas: Or so, yeah.

Tiffany Prob.: Yeah. And I was trying to think, I'm like, "How did I join this committee?" But-

Carole C Thomas: Michael Munn.

Tiffany Prob.: Yeah, I know. But it was through doing a blog site, but also through the Urban League convention.

Carole C Thomas: Okay. So that was 2014 or so.

Tiffany Prob.: Yeah. Oh my gosh, five years. Okay.

Carole C Thomas: Yeah, five years. Yeah.

Tiffany Prob.: Whoa. So, yeah, I joined in that capacity of really helping to connect the then-younger people to get to be involved in that convention, and doing some partnering with the black journalists in Boston as well. So I'm happy to continue to be on the committee. Though I'm now located in Delaware, I still have very great fondness for Boston, and try to visit as much as possible.

Carole C Thomas: Super. Thank you. That reminds me, I'm gonna say something once we make our introductions, but appreciate that. Thank you very much, Tiffany. And Pam.

Pam Frechette: Hello everybody. I'm Pam Frechette, Director of Visitor Marketing at the Greater Boston Convention & Visitor Bureau. I've been a member of the committee, I'd say, for a good two years. Correct me if I'm wrong, Carole?

Carole C Thomas: Right.

Pam Frechette: And have enjoyed working with Bonnie and Glenn, in particular, on developing the content and promoting the Web site for multicultural ... Not only events, but getting the word out there that, in fact, multicultural was in existence in the city. And that said, we still have a lot more to do, and I'm hoping to be a part of that.

Carole C Thomas: Great, great. Thank you very much, Pam. Thank you much. All right. Michael.

Michael Munn: Hello everybody. Michael Munn. I'm with the Boston Convention Marketing Center, Chief of Staff. I've been on this committee for ... This is my sixteenth year, which simply means that I'm just not as mature as Donna.

Carole C Thomas: Ha ha ha.

Donna DuPee: Ha ha.

Michael Munn: I'm excited to see that there are eleven participants. This is one of the biggest meetings we've had in some time.

Carole C Thomas: Right.

Michael Munn: So, that's motivating. That's good. We're growing, and that's a good thing. I'm responsible, or my group, my team, is responsible for populating the state-owned convention facilities, which is the Hynes and BCEC, and we loan some expertise and contributions to the MassMutual Center at Springfield as well.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Thank you very much, Michael. Thank you. I'm gonna leave Aaron, I will introduce him in a few minutes. But I'd like to introduce our newest member. We also have gotten updated information from Lori Nelson, who has also joined our committee. She is the Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Boston, was at our last face-to-face meeting, and we look forward to her participating with us going forward. So we welcome her. I know that [Fong Jo Li 00:09:01], who is a committee member, is in China as we speak. So, for that reason, and for whatever he's doing time wise, obviously they're at a different time zone, so he was not able to join us. But we do have a great ... There are ten of us on the line today, so that's exciting.

Carole C Thomas: We're welcoming to our committee Wendy Pease. Wendy is the President and CEO of Rapport International. She will explain her company. A very good friend of mine, a great colleague, really looks at the world internationally because of the work that she does and her company, the services that they offer. You probably remember at my November 1st conference when a question arose during our panel discussion, and she jumped up and said, "Just ask a white person." And the conversation took off from there. That's actually on our members-only Web site too. So she is a committed woman of action. Went with me with her two sons to India in February. We had a fabulous time. So, she's not feeling that well today but we'd love for Wendy to just say a few words today. Hi, Wendy.

Wendy Pease: Hi, thank you for that good introduction, and I may leave it at that 'cause I went to the doctor today and found out I have influenza B. So I'm not on the video, and I'm trying with all my might to pay attention. Normally, I'm high energy and fully engaged, and taking notes, and trying to learn everything, but today's kinda mellow.

Carole C Thomas: Wow, my goodness. Well, listen, you take it easy. Just one sentence, tell us more about your business, Wendy. And this is being recorded so you can always ... I'll send you the link and you'll be able to play it back at anytime.

Wendy Pease: Okay, thank you. So Rapport International has been in business for over 31 years. I bought the company about 15 years ago. And we provide foreign-language translation, which is written, and interpretation, which is spoken. And we do everything from Web sites and marketing materials, to patent applications, to ... Oh, we work for the Duck Tours, the Salem Witch Museum, Boston Red Sox, and there's some more but I'm drawing a blank right now, in the travel and tourism industry. And then we provide interpreters for a lot of doctor's appointments and depositions, when you need a person to help facilitate the conversation.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Excellent. Well, we'll learn more about your company as the months go on. Thank you so very much. Alrighty.

