



Visit Estes Park  
The Destination  
Marketing Organization  
VisitEstesPark.com

## Board of Directors Regular Meeting September 20, 2016 Minutes

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

**Also Attending:** Dan West, Estes Park Trail Gazette  
Carrie Arnold, Deer Crest Chalet

Elizabeth Fogarty, President & CEO  
Suzy Blackhurst, Visit Estes Park (VEP) staff

The meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Webermeier at 2:00 pm

**Public Comment:**

Dan West introduced himself saying he would be covering VEP meetings for the Estes Park Trail Gazette.

**Board Comment:**

Lindsay Lamson announced that representatives from two Colorado Welcome Centers would be in Estes Park, and asked the board if partnering with Colorado Welcome Centers is something VEP should be a part of. For several years Lamson and Webermeier have hosted the welcome center groups, but Lamson said he hoped VEP could help pay the costs this year with hosting. Steve Kruger said he felt being involved is appropriate for VEP.

Webermeier spoke about a recent newspaper article that addressed VEP board member term limits and Webermeier's talking with Town officials about the concept of his remaining on the board following the end of his second term in December. He said he wasn't looking for any special concessions, but was exploring possibilities as to how he might remain on the board. Webermeier also stated that he didn't think it was appropriate for the VEP Board get involved with the discussion, since the board does not control the seats. He announced that he plans to submit an application for the board seat.

Webermeier announced there would be no executive session; a special meeting prior to October 4 may be arranged.

**A. Action Items**

1. Approval of the Agenda  
Adam Shake moved the agenda be accepted. Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Approval of Minutes from the September 6, 2016, Board Meeting  
Karen Ericson moved the minutes from the September 6, 2016 board meeting be approved after correcting the information about who moved and seconded the motion to approve the minutes during that meeting. Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approval of the 2017 Operating Plan  
Ericson moved the operating plan be approved. Lamson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## B. Discussion of Items and Reports

### 1. Town Trustee Liaison – Patrick Martchink

Trustee Martchink provided the report on behalf of Trustee Cody Walker. He said shuttle bus advertising had been approved and the VEP Board member position to be appointed by the Town has been advertised. There is no plan for VEP to have a representative on the interview panel. Lamson said past interview teams have found it beneficial to have a VEP representative on hand and Jon Nicholas suggested if there have been concerns about VEP representation, the trustees could set forth their expectations. During the upcoming Town Board meeting, Martchink said the board would discuss hiring a downtown planning consultant, a broadband engineering contract, details surrounding the transit parking structure, and an Intergovernmental agreement supporting Interstate-25 improvements. He congratulated VEP for having received the award for best marketing campaign during the Colorado Governor's Conference on Tourism.

### 2. CEO Report – Elizabeth Fogarty

Fogarty said the Colorado Governor's Tourism award represents more than the marketing award, citing VEP's involvement state-wide over the last couple of years. Her involvement on the state marketing committee, Brooke Burnham's participation with the International Committee, the community and VEP's involvement in regional promotion, and the community's increased participation in the state tourism rally's and receptions – all help play a part in getting recognized in the state award. She said she was considering having the organization host a community party as she said she considers it a community award, as the winter campaign could not have been launched without the majority of businesses staying open in the winter and offering programs and services for VEP to market. Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of board members to plan a gathering, likely between mid-October and mid-November.

#### Finance Report:

Year to date statistics, adjusted for late payments, show tax receipts are 10.82% higher than in 2015. However, Fogarty said that the increase is not atypical as all mountain towns have been reporting double-digit growth this year. The receipts could reverse course, probably in 2018 when an anticipated recession occurs.

Fogarty reported that:

- She provided a presentation to the Rotary Club of Estes Park (noon) recently and received supportive and great feedback
- Staffers Suzy Blackhurst and Abi Huebner have exceeded sales goals for the 2017 Official Estes Park Visitor Guide. Guides remaining from the 2016 printing will be distributed to fourth graders and more backpacks to be distributed at the Visitor Center have been ordered. Stakeholders are being encouraged to donate items to stuff in the packs. VEP will discuss the distribution system with the new owner of Eves Brochure Rack and Lamson recommended all lodgers place the guides in their rooms.
- Representatives from Telluride have sought advice from Fogarty as they work to establish their own lodging association.
- Results from the EALA vacation home survey show that 96 percent of those responding say their properties have never been long-term rentals.
- Fogarty and Burnham attended a two-day Camp 9600 conference prior to the Tourism Conference that included presenters from Travel Oregon and Travel Alberta. During the Tourism Conference a potential future recession was frequently mentioned. Fogarty said Estes Park has some time to prepare for a downturn, but now is the time for Estes to invest in destination product development. Fogarty continues to research how to get interest in amending the current marketing district state statute that does not allow for capital improvements. Mitch Nichols, who consults for VEP, was one of the keynote speakers for the Colorado Tourism Conference. He used Estes Park as an example of using best practices in a variety of ways, including VEP's communications with stakeholders and providing ways for their active engagement.

- VEP received feedback after the fall celebration sale posters were done, and have amended them accordingly. Charley Dickey is distributing them at the same time he distributes copies of the newspaper insert that markets "take the more scenic route" during the Hwy 34 closure.
- Mark Holdt, strategic consultant for the board, will be sending a survey to board members and will be asking for a quick response.
- Tourism communities continue to find ways to put increased income toward product development. While creating events was a major focus of communities during the last recession, events are no longer a focus for most destinations, they are merely an amenity. Communities are now investing in destination product development. Estes Park needs to start investing in both short and long-term development, including improved trail system and experiential products. Fogarty said she will continue to discuss and focus on product development as long as board approves that approach.


#### D. Adjourn

Webermeier asked board members when they might be available for a special meeting the week of September 26. Staff will work with individual board members to establish a time to meet.

Lamson moved that the meeting be adjourned. Shake seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

  
Suzy Blackhurst, Recording Secretary

DATE: 10-4-2016

  
Scott Webermeier, Chair

DATE: 10/4/16