



Visit Estes Park  
The Destination  
Marketing Organization  
VisitEstesPark.com

# Board of Directors Regular Meeting September 20, 2017 Minutes

**Board Members Attending:** Steve Kruger, Lindsay Lamson, Adam Shake, Sean Jurgens and Ron Norris (Town Trustee Liaison).

**Also Attending:** Arthur Messal, Charley Dickey, and Rita Kurelja

Elizabeth Fogarty, President and CEO, Visit Estes Park

Michael Bodman, Finance & Admin. Manager, Visit Estes Park (taking minutes, backup)

Wendi Bryson, Operations Manager, Visit Estes Park (taking minutes and coordinating recording)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Kruger at approximately 1:00 p.m. Shake moved to enter the meeting, Jurgens seconded, and the board approved unanimously.

**Public Comments** - No public comments.

## A. Action Items

### 1. Approval of Agenda

Shake motioned to approve the agenda, Jurgens seconded, and the Board approved unanimously.

### 2. Approve Board Strategic Plan

Shake asked Fogarty for an update on what the staff has been doing in relation with the Board Strategic Plan. Fogarty stated that Mark Holdt sent what was included in the packet and the confidential working draft that included the survey responses. There have not been any changes made since the last meeting. Holdt took the information and put it into a comprehensive list. Shake requested that Fogarty explain the process the Board went through for the Strategic Plan. Fogarty explained the steps that were taken to achieve the final plan. Shake asked how long the board had been working with Holdt on this project. Fogarty stated it was close to a year for the Strategic Plan. Fogarty mentioned that Holdt was also helping with policy based board governance, but that was separate. Lamson added that it was 11 months of really thorough conversations. He mentioned that the Strategic Plan folded directly into some action items in the Operating Plan. He emphasized that it is a living document and will react to changes in the marketplace.

Lamson motioned to approve the Board Strategic Plan, Jurgens seconded, and the Board approved unanimously.

### 3. Approve VEP 2018 Operating Plan

Fogarty gave an update that the 2018 Operating Plan. When the final version is sent to the Town and County, an executive summary will be included as was done last year. The staff has done exhaustive research of other DMO operating and marketing plans. Some of the new additions are goals and additional non-proprietary data. Additional metrics and reports with proprietary data will be provided separately to the Town and County. The length of the plan is as a result of making sure that we are

very thorough, and throughout the year we receive input regarding the Operating Plan. All of that input is taken into account when developing the Operating Plan. All but two of the cited research in the Operating Plan is appropriate 2017 research that illustrates what is trending in the industry and why we are moving in the directions we are.

Shake mentioned that, after going through the document, he found it exhaustive, but that's not a bad thing, especially since there will be an executive summary as well. He asked Fogarty if she had received input from the Town and County, and if so, how that was integrated into the plan. Fogarty said that everything was integrated except what all the organizations agreed was proprietary and that would be provided as a separate addendum since the Operating Plan is hosted on the public VEP.com website. Everyone agreed that confidential data would be kept separate.

Lamson asked Fogarty if, when including the direct feedback from the Town and County, she verified that what was included in the Operating Plan was what they were looking for. Fogarty mentioned that Frank Lancaster had sent out a survey requesting feedback and received one reply. Fogarty shared that feedback received separately was addressed appropriately.

Jurgens agreed that it was extremely thorough and there were good sections on Social Media and defining ROI. He hopes that more people will be able to read the Operating Plan and understand better everything that Visit Estes Park does. Fogarty mentioned that a lot of the stakeholders actually read the Operating Plan and base their own marketing plans off our strategy. This way, we are all speaking a similar language and that is why the destination is succeeding. Fogarty emphasized that the level of detail in the Plan is helpful for others.

Shake asked roughly how much of this Operating Plan is original content versus last year. Fogarty shared the exact figure at the last meeting, but guessed it at 2,000 edits. The new research is mostly used for the niche campaigns and you see that throughout the Operating Plan. Reporting is making a big shift for next year with the addition of big data, so we can show the impact of our marketing. However, much of what we do cannot be metric'd or put into a statistic. Shake mentioned there's been a lot of talk about ROI, but return to community and return to guest/visitor is just as important. Fogarty mentioned DMOs are very different than an ad agency, because our responsibility is to create brand lift and creating emotion for this area, not selling a product or a widget.

Kruger thanked everyone for the time and energy they put into the Operating Plan. He said that it was well done. Lamson mentioned that the Plan was so thorough that he wanted to make sure that people know that broadening the year-round economy is still paramount. Fogarty agreed that is still the main focus for the strategy moving forward and is part of the mission and vision statement.

Shake motioned to approve the 2018 Operating Plan, Jurgens seconded, and the Board approved unanimously.

## **B. DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS**

### **Board Comments**

Shake thanked Fogarty and all of the staff for all the hard work over the last several months. He acknowledged that this is always crunch time with the ad sales, the Operating Plan and Strategic Plan. Jurgens also thanked everyone for their hard work and it looked great. Lamson hoped that as we receive feedback that there are recommendations that are actionable versus vague criticisms. He is hopeful that going forward, the board can continue working in tandem with the Town and County to the benefit of the Estes Valley, Larimer County, Northern Colorado and the state as a whole.

Town Trustee Norris confirmed that all the Town Trustees had received the Operating Plan. He is working on

going over the Plan, and he will encourage the other Trustees to send along specific comments at the next Board meeting. Norris gave some highlights from the next Town Board agenda including the Rocky Mountain Performing Arts Center update, the supplemental budget items and an update on the stormwater master planning effort. Lamson asked if the stormwater planning discussion was going to include funding. Norris said that they were discussing the plan and emphasis, and he thought the budget talks would come later on.

**Adjournment** - Lamson moved to adjourn at approximately 2 p.m., Shake seconded, and the board approved unanimously.

  
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Wendi Bryson, Recording Secretary

  
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Chair

DATE: 11/22/2017

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