Carole C Thomas: So we've heard from everybody now. I'm Carole Copeland Thomas, been with this committee first in the iteration in the '90s, along with Donna. And then Martha Sheridan's predecessor, Pat Mascaritolo, asked me to chair this committee in 2003-2004, when I was then a new board member. So I have been happily a part of this committee ever since, and really excited about what we have done, and what we're going to do going forward under Martha's leadership, along with Aaron Jones.

Carole C Thomas: So before we bring Aaron on, I just wanna check in with Glenn to see if there are any updates or things that we should know about with the Web site.

Glenn McGibbons: Well, the first one is thank you, first off, for sending me Lori's information. I'm always welcoming new bios and head shots. Anyone who has a update to their bio or head shot, please send that my way. Secondly, for cross-cultural pages, I think I'm going to do a follow-up after this call just so everybody has a PDF. And, Carole, I can send that to you, and we can disperse that maybe after this meeting, or for next week's meeting we can actually do an interpretation, for questions. But I didn't have that for today.

Glenn McGibbons: But also, just to update everyone, our last meeting we had met with Plymouth 400, had a nice presentation from someone named Michelle, I think it was Pecorino.

Carole C Thomas: Yes.

Glenn McGibbons: She was excellent, and informed us of her efforts. And we were inspired to add some events onto our Web site that do feed into the cross-cultural event area. So that's something that I wanted to update everybody on. And we're continuing to think in better ways to update those cross-cultural pages. So keep the ideas coming. And if you have something, I know we did recently add the tour-operators' area. Anyone who is a multilingual tour operator is now listed in that spot. Pam has written some new introductions that we'll be infusing into the site over the next couple of days. So lots of good stuff. It's continual, evolving project.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Great. Thank you very much for all the work that you've done, certainly over the last year, to vitalize the site and to really integrate it fully in with the main site. Appreciate that. Glenn, I will send you a link to the photo-gallery page where I have all of the black-history photos now. And the complete bio ... Not bio, but the complete, well the bio's on that same site. But the complete keynote address from Marques Benton; I've been quoting him ever since he spoke. And I also professionally had a transcript created, so there's a transcript of his entire message. I'll send it to everybody, because you can go there and you'll see all the pictures, see yourselves, and revisit his wonderful message.

Carole C Thomas: And then also I've had a two-minute Sizzle reel, which is one of these marketing reels with music and some testimonials. That is almost finished, and when that is finished, Glenn, I'll send that to you too. Right now, though, message is there, the keynote is there, and all the pictures. So I'll send that link to you. That's at the mssconnect.com Web site. But I'll send that to you after our meeting ends.

Glenn McGibbons: All right. I have one more request, I guess, and that is, I know that there have been a couple of meetings, Carole, where you took some photos of the team in action and working together. If you think that any are worth posting on the site, that might be good for maybe even the homepage or just to show some interaction with the committee itself.

Carole C Thomas: Sure.

Glenn McGibbons: Showing a little bit more or the face of the committee on those specific pages might be good for us.

Carole C Thomas: Great. I'll send both to you, the link, and I'll send those pictures to you this afternoon also.

Glenn McGibbons: Awesome.

Carole C Thomas: All right. Thank you very much. Thank you, guys. Thank you for all your hard work. Everybody who's worked within that committee, all the other activities that we've had, really appreciate that.

Carole C Thomas: Well, I'm now going to ... We have our next meeting, I've asked for our next meeting to be a face-to-face meeting. We're just sort of changing things a bit. We'd like for the May and the June meeting to be face to face. So our next meeting will be back at the CVB office, on May 16th. And I have on my notes we're going to have a Japanese speaker, and Bonnie was the one who was gonna set it up. Am I correct with that, everybody?

Glenn McGibbons: I don't know, but I think that does coincide with, I know that there's a festival coming up-

Pam Frechette: Japan festival, and-

Glenn McGibbons: Yeah-

Carole C Thomas: Yes-

Pam Frechette: It might coincide. I wasn't at the last meeting.

Glenn McGibbons: But that would be appropriate, because I do believe it's in May. I don't know the exact day is.

Pam Frechette: Cherry blossoms. We have some.

Carole C Thomas: Right, I have Matt Krebs down here, and I have Bonnie's name, so I'll check in with her. We'll verify and we'll just plan accordingly.

Pam Frechette: Okay.

Carole C Thomas: Excellent. Thank you. So now we wanna the rest of the time spend with our newly appointed executive vice-president. As we all know, we have a new leadership team within the Greater Boston CVB. We have just jumped right in and taken charge of all the direction for the bureau. It's very exciting in terms of where we're going to go. I've had a lunch meeting with both Michael Munn and Aaron Jones, and it was fascinating, and very very encouraging in terms of the thoughts, the vision, and what our committee can actually be involved in, since we have the history, we've got the resources, and how we can help with the bureau direction going forward.

