



Visit Estes Park  
The Destination  
Marketing Organization  
VisitEstesPark.com

## Board of Directors Regular Meeting October 4, 2016 Minutes

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

**Also Attending:** Cody Walker, Town of Estes Park Trustee Liaison  
Dan West, Estes Park Trail Gazette

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:** None.

**Board Comment:** None.

**Presentation:** **Restore America's Parks – Pew Charitable Trusts – Yaron Miller**

Miller spoke about the educational nature of the study being funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, that focuses on defining deferred maintenance in the country's national parks. Pew's work shows there is \$63 million in deferred maintenance in Rocky Mountain National Park, which includes decaying buildings, trails, roads, bridges, parking lots and more. NPS has an infrastructure repair backlog estimated at \$11.9 billion (FY 2015).

The Trust is conducting gateway community roundtables to discuss the issues and is seeking endorsement from local leaders to show Congress that the communities care and are in need of assistance on behalf of their national parks. According to NPS, in 2015, 4.1 million visitors to RMNP spent almost \$270 million in local gateway communities, supporting almost 4,150 jobs in the region. That spending, once cycled through the local economy has resulted in \$408 million in economic output.

For Colorado as a whole, and as Governor Hickenlooper mentioned in his remarks at the 2016 Governor's Tourism Conference, in 2015, 7.1 million visitors spent over \$450 million in gateway communities, supporting almost 7,000 jobs. All told, that spending resulted in a total economic impact of \$667 million.

### A. Action Items

1. Approval of the Agenda

Jon Nicholas moved the agenda be accepted. Karen Ericson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes from the September 20, 2016, Board Meeting

Nicholas moved the minutes from the September 20, 2016 meeting be approved. Steve Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Restore America's Parks – Letter of Support

Nicholas moved the board approve a letter of support for the Pew Charitable Trust effort to encourage Congress to consider guaranteed funding for infrastructure repair needs for the national parks. Kruger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## B. Discussion of Items and Reports

### 1. Town Trustee Liaison – Cody Walker

Trustee Walker noted that he wants to make sure he is not influencing individual boards for which he is a liaison. He also shared that the county will not be combining interview efforts with the Town of Estes Park to fill their vacancy. He said for those interested in applying, can apply with the county and apply with the town. Walker and Trustee Patrick Marchink will serve as the interview team for the town. To date, two applications have been received.

Trustees have approved the process to construct a town parking garage on the south side of Fall River at the Estes Park Visitor Center. It is believed that construction will be completed by July 2017.

### 2. CEO Report – Elizabeth Fogarty

Fogarty and Webermeier recently met with David Batey and Jim Pickering to review the Avalanche report. The determination from that meeting is that Visit Estes Park already is doing everything recommended in the report except Events, which the VEP board has concluded is not part of the organizations primary mission.

Fogarty thanked the board for its approval of the Operating Plan, saying bound copies would be available by the end of the week.

Fogarty passed around copies of the Highway 34 insert that was distributed to area papers most affected by the closure including business distribution. She shared that VEP has received very positive feedback regarding the messaging of "It's only fitting to take the scenic route."

For the second year, VEP is a purple sponsor for the school, adding that VEP continues to find new ways to support the community, whether the organization VEP is partnering with touches tourism directly or not.

VEP is once again organizing all of the CO national parks and national monument to submit a CTO grant request for a national park loop. Considering last year's request almost made the cut, the group is somewhat confident of acceptance this year.

VEP is completing its last Virtual Tour session until spring 2017. Fogarty said the website element has received great feedback from guests and businesses alike.

Fogarty shared articles and press materials that have resulted from work of Visit Estes Park.

Fogarty quickly reviewed the ballot initiatives for Colorado and encouraged anyone who would like to know more, to reach out for impartial info. and Fogarty offered providing links for additional info. so others can research on their own.

Fogarty shared an email from Tom Pickering where he shared that all of the hard work getting the lodging tax on the ballot has certainly paid off, and that makes him extremely happy. He also thanked the great work the team is doing.

Fogarty announced that staff member Suzy Blackhurst has notified Visit Estes Park of her intent to retire in mid-January. Fogarty shared Suzy's contribution to the organization and that she will be missed, but is also happy for Suzy as well.

## D. Adjourn

Lindsay Lamson moved that the meeting be adjourned. Karen Ericson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Suzy Blackhurst  
Suzy Blackhurst, Recording Secretary

DATE: 11-15-2016

Scott Webermeier  
Scott Webermeier, Chair

DATE: 11/15/16