



Visit Estes Park

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 2:00 PM
Via ZOOM Meeting

Board Members Attending:

Chair Sean Jurgens, Vice Chair Deborah Gibson, Secretary & Treasurer McShan Walker, Director Pat Murphy, Trustee Frank Lancaster and Director Jerusha Rice

Others in Attendance:

Kyle Patterson, RMNP
Colleen DePasquale, Chamber of Commerce
John Schnipkoweit, EDC

VEP Staff:

Kara Franker, CEO
Michael Zumbaugh, CFO
Rebecca Domenico-Gelsinger, COO
Heidi Barfels, CMO
Rachel Ward Oppermann, Director of Advocacy and Sustainability
Kendall Akin, Creative Manager
Dana Paiement, Senior Destination Development Manager
Colleen Sovey, Community Relations Manager
Claire Molle, Communications Manager

Meeting is called to order at 2:04 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA & MINUTES:

Chair Sean Jurgens asks for a motion to approve the agenda and minutes. Trustee Frank Lancaster moves to approve the agenda and minutes, Secretary McShan Walker seconds, all vote yes, motion passes.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

There is no public comment.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES:

There are no board member updates.

CALL FOR TOWN BOARD UPDATES:

There are no town board updates.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATES

Kyle Patterson gives an update on Rocky Mountain National Park. She starts with a reminder about the environmental assessment for day-use management which she says was due today, but due to a blip in the website, it has been extended through Monday. Patterson says she hopes to have updates on the Fall River Entrance and Moraine Park Campground construction projects at the meeting in January.

John Schnipkoweit gives an update from the EDC. Schnipkoweit says the EDC held the All Investor meeting since the last VEP board meeting and they are working on combining operations with the Chamber of Commerce. He says the EDC has the support of investors to move these efforts forward. He reports they plan to move this forward at the next board meeting which will take place tomorrow and they are looking forward to making progress.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

CFO Mike Zumbaugh gives the report of the financial statements. He says there is no Rocky Mountain Lodging Report available for November yet since this board meeting is being held earlier than usual. Zumbaugh reports that lodging tax revenues were down 11.4 percent for the month, coming in at \$254,000 for October and were down 1.8 percent year-to-date from 2022.

Zumbaugh says that compared to budget, VEP is down 2.6 percent for October but is 3.2 percent ahead of budget.

Chair Sean Jurgens notes that he had a great fall season at his property, so he finds being down 11 percent in lodging tax revenue strange. Vice Chair Deborah Gibson and Director Rich Chiappe both chime in saying they were both up in the fall at their properties as well.

Zumbaugh responds by saying there may have been one larger remitter or more that could have skewed these numbers. He says he will find out where the holes are and report back.

Chair Sean Jurgens moves to accept the financial statements as presented. Vice Chair Deborah Gibson seconds. There is no further comment. All vote yes, motion passes.

BUDGET VOTE:

CFO Mike Zumbaugh reports that there have been no questions or concerns brought up regarding the budget since its presentation in November. Zumbaugh asks if there are any final questions.

Chair Sean Jurgens asks if there was any public comment on the budget and Zumbaugh responds that there was not. There are no further questions.

Chair Sean Jurgens moves to approve Resolution 23-01, the 2024 budget. Director Pat Murphy seconds there is no comment. All vote yes. The 2024 budget is approved.

APPROVAL OF THE 2024 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

VEP CEO Kara Franker presents the proposed board meeting schedule for 2024. Franker draws attention to the end of the year where there will be two December meetings, which is because the November meeting falls on a holiday, so the November meeting will instead take place on December 5 which will be the budget hearing followed by the budget approval being on December 19.

Franker asks for questions or if anything needs to be moved around. She says the board will need to vote on the 2024 meeting schedule.

After a very brief discussion, it is decided that the schedule as presented works for everyone.

Chair Sean Jurgens moves to approve Resolution 23-02, the 2024 Board Meeting Schedule. Secretary McShan Walker seconds. All vote yes, and the meeting schedule is approved.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

VEP CEO Kara Franker gives a short overview of Bill C which is moving through the legislature and has to do with short-term rentals. Franker says this is a very different issue than the STRs have been going through with Larimer County because this is statewide, so it's important that everyone take a deeper dive into how it could affect lodging taxes. Franker says STRs currently bring in 39 percent of the total lodging taxes. She says Bill C would put regulations on short-term rentals statewide and if someone is renting out their place for more than 90 days, they would be taxed as a commercial entity. Franker says the board can have a more robust conversation about this in January once more research is done to see whether or not VEP is in a position to say or not say something. Colleen DePasquale with the Chamber of Commerce says Bill Brown spoke to her executive committee on Tuesday and she is working on researching the issue with a survey that is being distributed to the community. Franker says the VEP staff can help DePasquale put together and distribute the survey.

A robust discussion about Bill C continues among the VEP Board. It is determined that Franker will ask Bill Brown to talk to the board at the January meeting. In January, the board will also hear the Chamber's update from the survey as well as any other board or public comment. Franker says we will add this agenda item to the January board meeting agenda.

CEO Kara Franker continues with more notes. Franker says Frosty Beer Fest sounds like it was a hit, and there are tons of people pre-registered for Catch the Glow Family Day and Sweets Stroll tomorrow. She says with great weather predicted, the team is preparing for crowds. Vice Chair Deborah Gibson says that it looks like Catch the Glow holiday season and events have been bringing a lot of people into town, especially considering how cold it has been.

CEO Franker says the team had a great meeting with Trustee Barbara McAlpine about VEP's sustainability efforts with the Town Administrator. She says there are more announcements to come about Earth Day initiatives. Franker says she asked the town if the VEP team could do a study session with the town board about this as well. She says this will be modeled similarly to the presentation to the town for the Catch the Glow initiatives.

Franker concludes by reporting that the Frozen Dead Guy Days documentary will air on PBS soon.

ADJOURN:

There are no further comments.

The meeting is adjourned at 2:57 pm.

Upcoming Meeting: January 25, 2024, at 2 p.m. via Zoom.

Claire Molle
Claire, Mollé, Recording Secretary

Jerusha rice
Jerusha Rice, Secretary

DATE: _____

DATE: _____

Signature: *Claire Molle*

Email: claire@visitestepark.com

Signature: 
Jerusha Rice (Jan 25, 2024 18:19 MST)

Email: jrice@visitestepark.com