Carole C Thomas: So without further ado, I would love for him to first just give us a little background about who he is and the work that he did before joining the bureau, and then take us forward with this discussion. We're gonna conclude at 3:30, and I assume that the Comcast man is doing something downstairs. He and my son-in-law, they're down there doing something. Don't know. Okay.

Carole C Thomas: Aaron Jones, welcome. Thank you so much.

Aaron Jones: Thank you, Carole. I think we all need to hire you 'cause you do the greatest introductions. Boy, you really know how to set people up.

Carole C Thomas: Thank you.

Aaron Jones: I appreciate it. So, I'm just kinda segue up from Carole's introduction and tell the group that, as I said in our last face-to-face, I'm very excited about the advent of this committee, and certainly having met some of the individuals on it I grow even more excited by the talent within. So, just as Carole said, my background, I've now been with the CVB for about a month, a little more than a month. So time's flying by. But I've had a 30-plus-year career of running businesses in the sports and entertainment space. And Martha and I connected because of my operations experience and my fiscal-management experience. So I'm happy to be on board and hopefully here to bring some innovation to the way we do business. And, particularly, now that Martha has begun I've gotten on board with what her agenda is. And our number-one priority is to try to increase revenue for the CVB. And, in doing so, I think the multicultural committee is poised to play a significant and leadership role in driving that.

Aaron Jones: So what Carole mentioned, and what we had lunch about, was I think, with the resources available in this committee, and if we channel and focus our efforts throughout the course of this year, we could play a significant role in having multiculturalism be a driving force in tourism and meeting planning for the CVB and for the greater Boston area, for this year and many years to come. And, in a nutshell, that's what the strategic direction that I want us to be focused on, and I want us to galvanize a group that is committed to this agenda.

Aaron Jones: For the most part, I think we're all, on this call, familiar with organizations, events, and activities that center from some aspect of multiculturalism. And there are organizations, of course, all around this country and this world, that we have the capacity to host and accommodate here in greater Boston. It doesn't necessarily, as Michael mentioned, Michael being from the convention center, it doesn't have to be large business like what we're fortunate to host next year, the NAACP convention, it can be something as small as ten or fifteen people that we might want to host in Cambridge, or Roxbury, or Dorchester.

Aaron Jones: But we all know of the events or activities around the country that we should focus on trying to lure here to the Boston area, be them church organizations, meeting organizations, fraternities, sororities, medical or technical business industries. Whatever the cases may be, I want us, as a committee, to be singularly focused on trying to lure those events and activities to the city of Boston. And I think as a committee we can play a significant role in luring and recruiting and accommodating those groups so that they feel secure that they can be welcomed and facilitated here in the city of Boston.

Aaron Jones: So one of the things that I had discussed with Carole is that we empanel a subcommittee within the committee that will focus on nurturing that type of business throughout the course of the year. So I'm hoping, throughout this meeting, that we can have discussion on this point, talk about some strategies, but then also narrow into some members within the committee that want to champion this effort throughout the course of the year.

Aaron Jones: So, basically, that sort of sums it up. Correct, Carole? If there's anything I can add, you just let me know.

Carole C Thomas: Thank you very much. I've been taking notes, Aaron, on your topics. Can you elaborate more for the committee on the number-one priority being increased revenue for the CVB? Can you give us more information about that? 'Cause that'll help the discussion and helping to reach that goal.

Aaron Jones: Sure. So, well, I think it's not that narrow. First of all, I wanna make sure we're clear, it's not that narrow on just increasing revenue from CVB. What our main job here at the CVB is to be a facilitator of meetings, tourism, and hospitality for the greater Boston area. So what Martha's agenda is is for us to play a larger and more visible role in promoting all aspects of Boston and greater Boston as destinations or landing spots for tourism and meetings, business and hospitality throughout the city of Boston.

Aaron Jones: We, as an organization, are mainly a facilitation group. We try to facilitate business through tourism, meetings, and hospitalities for our membership, which, by and large, is all of the industries associated with tourism, meeting, planning, and hospitalities: hotels, restaurants, tour companies, et cetera. So in our sort of umbrella of trying to drive more revenue it's really a focus on trying to promote the greater Boston area as a destination location for all people traveling for both business and/or leisure. And our attempt to drive revenue is summed up in the fact that we, as a intermediary group, want to promote the area as a destination place for those people who are doing leisure travel, business travel, or have the need for some hospitality. We think think we can be a landing spot.

