



Visit Estes Park
The Destination
Marketing Organization
VisitEstesPark.com

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 24, 2018, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall Board Room, 170 MacGregor Ave

Board Members Attending: Sean Jurgens, Anne Morris, Pat Murphy, Lowell Richardson, Stefano Tomasello and Deborah Gibson

Also Attending: Al Milano, Suzy Blackhurst, Frank Lancaster, Art Messal, Kirby Hazelton, Trustee Ron Norris and Zach Clemens

Wendi Bryson, Operations Manager, Visit Estes Park
Michael Bodman, Finance & Data Analytics Manager, Visit Estes Park
Jonathan Chmil, Lyons Gaddis, Visit Estes Park Attorney
Kathy Asche, C.P.A., Visit Estes Park Accountant

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sean Jurgens at approximately 1:00 pm.

Public Comments - Frank Lancaster spoke about the collaboration between the town of Estes Park and Visit Estes Park. Art Messal requested the board stop seeking a new permanent CEO in favor of a comprehensive audit.

A. Action Items

1. Approval of Agenda

Morris moved to approve the agenda, Murphy seconded, the board voted to unanimously approve the agenda.

2. Approval of 1/10/2017 Regular Meeting Minutes

Morris moved to approve the 1/10/2018 regular meeting minutes, Murphy seconded, and the board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

1. Board Working Committees and Assignments

Morris explained that the committees were brought up in an effort to address the substantive issues facing the organization, so the board could divide and conquer. Gibson thought that the board should look at the committees used in the past to see if they were still needed or new committees were needed. Bryson explained that last year there was a finance committee and a board strategic policy committee. Jurgens mentioned that he was sure as the year progressed other committees and projects would come up. Morris wanted to know if it would

be possible for the board to propose committees and their focuses by the next board meeting. Richardson asked what Morris had in mind. Morris thought that a metrics committee focused on the key performance indicators, staff provided statistics and public input. Morris went on to suggest a finance, metrics, hiring, strategic planning and possibly a committee that's looking forward to the operating plan. Bodman spoke to the board about how in the past the board was trying to do more work in committees so that when the full board met the discussions could be informed with the work done by the committees. He also explained that using committees was expected to be a more efficient way to get things done. Gibson explained that her previous experience with boards involved more of the work done in committees and it was very successful. Jurgens agreed that he thought a decision on the committees could be made at the next board meeting. Morris asked if an agenda item could also be added for the next board meeting to establish liaison assignments with other organizations. Gibson asked if it was appropriate for board members with interest in specific committees to notify the chair. Jurgens agreed. Richardson asked if there was anything in policy-based governance regarding how we participate in other organizations whether as a liaison or on their boards. Bryson explained that it was not spelled out specifically, but that it could be a procedural decision.

2. * Events Center Partnership – Rob Hinkle – **Presentation Cancelled Due to Illness**

3. EPIC Update on Rocky Mountain Performing Arts Center – Al Milano

Al Milano provided an update on the performing arts center site search and some background on himself and the organization. He explained how the vision for the theater had transitioned from a single use building to a multi-use building due to feedback they received. Milano talked about some of the additional services the facility would be able to offer. He spoke about some of the challenges they were facing with the original site and went on to say that they have narrowed a list of prospective sites to just a few now. He expects they will have a site by the end of March. Milano said his experience does not include having an outside organization assist with direct marketing beyond internet links between the two organizations. Morris thanked Milano for his presentation and mentioned that she works with him on performing arts Center project. Murphy asked if Milano could share information on fundraising efforts. Milano stated that he's had nothing to fundraise for the last few months, so instead he was building relationships. He stated he was very comfortable with the organization's progress at this point.

4. Operations Update & Financial Report

Bodman presented the December financial report. He went over the bank balance changes when compared to last year and what comprises those funds. The total received in the month of November was 2.78% higher than last year. When adjusted for late and missing payments, the difference is estimated to be 7.31% higher than last year. The total received year-to-date (YTD) through November 2017 is up 10.08% compared to the same 11-month YTD period last year. Adjusting for late and missing payments, the YTD change is estimated to be up about 9.61%. For the fall season, defined as September through November, lodging taxes were up 22.1% compared to the same season last year. Adjusting for late and missing payments, the fall season is estimated to be up 7.31%. Bodman briefly reviewed increases shown in the KPI report for lodging tax figures, website users, Facebook followers and town sales tax. He said the number of visitors recorded at the visitor center have declined recently, however that is attributed to new counters having been installed. Morris asked Bryson if she could elaborate a little more on that. Bryson explained that the new counters on the doors

were seen as more accurate than the previous system. Morris asked whether it was thought visitor counts had been overestimated in the past; Bryson agreed. Bodman noted that the visitor count for Rocky Mountain National Park was down slightly from 2016 as anticipated due to the ending of all major centennial celebrations. He said VEP would continue to monitor those counts this year due to the proposed fee hike, since any negative impact on Park visitation is believed to have a direct impact on Estes Park.

Bryson reported that testing for the board's public email website has begun and that she was hoping it would be ready by the next meeting. Bryson gave an update on the 2018 Visitor Guide availability and figures on the initial requests. She also gave an update on the 4th grade Every Kid in a Park project. Bryson then went on to share some updates on IPW coming up in May and how VEP was partnering with CTO for that event. She then went on to talk about a new business that VEP would like to partner with called Colorado Wilderness Rides and Guides in an effort to build more corporate based travel in Estes Park, and how VEP is making group leads a free service to stakeholders in an effort to expand the pool of stakeholders that can respond to guest needs. Bryson said that making group leads a free service will allow more stakeholder participation while promoting more use of the extranet and the guest would only receive one email directly from visit Estes Park rather than each stakeholder replying directly to the guest. Morris expressed concern that the process sounded very labor-intensive. Bryson explained that was why the responses would be funneled through the extranet, since that would greatly cut down on the amount of work required to process each request. Gibson shared that there were two training sessions last November available to everyone that had great information on the extranet, and that her front office manager was meeting with Abi Huebner for individual training as well. Bryson mentioned that VEP wanted to bring SimpleView to Estes Park to provide further training with stakeholders although training provided last November had been video recorded and was available from the website. Also, Bryson and Bodman talked about the possibility of renaming and relaunching the extranet to encourage stakeholder engagement with tools that already exists and could be utilized more fully.

C. Action Items

1. Request to Enter Executive Session

Executive session for the consideration of personnel matters involving the selection, appointment, and employment of an interim CEO pursuant to Sec. 24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S.

Jurgens moved to go into Executive Session for the consideration of personnel matters involving the selection, appointment and employment of an interim CEO under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(f), Murphy seconded, in the board approved unanimously. The board entered into the Executive Session at approximately 2:00 PM and resumed regular session at approximately 4:15 PM.


2. Selection of Interim CEO

Jurgens moved to select Suzy Blackhurst as the interim CEO, Murphy seconded. Richardson commended both candidates, and told Bryson that the board was extremely impressed with how knowledgeable she had become in a very short amount of time. He went on to say that not a lot of people could do that and that she should be commended for all her hard work. Jurgens went on to add that it was not an easy decision. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Board Comments

Richardson spoke about meeting with Jurgens to discuss some of the recent CORA requests and some of the issues that they would be facing and that he was going to take a lead role in some areas due to his experience.

ADJOURN – The meeting was adjourned by Chair Sean Jurgens at approximately 4:20 PM.



Wendi Bryson, Recording Secretary



Sean Jurgens, Chair

DATE: 2/14/18

DATE: 2/14/2018