



Visit Estes Park
The Destination
Marketing Organization
VisitEstesPark.com

Board of Directors Regular Meeting March 15, 2016 Minutes

Board Members Attending: Karen Ericson, Steve Kruger, Lindsay Lamson, Morgan Mulch, Jon Nicholas, Adam Shake, Scott Webermeier

Also Attending: Ron Norris
Greg Rosener
Paul Fishman

Elizabeth Fogarty, President & CEO
Visit Estes Park Staff Suzy Blackhurst

The meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Webermeier.

Public Comment. None

Board Comment. None

A. Action Items

1. Approval of the Agenda

Karen Ericson moved the agenda be approved. Steve Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. New Member Oath of Office.

Chair Webermeier led new member Morgan Mulch in reciting the oath of office. Mulch was appointed to the director position by the Larimer County Commissioners.

Following the oath, it was noted that Mulch would be available for board orientation after April 1. Mulch agreed to provide President & CEO Elizabeth Fogarty with dates when he would be available for that orientation.

3. Approval of Minutes from the February 26, 2016 Strategic Planning Retreat

Adam Shake moved that the minutes from the February 26, 2016 Strategic Planning Retreat be approved. Jon Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes from the March 1, 2016 Board Meeting at Town Hall

Steve Kruger moved that the minutes from the March 1, 2016 Board Meeting at Town Hall be approved. Lindsay Lamson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Karen Ericson abstaining from the vote.

5. Review & Approval of the 2016 CEO Goals

The board reviewed goals that reflect adjustments from CEO goals from 2015. Shake moved the goals be approved. Lamson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Discussion Items and Reports

1. Town of Estes Park Liaison Report – Ron Norris

Norris noted that the Town Board will meet with Estes Valley Recreation & Park District Board and Staff during the Tuesday, March 22 Trustee Work Session to learn more about progress on the construction of the EVRPD Community Center. Since voters approved construction of the center, Norris said it appears significant changes to the proposed plan, including elimination of an area for child care, are being considered. Norris also said construction on Dry Gulch Road is expected to begin on March 28. Recently received from the Colorado Department of Transportation is information that reconstruction of U.S. Hwy. 34 won't begin until fall at the earliest.

Norris told the board that with Town Trustee elections will come a new liaison to Visit Estes Park. If there are specific skills and background that VEP thinks would be good for the new liaison to possess, Norris suggested that information be passed on to whoever is elected mayor. Trustee Bob Holcomb has registered interest in the appointment as has candidate Paul Fishman.

Also to be discussed at the March 22 study session will be the town's capital improvement plan. From 6 to 7 pm the board is scheduled to meet in executive session to provide Town Administrator Frank Lancaster a performance review. During the regular meeting the board is scheduled to proclaim April as Estes Cares about Bears Month, amend the development code as it pertains to density calculations and apartments in non-residential neighborhoods, adopt the 2015 international building code, and update the town's budget. Also expected is a discussion about pay increases for trustees and mayor.

Further action on vacation home rental regulations will be held during a March 30 joint meeting with Larimer County. Action at that meeting is expected to focus only on rentals to eight and under individuals. Larger group rentals will be discussed after the joint task force completes its work.

2. Legal Counsel Visit

Webermeier announced that an invitation to Visit Estes Park's legal counsel is forthcoming so attorney Blair Dickhoner can answer questions that have been raised in the past few months. Nicholas suggested that discussing risk management with the attorney would be advisable. Lamson asked that communications be added to the list of subjects to be discussed, particularly in relationship to what risk elements there are for board members when acting in the interests of Visit Estes Park. Fogarty will work on scheduling.

3. Financial Report

Fogarty discussed the financial report in the board packet saying after adjustments for a significant late payment, it shows there was a 29.5% increase in January lodging tax receipts over those received in January 2014. She said the increase is credited to the success of the winter marketing campaign and the team's hard work. It was noted that using the lodging ADR is a more accurate reflection of the lodging industry than relying solely on occupancy rates because only about 25 properties participate in the Rocky Mountain Lodging Report.

4. KPI Report

Fogarty noted that by year's end the PR averages are expected to even out. She said the drop in PR at this point is a reflection of a very significant prior placement. She noted that a drop in website page views can be attributed to directing users to the specific content they are seeking, which also reduces the number of pages users need to access. JackRabbit referrals still remain in top two in the country. Fogarty continued to go through each key indicator, and discussed at length for Mulch's benefit, as this was his first board meeting.

Shake shared national park attendance statistics that were released right before the VEP meeting began, saying attendance is up 19.7%, and that visitation to Rocky Mountain National Park has doubled in the last five years. Lamson questioned whether there had been any movement to increase activity in the national forest. Fogarty reported that she and PIO Kyle Patterson are planning a joint meeting with national forest personnel, but funding and staff seems to be a similar challenge as it is with the national parks.