Aaron Jones: So, as I mentioned to Carole, one of the things that we can play a role in as a committee is playing host to or being a liaison to all of the organizations around the country and the world that oftentimes facilitate meetings or travel for themselves or their membership. And if we, as a committee, go out and attract that business to bring their groups to Boston, we can facilitate more visibility for the CVB. And I think that would be a successful effort by us as a committee ... Again, as Carole mentioned, we are a subcommittee of the board of the CVB, so, part and parcel, we're all on this call here to promote greater Boston as a destination for any interested groups throughout the world. So I just want us as a committee to be laser focused on how we can contribute to the visibility and location of greater Boston as the destination of choice for organizations for which we are affiliated with or we have a connection to throughout the course of our existence as a subcommittee of the CVB.

Carole C Thomas: Great, great.

Bill Dunham: Can I give this [inaudible 00:27:27]? Or later on? Yeah.

Carole C Thomas: Bill, let me ask one thing and then I'll open it up for discussion. Or at least let me discuss one thing. Thank you for clarifying that and putting more flesh on that framework. Really appreciate it. Let me give you one example that just kicked in while you were talking, Aaron. And I'll clarify this with you. Pam, Glenn, Aaron, do you know if Zoo New England is a member of the CVB?

Glenn McGibbons: Yes-

Pam Frechette: Yes it is-

Glenn McGibbons: Correct.

Carole C Thomas: Good. Okay, great. Well, they just hired me to do a comprehensive initiative on diversity and multiculturalism. So I've just started, and my work is taking me to both sites, both Franklin Park and the Stone Zoo. And soon I'll be visiting some other zoos around the country in connection with this work. Two things. Number one is that I'm already talking to them about the NAACP coming to Boston next year and having some kind of activity or something going on at, particularly Franklin Park Zoo, as a direct impact, or as a direct mechanism to get more people in greater Boston actively involved in the zoo, and going to the zoo. So that's one thing.

Carole C Thomas: And then number two, just the importance of the relationship and, certainly the NAACP coming here, the media visibility that's gonna take place, and having that connection in place, which will be a win-win not only for the NAACP, certainly for the bureau, but also for Zoo New England. So I just wanted to throw that out there. Michael, I'll have an off-line conversation with you about that, and talk to the powers to be within the local body and elsewhere so that we can see how that kind of discussion can go forward.

Pam Frechette: Carole, I've been to some events at the zoo or at Franklin Park. It's gorgeous.

Carole C Thomas: Yes.

Pam Frechette: I did recently read where the mayor is ... I don't know where he found all this money, but there's a big planning process beginning to refurbish and spruce up the park and the zoo. But, again, it's a little gem that very few people know about.

Carole C Thomas: Absolutely.

Pam Frechette: Or maybe are intimidated from going there. I don't know. And the golf course is terrific. My game isn't, but the course is.

Carole C Thomas: I can't agree with you more. It's beautiful and the people who work there are very dedicated. And the leadership said, "Hey, we really need to have a commitment on D & I work, diversity." And not only they're looking at it from their point of view, what I'm now learning is their deep connection with the American Zoological Association & Aquariums, which now is almost mandating, as part of their accreditation process, a diversity-and-inclusion commitment. So it all works hand in hand with what we're doing.

Glenn McGibbons: Yeah. And, Carole, Zoo New England will be a part of our neighborhood campaign that we're developing over the next few months. And what that is is basically the bureau is reaching out and developing more content on our site, and actually want to reach out to more of the cities that are pretty much outside of Boston proper. And our hope is that this would really attract more business in terms of being a member, obviously, or some of those neighborhood businesses. And right now, Zoo New England and Stone Zoo, especially Franklin Park Zoo really fits into that part of town. And really what we wanna do is really kind of build up and bolster visitation to other areas, not just Boston proper.

Carole C Thomas: Right. Super. That's great to know. Thank you. Whatever you can send me on that would be very helpful.

Glenn McGibbons: Okay, I'll let you how it goes.

Bill Dunham: And, Carole, I-

Carole C Thomas: Bill, yes.

Bill Dunham: This, my former agency, which is now DCR, but used to be the MDC, the Metropolitan District Commission in the Department of Environmental Management. There was some relationship with the state parks, with Franklin in particular at one time. I had an associate, she actually worked at that time to save them. Franklin in particular was always bankrupt.

Carole C Thomas: Right.

Bill Dunham: There's an unusual history, which I hope they'll bring you up with, about how-

Carole C Thomas: I know about it. Oh yeah.

