



TOWN OF
ESTES PARK
COLORADO



**Lodging Tax Extension Task Force
Meeting #6
Wednesday, June 22, 2022
12:00 p.m. Via Zoom**

Advisory Members Attending

Jody Shadduck-McNally, Scott Webermeier, Deborah Gibson, Sean Jurgens, Jerusha Rice, Laura Walker, Alea Rodriguez, Travis Machalek, Adam Shake

Voting Members Attending

Michael Andrzejek, David Batey, Austen Bierl, Dan Centurione, Teresa Commerford, John Cullen, Richard James, Dzidra Junior, Laurie Dale Marshall, Trevor Scott McGuire, Michael Romero, Greg Rosener, Suzanne Smikahl, Scott Thompson

Visit Estes Park Staff Attending

Kara Franker, Rebecca Domenico-Gelsing, Rachel Ward Oppermann

Meeting is called to order at 12:05 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MEETING QUESTION

What level of programmatic detail is needed to justify a proposed lodging tax increase to the voters?

DISCUSSION

Kara Franker addresses the group. The final report will reflect all viewpoints of and the details discussed throughout this Task Force. The time and effort this group gave is invaluable. The work is not over. Recommendations made by the Task Force to date are reviewed.

Bill Brown addresses the group. It is beyond the scope of this Task Force to devise the structure for how the funds will be allocated and managed. It will be devised through discussion between the boards of Visit Estes Park, the Town of Estes Park and the County. The group achieved its goal. The group is interested in how a ballot measure will be presented to the community and what the voter needs to see on it.

Eric Blackhurst presents an organizational plan for the use and management of HB22-1117 funds. He is speaking on behalf of himself, not the Housing Authority. His plan attempts to address concerns regarding available time to create a plan to present to voters for a November 2022 election. A history of workforce housing need and development is given. The Housing Authority has a 22-year history of managing, purchasing, developing and subdividing workforce

and low-to-moderate income housing. They have experience working with the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA).

The Town of Estes Park should act as the fiscal agent. The mechanism for a local entity to deal with housing is in place. There is local, qualified, experienced staff. The Housing Authority is a quasi-governmental organization that does not need to make a profit. They would need to expand their staff. The Housing Authority is not going to build 1700 units, it will be the private sector. Funds to reduce the costs to builders could flow through the Housing Authority. He addresses how to include childcare.

Scott Moulton, Naomi Hawf and Eric Blackhurst speak to their experience with CHFA. CHFA's involvement requires them to have a product that can be leveraged and it may take them awhile to develop one that is right for the Estes Valley.

A goal of the Housing Authority is to keep the properties they have livable, to upgrade and renovate them when necessary and to make sure they have the budget to do so. They are adept at making sure their properties are financially stable. Properties start with a solid reserve balance. There are projects they could start working on today if the Housing Authority received funds.

Preservation of existing inventory is very important. If the Housing Authority had the funds, they probably could have saved the Graves Avenue apartments. Part of the problem with rehabbing units is where to house the current tenants while the work is taking place.

Laurie Dale Marshall presents data and a plan for early care and education in Estes Park. The entire school system can be more efficient if children have early care and education opportunities. There are economic benefits. There is a shortage of quality, affordable care. The solutions are multifaceted including a childcare center, homebased care, subsidies and renovations. There are a variety of issues: affordability, the need for emergency care, seasonality, compensation is not at a living wage. Wages should match what school districts are able to offer so workforce is not lost to school districts.

Bennet Preschool at the YMCA is used as an example to demonstrate costs of care at full capacity, including the number of children that could be served and the number of teachers needed. It does not include infant care, which is more expensive and is the greatest need in Estes Park.

There is not one solution for childcare issues. Existing platforms, such as base funding through the Town, could be used to distribute the funds. Keep it simple.

Dzidra Junior lists additional costs associated with the Bennet Preschool example that weren't included in Laurie Dale Marshall's example.

David Batey presents thoughts on next steps after the Task Force sunsets. Resolve the project organizational structure. Establish a working group. Determine when to go to election. Establish an issue committee to work on the details of an effective campaign. Develop plans for years 1-5. Determine if the short-term rental fee should be reconsidered. Determine if the Fish Hatchery project should be put on hold. Going to election in November 2022 will be challenging. If there is not a plan at the time of the election, a description of how the plan will be developed, with oversight, is recommended to increase voter trust. The group discusses David Batey's thoughts, generally agreeing that a plan is needed. The staff members of the Town, the County and Visit Estes Park are going to meet to develop recommendations on structure for their boards to consider. A split election is proposed.

Deborah Gibson states there is another constituency that needs to be considered: the people living and working here and trying to raise families. Their needs are urgent. Hard decisions must be made on a week-to-week basis. The sooner work on solutions is started, the cheaper they will be. A remote workforce is not sustainable. This group is not talking about servicing growth, but the business that is already here.

Travis Machalek does not advocate for a split election. Identifying the structure and an organizational leader is important.

ACTION ITEM:

Dan Centurione moves to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2022 meeting. Greg Rosener seconds. Motion passes 14-0.

ACTION ITEM:

David Batey moves to request clear and transparent communication among all parties on all decisions that are made and requests that decision makers take all the time needed for thorough planning and preparation for election success and project effectiveness in addressing our community's workforce housing and childcare needs. Dan Centurione seconds. Motion passes, 13 in favor, 1 opposed.

ADJOURN: 2:17 p.m.

Rachel Ward Oppermann

Rachel Ward Oppermann,
Recording Secretary

DATE: Jul 8, 2022