5. CEO report

- Fogarty announced the annual Tourism Summit will be on April 27, and likely will kick off with educational sessions and will include adding a two-hour wellness session to the summit, in partnership with Estes Park Medical Center.
- The position recently vacated by Becky Gruhl has been posted and advertised. Most board members said they had discussed the situation with Fogarty and questions were answered. Nicholas noted that he did have some questions, but felt the board meeting was not an appropriate venue for asking. He said he would meet with Fogarty after the meeting to ask questions.
- The second Travel Buzz session had 16 people attending, and others have asked to have the session dealing with raising sponsorship and product development funding presented again.
- Fogarty attended the Town's Board of Appeals meeting where part of the initial discussion was to require vacation owners to retroactively install sprinkler system. She said the public requests were to postpone new building codes until after the vacation home county task force has completed its work.
- Staff member Suzy Blackhurst was asked to outline initial steps in planning for the Town's 2017 Centennial Celebration. She said a celebration committee was beginning work and initially planning for a year-long celebration that would include an April 17, 2017 party and special closing event. VEP is designing and paying for a town centennial logo.
- Fogarty welcomed any last minute RSVP's to the EALA member dinner where town candidates have been asked to join for a Q&A forum. Visit Estes Park will not be voting for the EALA endorsement of candidates.
- During last week's executive committee meeting, time constraints on Fogarty were discussed. To ease her schedule, she will be stepping off the EDC Executive Board and not participate in strategy meetings unless the topic is specific to Visit Estes Park, or she is asked. Fogarty will continue as the VEP representative on the EDC Board.
- Fogarty showed board members an advertisement developed by Brook Burnham that will be used to promote attendance at the March 30 premier of a film about Colorado's national parks produced by Great Divide. Rocky Mountain National Park provided unprecedented access to Great Divide to obtain footage for educational purposes.
- Fogarty is scheduled to present to Sunrise Rotary next Tuesday morning, March 22 and Estes Area Lodging Association in April.
- Wellness topics continue to be discussed. Fogarty outlined information discussed with David Batey of the EDC Strategic Planning Committee in an attempt to clarify roles between EDC, Estes Park Medical Center and Visit Estes Park, and to outline how the organizations will work together and avoid duplication. Batey will review and present the information discussed with Elizabeth at the next EDC Strategic Planning Meeting, and then will present to the EDC board with a formal resolution, per Batey's encouragement. Under the outlined work, EDC's focus will mirror what is outlined in the Avalanche Report by focusing business expansion in the wellness industry and also attracting businesses. Visit Estes Park will provide a unified brand identity for the community, which again is a directive of the Avalanche Report. As wellness activities, services and products emerge, EPMC will assist with validating them as wellness to maintain integrity. As discussed and approved by the board at prior meetings, including the VEP Board Strategic Plan Meeting, VEP will take a holistic approach to marketing, and not focus on any one industry or organization. The entire destination and all the amenities, services and experiences will be embraced as part of the Estes brand. Prompted by a board member asking how to maintain roles, Elizabeth encouraged that as long as the CEOs

and Boards stay in communication, then mission creep can be avoided. Morgan Mulch suggested using a collaborative checklist so all can see what's happening, who's doing what and get feedback on successes.

- Fogarty is working on the VisitEstesPark.com lottery letter and checklist for businesses interested in special placements on VisitEstesPark.com. VEP is looking into developing a vacation rental microsite to accommodate both guest and stakeholder requests. Completing the work will take longer than hoped, Fogarty said, as multiple agency partners are involved. Vacation rental properties without central reservation systems will be offered the use of the JackRabbit system.
- Fogarty distributed an event evaluation questionnaire that has been developed to assist in reviewing individual events and Visit Estes Park's marketing contribution. Fogarty will be meeting with Frank Lancaster and new Events Department Director Rob Hinkle to discuss the evaluation process and event surveys. VEP will be asking each event to survey attendees. Fogarty said event organizers can use iPad and programming provided by VEP, and use the mobile VEP Information gazebo. Events must staff their own survey takers.
- Fogarty attended a planning commission meeting earlier in the day where there was a vacation home discussion. From conversation at that meeting, planning commission members need data to assist some of the solutions proposed, including a website complaint system and appeals process. Needing to be decided is how many complaints constitute a violation. Town Attorney Greg White reminded planning commission members about due process. Planning commissioners also discussed limiting the number of vacation homes that might be allowed.

C. Adjourn

Ericson moved the meeting be adjourned. Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.


Suzy Blackhurst, Recording Secretary

DATE: 4-18-16


Scott Webermeier, Chair

DATE: 4/18/16