Bill Dunham: So that's part of why it's good what you're undertaking. I think it has a lot of potential. It's just gonna be sifting through a lot of things you're gonna find, but any way for my past association with this lady I'd be glad to talk to about off-line.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Thank you. Thank you very much. Yeah, they've been pretty honest with me and transparent about the past and the switchover. They're sort of semi-private. They're non-profit, and they're semi-private, but still getting a significant amount of money from the state, the rest from private donors. So, I'm doing a real deep dive with them.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Thank you. So beyond the zoo, please, let's open it up and respond to Aaron with questions or comments.

Bill Dunham: I have something for Aaron. It's always been my ... What's the expression, Billy neck or Billy nuck? It may have changed. I may have been miscommunicated, but I tried, several years ago, for the big elephant in the room, that's the Massport, to do a better job with all the cruise ships that come in. It's a big business now, and their care for all those employees, thousands who work on all those ships, was not appropriate. They gave 'em a little brochure. That's multiculturalism at its top, for all these different countries, and they're learning about our country and Boston. We need to do more than a brochure. We need a full-phase program to make all these workers who get time off the ship to come, to feel comfortable and welcome to Boston. I would be glad to help Carole and any committee, anybody else, with that.

Bill Dunham: If somebody else needs to check with what the Massport is doing. Maybe they have come a long ways with that, but several years ago it was so abysmal, I'm sorry to say. That would be a good effort by us.

Carole C Thomas: That's interesting.

Tiffany Prob.: I also agree with that, Bill. I was also gonna mention ... The reason why I mentioned prior about the Urban League was because one of the things that I contributed to the group through my Web site was that we created an online guide. It was kind of the "Welcome to Black Boston" kind of guide that we had done for Washington, D.C., as well. So what I was thinking also, as these groups start to come ... And I know digitally it's much easier to do, to update. Maybe even an app or something like that is something that I think that the committee could do something to contribute long term. Having more materials that we're able to produce that show the multiculturalism in the businesses that are here in Boston. People sometimes ... What was popular in our guide: where to eat, or where to get our hair done, or where to get nails done, or things like that, or emergency situations, that kind of thing, while they were here in Boston and weren't familiar with the area.

Tiffany Prob.: So I didn't know what the committee would think about something like that. If that could be a charge that we could do? Just something I'd like to contribute.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Thank you, Tiffany. Other comments?

Aaron Jones: [crosstalk 00:35:59] what we said. Michael, I want you to chime in on this 'cause I know that there have been some efforts in the past that have been focused on this very agenda. Most directly, there's something that used to be run called Weekend of Discovery where these businesses or these organizations around the country, we wanted to attract the top executives from national multicultural organizations and invite those representatives here to Boston to showcase what our city is all about, how much accommodation we can handle, and what meeting and convention space we had to host them. So I think those suggestions about maybe developing some sort of, as I know it to be called in the past, like a "Black Book", of what kind of businesses and cultural and other art destinations there are around the city that are owned or either frequented by multicultural people. Those are fantastic ideas. Bill, with the cruise-ship employees, I can certainly investigate what's being done from that standpoint.

Aaron Jones: But I know the city does have some history of trying to go out and solicit this kind of business, or multicultural business, to host. And, again, one of the things that I think should be our main agenda is to sort of reinvigorate that kind of recruitment process.

Michael Munn: I had ... Can you hear me? Can you hear me?

Carole C Thomas: Yes.

Michael Munn: I had ... I'm trying to give you that segue, Aaron. I don't know if I could be heard without trying to slip in there. But that would be a good point to start. And, Tiffany, your suggestion is a very very good one. Back in the day, not so far back, but at least eight, nine years ago, we had a member of this committee was Thelma [So 00:38:19].

Carole C Thomas: Yes.

Michael Munn: Thelma was the producer, she was the publisher of the Black Pages, which came out annually. I think 2010 or '11 might've been the last year. I'm happy to say and share with this committee, and it shouldn't go any furthar than this committee, that when the NAACP comes in 2020 Thelma will come out of retirement and put together a publication that, I'm hoping, will be ongoing whether she does it or not. And, hopefully, Tiffany, you can tap into that and maybe run with it.

Tiffany Prob.: I would love to.

Carole C Thomas: Yay.

Tiffany Prob.: I would love to.

Michael Munn: That was a very very vital publication that we used when we sent out our RFTs, especially for multicultural events that did exactly that. It showed places in Boston, but even more than that it showed services, multicultural services, or services from a diverse community that was available, relative to hair dressers, where you get your nails done, where you can go and worship, various churches and what have you. And that just created sort of an infrastructure of social activity, or opportunity, for those people that would be participating in whatever conference or event came to Boston. It sort of gave them a head start as to what was available when they got here. And so that's somewhat missing. I think Colette Philips did a piece called Kaleidoscope that we've been trying to get her to republish. And-

Aaron Jones: What was it called, Michael? Can you repeat the name?

