



Visit Estes Park
The Destination
Marketing Organization
VisitEstesPark.com

Board of Directors Regular Meeting June 7, 2016 Minutes

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

Also Attending: Town Trustee Liaison Cody Walker
Elizabeth Fogarty, President & CEO
Suzy Blackhurst, Visit Estes Park (VEP) staff

11 citizens attended the meeting

The meeting, held in the Town of Estes Park's Board Meeting Room, was called to order by Chair Scott Webermeier.

Public Comment: None.

Board Comment: Jon Nicholas announced that at 7 p.m. in the Hondius Room at the Estes Valley Library, a public meeting to discuss the Estes Park Economic Development Corporation Incubator Project would be held. He invited all to attend and provide input.

A. Action Items

1. Approval of Agenda
Karen Ericson moved that the agenda be approved. Steve Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Approval of Resolution 03-16 Providing for the Recording of Open Meetings.
Lindsay Lamson read Resolution 03-16 and moved that it be approved. Ericson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approval of Minutes
Lamson moved that the minutes from meetings conducted February 2, 2016, February 16, 2016; May 3, 2016; May 17, 2016 and May 24, 2016 be approved as consent agenda items. Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Discussion Items and Reports

1. CEO Update – Elizabeth Fogarty

Fogarty reviewed in detail the recently released annual report, highlighting specific passages and content on pages throughout the report. She noted that tax funding currently correlates to the organization's marketing efforts, and that fees associated with visitestespark.com, Visitor Center brochure rack space, and the Visitor Guide are related to making those programs at the very least, self-sustaining.

In the coming months, Fogarty said new platforms for stakeholders would be coming on line as VEP strives to stay ahead of what is trending in the industry and also to remain competitive. She said VEP is investing in a platform for virtual tours for those who have enhanced or featured listings on visitestespark.com. Opportunities for eNewsletter placement is also a new offering. Thirdly, CrowdRiff, VEP's new social media aggregator will soon be live on the site and offer partnership opportunities for stakeholders. While there have been significant conversations about installing touch screens at the Visitor Center over the last year, Fogarty said the touch screen technology has not proven to be successful, so they continue to research the opportunity, but will not pull the trigger until the substantial investment is a worthwhile and reliable solution. Fogarty shared that all the marketing platform options that VEP offers stakeholders, assists each individual business enrich their own marketing campaigns specific to their needs beyond what that stakeholder could achieve via their own website or marketing channels. Fogarty shared that everyone within the District receives a free listing, and then the paid listings offer this increased opportunity for each business to grow their own reach, by utilizing the VEP traffic to direct them to their own business.

Fogarty recently attended the annual Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (CADMO) conference held in Colorado Springs. Among the topics discussed was defining wellness as a lifestyle. During the sessions, she said CADMO members were told by Wisdom Works, who are well-being leaders in the wellness industry, that based on continued research, guests find conversations about wellness make them feel it's about compliance or a diet, or at the very least it relates only to spas for them. Rather, Fogarty shared, wellness needs to be represented in a very organic way and must be a thoughtful integration of vitality, well-being and thriving, verses "health." It's all about making the emotional connection once again, not a list of "things," which is also how the entire brand of Estes must resonate as well.

Fogarty shared that she approached the group of DMOs that were successful in receiving one of the CTO grants for the CO hot springs loop and shared that the national park and monument destinations also applied for a CTO grant but did not receive it. Fogarty asked the DMOs if they would consider an "Itinerary B" and create a "hot spring and national park & monument loop." The national park/monument group still has \$25,000 to contribute as well. The DMOs were very receptive, so Fogarty shared her excitement in what might be a salvaged national park/monument loop after all.

Other topics discussed at the CADMO meeting included all destinations finding lack of workforce housing being at chronic levels. Communities are employing accessory dwelling units to help alleviate shortages, and most have adjusted their density codes to alleviate the housing stress as well. For all communities, vacation home rentals is a growing industry and destinations shared their continued support of this segment of the lodging industry. The destinations that did not limit the number of vacation homes allowed to operate, shared that the market adjusted itself and hotel reservations are rising, while the vacation home rentals have stabilized. The group agreed that allowing the market to adjust itself was the way to manage it, not via increased regulation which causes an underground market, and loss of tax dollars. Those communities that have allowed marijuana sales are seeing accompanying large vagrancy issues as affecting tourism and contributing to a chronic homeless population. This was one of the major concerns expressed by the retail marijuana destinations. The state is still stating that the increased tourism is *not* necessarily due to retail marijuana. Other communities, such as Grand Junction are using the marijuana industry to attract associated industry, such as a laboratory that tests marijuana and tracks the plant's DNA. Fogarty shared specific details for Shake and Nicholas to consider for the Estes Park EDC. Also discussed by the group was the state's Local Marketing District statute that forbids marketing districts from using tax proceeds for capital expenditures. Because of the need for product development, tourism consultants Mitch Nichols and Dave Radcliffe, noted that Colorado is behind the times with not allowing DMO's to financially support these ventures. DMAI and DestinationNEXT have long been incorporating destination product development as part of the fabric of

destination tourism and communities who have invested in it are thriving. Fogarty shared that she continues to proactively advocate for the state to reconsider this, at CADMO and other state meetings.

Fogarty ended her report by having staff member Adam Concannon present several videos that have been added to visitestespark.com and used in social media postings.

C. Adjourn

Adam Shake moved the meeting be adjourned. Jon Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



Suzy Blackhurst, Recording Secretary

DATE:

7-19-16



Scott Webermeier, Chair

DATE:

7/19/16