



Visit Estes Park  
The Destination  
Marketing Organization  
VisitEstesPark.com

## Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 3, 2020, 6:00 p.m.  
Conference Room, 1751 N. Lake Ave Unit 107  
Via GoTo Meeting

**Board Members Attending:** Chair Person Deborah Gibson, Vice Chair Sean Jurgens, Treasurer Tonya Humiston, Secretary Pat Murphy, Trustee Marie Cenac, Trustee Scott Webermeier, and Director McShann Walker

**Also Attending:**

Kevin Benes Vice President & CFO, Visit Estes Park  
Krystin Campion, Executive Admin Assistant  
Josh Harms Marketing Manager  
Abigail Huebner Director of Stakeholder Services

Meeting was called to order by Chair Person Deb Gibson at approximately 6:06 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment was stated.

**CHAIR PERSON' S MESSAGE:**

Chair Person Gibson starts her message with a very big thank you and a mention of gratitude to all the Firefighters and First Responders that came to aide Estes Park during the fires, in general, but especially during the evacuations. She also expressed how happy she is to be home, and she knows the others are too.

Chair Person Gibson reviews the agenda items and asks for a motion for approval of the agenda. Trustee Webermeier motions and Trustee Cenac seconds the motion. The motion is passed unanimously across by the Board of Directors for Visit Estes Park, otherwise referred to as VEP.

**REPORTS.**

1. RMNP Update-PIO Kyle Patterson

Patterson shows up late and gives her report later in the meeting. Patterson starts by saying that she hopes the update emails have been helpful for everyone. She then discusses how the RMNP is still currently closed, however, they are wanting to open some parts of the park up hopefully by November 6, 2020. One area RMNP knows will have to stay closed, even though it is a big draw for people, is the Bear Lake area due to fire damage and risk. Patterson goes on to state that 90% of RMNP is impacted when you combine the beetle kill and the drought, so the risk of fire and forest damage is not going away anytime soon.

2. Town Board Updates

Trustee Cenac gives a brief Town update. She mentions that the Town was able to evacuate 14,000 people within 2 hours, which has the town thinking about ways to improve this process, should the need arise again. But, overall, the evacuation went fairly smooth. The other thing the Town is starting to think about is that the Covid-19 numbers are on the rise again, especially in Estes Park, with people being forced to gather in groups at different locations. The Town is working on updating the website with more COVID-19 Information having the goal of making things a bit clearer for the public. Trustee Cenac also mentions the free COVID-19 testing that happens at the Events Complex on November 4, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**PROGRAM REVIEW.**

1. Employee Volunteer Program

Benes presents that there is one staff member, Rachel Opperman, who is a volunteer firefighter. He also states that each VEP employee is given 40 hours of volunteer time each year. With the wildfire situation this

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year, Rachel Oppermann had already exceeded her volunteer hours. While she continued to go out and fight the fire in these past weeks, she was expected to use her own personal PTO for work missed. Benes stated that did not sit right with him given she was out fighting for the local community. He also states this is something the CEO would normally handle; but, in light of not having a CEO right now, he felt the need to bring it before the Board. The Board clarified that this is a one-time request to extend the volunteer hours for this one employee for this one instance. Should this arise again, they will discuss again. Trustee Cenac motions to approve giving paid volunteer hours to Rachel Oppermann. Vice Chair Jurgens seconds this motion. Chair Gibson asks for comments from the public and the Board members. Chair Gibson mentions how she was in contact with Rachel while this was all happening; and, even though she was very remote, Rachel was very responsive and accessible during this time and very much in favor of this. The motion is passed unanimously.

## 2. Stakeholder Services Updates

Huebner starts with mentioning that her team has paused reaching out for sales during the recent events as that is in poor taste. Focused on making sure Stakeholders are taken care of during this time. The team is digging deeper into the analytics to make available to Stakeholders to have a clearer understanding of how they are doing with current advertising efforts. A new project of a Virtual Visitor Center is currently being worked on. This project will allow all the guests to view the brochures that would normally be available in the physical visitor center. Huebner believes that print will come back, and that guests like to have the physical paper in hand; but for now, this will be available. The page is up and running and just now reaching out to Stakeholders since the fire situation is more under control. Chair Person Gibson mentions the statement that went out about how VEP is still here and offering support through all the twists and turns that the year has brought. Trustee Webermeier asks what Huebner means by digging deeper into the analytics for Stakeholders. What does that mean for Stakeholders? Huebner's long-term goal is to get as many stats to Stakeholders as possible to show VEP's value and also help make them aware of the free offerings. This shows how effective VEP is for them and presents a monthly ticket to Stakeholders of how they did each month. Huebner is still getting this organized and spit out. Webermeier asks, when will this be spit out? Huebner is thinking next year of 2021; but they are still trying to get data out to Stakeholders for the last 6 months. Huebner mentions that Rebecca Pena, Group Sales Manager, has created lead segments as requested by the Board previously. They have separated the group in categories per the Board's request.