Tiffany Prob.: Kaleidoscope-

Michael Munn: Kaleidoscope-

Tiffany Prob.: I know that-

Michael Munn: If I can get to my desk that's being held ransom in Susan's office, I'll show you. I'll give you a copy of one. I think have one.

Carole C Thomas: And, Aaron, you saw Colette because I honored her last month at the breakfast.

Aaron Jones: Oh yeah. Yeah, I'm familiar with her. Yeah, her get-connected events, et cetera.

Carole C Thomas: Right.

Aaron Jones: So, she's a [inaudible 00:40:30].

Michael Munn: Yeah, so we're trying to get her to, perhaps, republish that because that not only gave that kind of information but also gave statistics relative to multicultural numbers in Boston. So it was a good piece to have as a reference, as a desktop reference.

Michael Munn: With regards to the revitalization, if you will, of Weekend of Discovery, I think that would be a good jumping-off point for what this committee could do because there's a segment of that whole dynamic, that whole operational piece, that the committee can play a vital role in, and that would be identifying those organizations. And because we all wear many different hats and have different networks that we might be able to create some center of influence relative to reaching out to these groups and gaining their interest to come and visit us, to at least get a sense of what we're all about and whether this would be a ideal place for them to convene an event, to bring their event. And that's how it all starts.

Michael Munn: So, with that kind of multicultural fan trip we would then, at least, start the ball rolling with regards to how we identify who is identifiable with what we have, what the resources have to offer for them bringing their event to Boston.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Makes sense. Other comments? Other thoughts? Yes.

Tiffany Prob.: Just to follow up with that, 'cause you guys got my mind kind of going a bit on this topic of thinking about if it would be possible, even technologically, Glenn, to have kind of something similar to a blog, or similar to something that can be easily updated, where we could put different events that are happening that are of multicultural focus. Similar to what my Web site was, but my Web site is more for young people that are of African-American descent. But if it could be opened up to something that could be for all multicultural people in Boston. Is that something that could be tied into, or something that the committee would think about? Just to keep it relevant, or driving traffic to the page on a more weekly or regular basis.

Carole C Thomas: Well, Glenn, let me ask you. I know that you're doing a great job of populating and integrating events on other pages outside of our own page on the bostonusa Web site. How would you respond to Tiffany's suggestion?

Glenn McGibbons: Well, I would say that we'd find more areas which our cross-cultural events can feed. So right now it is on the cross-cultural page, but I think what I'm hearing is that it should be on more areas of the site, perhaps. And that is definitely ... You know, and we do have a blog, too, where-

Carole C Thomas: Okay.

Glenn McGibbons: Right now our blog does ... We tag specific blogs that have a multicultural or cross-cultural slant to it, and those do feed to our cross-cultural page right now. And we do promote the cross-cultural page. We do a couple of social posts that are supported with some funds, to make sure that people are aware that Boston is a cross-cultural city. So we'll be doing a little bit more of that. We've gotten a little away from using our hashtag, #crossculturalboston, I've noticed, so we're actually, right now, revamping our team here with regard to the social-media space. And so we're gonna be getting that back into the forefront a little bit more, so I think that that will also help.

Glenn McGibbons: We're also revamping some meetings pages, so there could be some way that we actually are attracting meeting planners who are perhaps a person of color that might be more apt to consider us if there were some multicultural aspects to our meetings' pages. So that's kind of where I'm thinking based on what Tiffany just said.

Carole C Thomas: Good point. My head is spinning now.

Glenn McGibbons: I'm sorry to make anyone's head spin.

Carole C Thomas: No, that's a good thing. But let me see if we can bring in Wendy. Any comments? Or Robin, I know that you've been very attentively listening.

Wendy Pease: Yeah, I talked to Glenn; I think it was a couple weeks ago. I see huge potential for doing things on the Web site to bring in international visitors, which would just be translating some key stuff and then making sure the key words are optimized. And then making it easier for the visitors on the Web site to find the tour groups or the museums or the activities that provide in language. So the Duck Boat gives tours in multiple languages, and they support ... They have brochures in multiple languages. But if you go to the Web site now, you'd never be able to figure that out. And so if there was a place ... To go to a Spanish Web site and then you could see everything that would be provided, services in Spanish. Then if somebody Googles something about Boston in Spanish it'd be more likely to come up.

Carole C Thomas: And that's a direct impact, and would positively impact Rafael Torres, who isn't on the call today; he had a tour today. But, yes, I mean, he's a member. I'm sure that companies like his company, they'd love to have more direct visibility on the site.