## 3. Marketing Updates

Harms starts his presentation with the fall plan; but with fire situations, they switched to a winter focus. Once the evacuations started, they paused everything and are currently focused on getting everything up and running again. With social media and search marketing campaigns starting the next day, this information will have caution on being prepared for possible evacuations, as well that some places might still be catering to First Responders in town and making people aware of what coming to Estes Park looks like right now. Going forward, VEP is looking at hosting a FAM tour for winter. Other marketing materials are in the works such as time lap videos. Then Harms presents the stats of the campaign that were running prior to the fire, which were all in the green, meaning successful; but the experience a dropped with the fires, the closure of RMNP, and the evacuations.

## 4. Finance Officer Updates

Benes presents that the wildfires and evacuations disruption caused a disruption in the ability to get all the numbers needed for a complete finance update; but the number he has shows that September came in higher than expected, which is a positive. But, so far, for the year, the lodging tax budget is down about \$500,000 from the original budget, which is much better than the COVID-19 budget prepared in April 2020.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT.

### 1. Budget Resolutions 04-20 & 05-20

These are drafts of the budget until the public hearing on November 6, 2020. Otherwise, the Board will vote on these at the December meeting. 4-20 Resolution is the appropriation of the funds for 2020 and they are different due to Covid-19. 5-20 Resolution is the adoption of the 2021 Budget based on the Operating Plan for 2021.

### 2. Interim CEO Discussion with Potential to Vote

Chair Gibson turns over the discussion to Vice Chair Jurgens. He states that VEP needs to name an Interim CEO and, in the past, they have a nominated the Board Chair to enter into negotiations with a person to fill the interim slot. Chair Gibson then asks Vice Chair Jurgens to suggest a candidate. Vice Chair Jurgens suggests Abi Huebner based on the facts that she is the most senior employee, knows all the ins and outs of the

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deadlines that we are dealing with at this time and, also, is the easiest for a transition without delays. Vice Chair asks for thought and comments from the Board. Director Murphy Humiston and Cenac all agree that she makes sense. Vice Chair Jurgens motions that Chair Gibson enter into negotiations with Abi Huebner for Interim CEO position. Director Murphy seconds the motion. Chair Gibson asks for Board and Public comments. There are none, and the motion passes unanimously.

### 3. CEO Replacement Discussion with Potential to Vote

Benes presents a power point on how it would be beneficial to have VEP run the new CEO search instead of looking at a firm to do this. Another reason to consider this avenue is it would be more cost effective. Another option that was discussed is having one person as the CEO, and that might be a better fit for the organization. During the CEO search and discussion, Trustee Webermeier also suggests that the Board meet more than once a month and ideally twice a month. Cenac agrees that the Board should meet more than once a month. The Board discusses this option and states that they are not ready to vote on this matter. The general consensus of the Board is to make sure that things are transparent and to take community perspective into account during this search. They also discuss that they need to redefine the job description and salary and want staff feedback on this topic as well. It is important that the staff meet and greet and see that the chemistry is there as well. The Board agrees to meet November 17, 2020. Trustee Cenac motions to create a CEO Search Committee composed of Chair Gibson, Trustee Webermeier, and Director Walker. Motion is seconded by Vice Chair Jurgens, and passes across the Board.

### RESOLUTION.

Ratify the Resignation Agreement and Mutual Release of CEO Lund  
"Move to ratify the Resignation Agreement and Mutual Release as consistent with prior Board authorization."  
Webermeier moves to ratify the Resignation Agreement and Mutual Release. That is seconded by Vice Chair Jurgens. Motion passes across the Board.

### CONSENT AGENDA.

Approval of minutes from the October 6, 2020 Regular Meeting.  
Chair Person Gibson asks for a move to approve the last meeting minutes. Vice Chair Jurgens seconds the move to approve the Oct 6, 2020 meeting minutes. The motion is passed unanimously across by the Board.

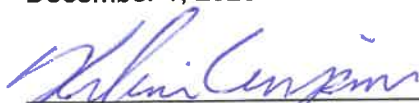
### BOARD COMMENTS.

Trustee Webermeier wants to acknowledge Chairperson Gibson for a phenomenal job of PR and communications to the public, and responses were above and beyond the call of duty. Trustee Webermeier also addresses Krystin Campion saying that at the Town Board meeting, they do not always start roll call with the same person. Have a little fun with everyone, and change up the roll call order a bit.

### ADJOURN.

Chair Person Gibson adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Next meeting:  
November 17, 2020  
December 1, 2020

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Krystin Campion, Recording Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deborah Gibson, Chair Person

DATE: 11-17-2020

DATE: 12-12-20

Upcoming Meetings: December 1, 2020

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