Wendy Pease: Right-

Carole C Thomas: Great, Robin-

Wendy Pease: And then doing-

Carole C Thomas: Yes, I'm sorry.

Wendy Pease: Then doing some counseling with some of the companies that aren't doing translating about how they could be more welcoming to international visitors.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Great suggestion. Another one.

Tiffany Prob.: Sorry, I feel like I'm dominating. I'm sorry. I'm just really jazzed about having our new member because I'm a linguist as well. So anything that promotes language, translation, I'm also really interested in having conversations with you offline about that as well.

Carole C Thomas: Excellent.

Wendy Pease: Hooray.

Aaron Jones: Tiffany, Tiffany, was that you who said you're a linguist?

Tiffany Prob.: Yes. Yes. I'm a linguist. And I also speak Spanish as my second language, and I'm learning Chinese as well.

Carole C Thomas: Awesome.

Aaron Jones: So, are there any trade associations associated with linguistics? Multicultural trade associations?

Tiffany Prob.: I'm sorry?

Aaron Jones: Are there any trade associations?

Tiffany Prob.: Yeah.

Aaron Jones: Do they hold meetings or conferences?

Tiffany Prob.: Yes. Absolutely.

Aaron Jones: Great.

Tiffany Prob.: And same with the ... I'm in composition, so I'm also thinking about the compositional conferences. Any educational conferences that come that have multicultural components. NCORE is a very large one. They tend to do most of their conferences in New Orleans. But, thinking about multiculturalism, thinking about them coming to Boston. I'm not sure if they've been here before. Or if they have, I know it's been several years.

Aaron Jones: That's NCORE?

Tiffany Prob.: NCORE. N-C-O-R-E.

Aaron Jones: N-C-O-R-E. N-C-O-R-E.

Tiffany Prob.: Yep.

Michael Munn: One of the things that I spoke about with Wendy, when we spoke last month, I believe it was, I mentioned that we used to work through international recruitment through the US Department of Commerce. And there's probably a way for us to connect with the USDOC for the initiatives that we're looking to do. And because we have boots on the ground and there is international ... That they would do a lot of that recruitment effort, and there may be a way for you to connect to do the translation relative to what we're looking to do. And that synergy, or that connection, seems to be one that would be ideal in terms of utilizing the engine that's already in place through the USDOC and optimizing that for what we're looking to do. I think they do that with various other organizations and genres relative to recruitment of opportunity, to bring business commerce to the US.

Wendy Pease: That's a great idea. That's a really good idea.

Carole C Thomas: Super. Robin, wanna get you in here before we end this meeting. And, clearly, this is only the beginning.

Robin Parker: Absolutely.

Carole C Thomas: What I'm gonna suggest, because this meeting is so important, I am going to take it upon myself to have this meeting transcribed. So I will provide not only the recording but also the transcription. I encourage you, once it's ready, to download it and review it because sometimes when you see stuff in print it makes more of an impact in addition to listening to it or watching what you've watched and listened to. So I will have both available. The video recording probably sooner than the transcription.

Carole C Thomas: Robin.

Robin Parker: This is all great because we do the history tours for the university, and I'm always tracking data. It's data, data, data. And one of the things is that we offer self-guided walking tours in nine different languages. We try to offer tours with a guide that speaks the requested language, but it's not always possible because our tour guides are students. So I think this is great. And I'm looking forward to it. So if there's any information that I might be able to provide ... And, again, once I've looked through what Carole's gonna send, I'm sure it will pique some ideas that I have as well.

Carole C Thomas: Awesome. Thank you so so much. I know Bonnie just joined us. Bonnie, real quickly, just introduce yourself to us. And, Bonnie, you'll be able to watch the replay of this. And, as I said, I'm gonna have a transcription made of this meeting, so you'll have hard copy as well. But, Bonnie Johnson, introduce yourself to us.

Bonnie Johnson: Hi. Hi there. I'm Bonnie Johnson, and I'm wearing my WICN public radio hat, and I'm presently at work, at Broadridge Financial, where I'm in the world of software engineering. But I can't wait to hear what I missed. I was thinking about that medical-translator group that always has conferences in our area.

Carole C Thomas: [crosstalk 00:52:47] you'll have to go back and listen 'cause this is a very rich meeting today.

Bonnie Johnson: I'll have to listen, yeah. Yeah-

Carole C Thomas: There are actually eleven of us on this call, which is awesome. Great.

Michael Munn: Twelve. Twelve now.

Carole C Thomas: Oh, twelve. No, no, eleven, because, Michael, you're here twice, audio wise and your image. So there-

Michael Munn: I should be counted twice, shouldn't I, Carole?

Carole C Thomas: Just like they used to count in Chicago when they voted [crosstalk 00:53:17].

Carole C Thomas: So, before we leave, because, again, this is only the beginning, I wanna have Aaron to close off the meeting with your thoughts, comments, next steps. Aaron Jones.

Aaron Jones: Yes. So next steps. Thanks, Carole. I think that the enthusiasm on the call is really encouraging, and I'd like for those people who really wanna be boots on the ground, from this committee, to contact Carole, 'cause we want to sort of form our group that's going to be the mobilization effort to go out here and solicit these initiatives and recruit this business. So, if you guys could follow up with Carole, whomever might be interested in being on that team, we will gather and begin to strategize on what might be the lowest-hanging fruit or the earliest opportunities that we can go out and try to recruit. And we'll start to re-energize that Weekend of Discovery effort.

Carole C Thomas: Super. Excellent. Well, I wanna thank everybody. I always try to keep things in a timely manner and, clearly, this is only the beginning. I totally agree with Aaron that the enthusiasm has been quite high. You see all the people who were on this call today, which is fabulous. And the others, they had legitimate reasons why they couldn't be here. Not a problem. They'll be able to be brought up to speed. But here you could see our committee is now being pulled to the next level through new leadership, which is very exciting. So I'm hoping that this will have a direct, positive benefit on all of you, whether you're a staff member, whether you are self-employed like I am, but, obviously, for the greater good, we can all benefit. Our next meeting is going to be in May on the 16th.

Glenn McGibbons: Sixteenth.

Carole C Thomas: May 16th, face-to-face meeting. This will be the driving force ... Oh, Bonnie, since you're here. Bonnie, you're gonna secure our guest speaker for next month, a Japanese topic?

Bonnie Johnson: So, she has a little bit of a conflict, but in the meantime I was wondering about bringing in Catherine Morris, who is the founder of the non-profit BAMS Fest. BAMS Fest is an acronym for Black American Music and Soul Festival. It's happening at Franklin Park, and this is the second annual. And it's sort of pivotal because [inaudible 00:56:04] in time will be no more. But they've partnered with her effort, but this could be and should be sort of significant.

Carole C Thomas: Great. Give me her name again.

Bonnie Johnson: She's very dynamic [crosstalk 00:56:23]. What she's doing and her rules are really interesting when it comes to serving a multicultural audience. And I really think she could present something very interesting for us. I might be talking to her tomorrow. And the reason why I didn't ... Because that Japan ... I'm sorry, I'm losing my train of thought. But the organization for Japan, they lost a couple of employees and the director is a little bit stacked. His schedule got really stacked up. So he's kind of limited.

Carole C Thomas: So hopefully we'll have him sometime in the future.

Bonnie Johnson: Yeah.

Carole C Thomas: Give me the lady that you just talked about? Catherine?

Bonnie Johnson: Catherine Morris.

Carole C Thomas: Morris, okay. And the organization again?

Bonnie Johnson: BAMS Fest. B-A-M-A-F Fest. Black American Music and Soul Festival is the acronym.

Carole C Thomas: Got it.

Bonnie Johnson: And she's been doing pretty good in and around the city, but I think you'll find her mission very interesting when it comes to reaching multicultural audiences. And I think that she'll bring an interesting spin on ... Her goals form a line in terms of who she's trying to reach. It's interesting.

Carole C Thomas: Super. So we'll plan on ... You reach out to her and see if you can have her-

Aaron Jones: Have her-

Bonnie Johnson: Yeah-

Carole C Thomas: For May-

Bonnie Johnson: I'll be talking to her tomorrow so I will see if I can secure her time that day.

Carole C Thomas: Okay. Awesome.

Bonnie Johnson: Okay, and I'll let you know.

Carole C Thomas: Thank you. Thank you all so much. Thank you, Bonnie. Thank you, everybody. Thank you, Aaron, for this initial conversation on this topic. If you are interested in being boots on the ground and helping out with the subcommittee. I will obviously be a part of that subcommittee. Just shoot me an e-mail. Give me a phone call. You will get the link to this recording. I will transcribe it, 'cause clearly there's a lot of meat in here. And we'll move this forward. So, again, have a great holiday weekend. Easter. Passover. And we will move forward. Thank you, everybody.

Carole C Thomas: [crosstalk 00:58:37].

Carole C Thomas: All right. Take care. Thank you, Aaron. Alrighty.

Carole C Thomas: [crosstalk 00:58:42].

Carole C Thomas: All right. Bye bye now.