



Visit Estes Park  
The Destination  
Marketing Organization  
VisitEstesPark.com

**Board of Directors Regular Meeting  
Thursday, April 27, 2023 at 2:00 PM  
Via ZOOM Meeting**

Board Members Attending:

Chair Sean Jurgens, Vice Chair Deborah Gibson, Secretary McShan Walker, Director Pat Murphy, Director Jerusha Rice and Marie Cenac standing in

Others in Attendance:

Kyle Patterson  
Colleen DePasquale

Board Members Not in Attendance:

Director Rich Chiappe

VEP Staff:

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

The meeting is called to order at 2:05 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA & MINUTES:

1. Overview of Agenda

Chair Sean Jurgens gives an overview of the agenda items.

Chair Sean Jurgens asks for a motion to approve the agenda and minutes.

2. Approve Agenda

Secretary McShan Walker moves to approve. Vice Chair Deborah Gibson seconds.  
The agenda and minutes are approved.

CALL FOR TOWN BOARD UPDATES:

There are no updates from the Town Board.

### BOARD MEMBER UPDATES:

There are no updates from board members.

### PUBLIC COMMENT:

There is no public comment.

### REPORTS:

1. Adam Shake not in attendance due to a conflicting meeting, but Kara announces on his behalf that he has chosen to step down from his position and an interim position will be opening.
2. Kyle Patterson reports the Fall River entrance to RMNP construction continues. They had hoped it would start in April with completion in May 2023, but the project was not able to begin until October 2022 due to unforeseen challenges which prolonged construction. Patterson says as we head into Summer, 1 lane remains open and asks that we continue to share the message of longer lines and encourage entrance through the Beaver Meadow Entrance. Patterson also reports that the Moraine Park Campground is closed and says the Hiker Shuttle will continue this year.
3. Colleen DePasquale gives an update from the Chamber of Commerce saying the Chamber hosted their Food for Thought event last night, about future workforce challenges. A group will be going to Denver on Monday to meet with Senators and Representatives and take a tour of the Capitol. Chamber is creating a Wedding Alliance for anyone who is associated with weddings. The next Chamber of Commerce After Hours event will take place on May 18th at Rock Cut Brewery and the upcoming Estes Next will take place at the Estes Park Library on Thursday, May 25th.

### PROGRAM REVIEW:

1. CEO Kara Franker starts her report with a recap of Frozen Dead Guy Days and the success of the festival she also shows a video recapping the event. Franker announces that the date for next year's FDGD will be over St. Patrick's Day weekend 202 with festivities possibly spilling over into Monday. Franker says the team is working to improve any challenges such as long lines. Franker also says testimonials from business owners have been great giving examples from Jenna McGregor and Elizabeth of the Blue Door Inn saying they had great business. Franker says the event

also raised \$9,500 for the high school band and increased the workforce housing and childcare fund. Franker moves on to give an update from the US Travel Association showing that inflation may cool down, travelers over 40 are spending more on experiences than goods, and air travel will be nuts this year. Franker spoke about the LTE documentary which VEP released saying it will be going out in the next newsletter and that it has received great reviews from those who have watched it. Franker reports news that the Ice House at the Stanley Hotel will be turned in a museum and Grandpa Bredo will be transferred there at the end of August 2023. Franker now reviews the 2022 Annual Report as well as VEP's 2022 Annual Report video. Discussion begins on how VEP can share this video with the public and local government. It is determined that CEO Kara Franker will reach out to the town and county to schedule some time.

2. CMO Heidi Barfels gives the marketing update. Barfels starts with eTourism Summit which Kara Franker, John Berry, and Claire Molle attended. Claire gives a short review about the takeaways of the summit. Barfels continues with report saying new data is showing luxury travelers are prioritizing authenticity above exclusivity. Barfels says VEP is reaching this audience through marketing campaigns including one in the Travel and Leisure Summer magazine with a full page ad and article about Estes Park. Barfels shares some of the team's new content including the new "Now You Know," series, media coverage of FDGD, coverage of Bigfoot Days on Colorado & Company, social media highlights including the Bigfoot Days reel and the new photos of 217 Wine Bar and the team's Earth Day initiatives. Barfels ends with the Lodging Report.
3. COO Rebecca Domenico-Gelsinger gives her update on VEP's Community Relations efforts. Domenico-Gelsinger reviews things the team attended over the past month including the Valor Vacation Open House and the Community Advisory Committees for both Isabella Bird and Extend the Season which VEP's Dana Paiement hosted. Domenico-Gelsinger says transportation continues to be a priority for the team. She also reports that VEP's Kendall Akin and Dana Paiement recently gave a presentation to Visit Denver. Domenico Gelsinger reviews VEP's Estes Experiences campaign and encourages everyone to attend the Happy Hour event at the Bull Pin on May 9th. Domenico-Gelsinger reviews new offers from partners for the Neyon Program. She also says VEP staff will be and has been attending trade shows including MIC, Destination West and Simpleview Summit. Domenico-Gelsinger reports partner updates saying Fun City is about to open, Trendz has a new "Round Up" program, Raven's Roast is open in its new locations and Estes Park has two new businesses, Bandit's Bike and Bear & Bee. Domenico-Gelsinger completes her report with the Visitor Center guest count saying March 2023 saw over 10,000, a slight increase from last year and Group Sales showing a \$2.4-million value YTD.
4. CFO Mike Zumbaugh gives financial updates. Zumbaugh reports that \$355,000 has been passed to the town from LTE funds. Zumbaugh says the 2-percent collection is down 4.4 percent for February and down 2-percent YRD. Zumbaugh says new numbers are still coming in which will

change this and may no longer show a downward trend. Zumbaugh reports we are down 5.2-percent compaged to budget YTD, but incoming receipts will also change this numer and close this gap. Zumbaugh reviews the Keydata numbers showing recent numbers from STRs. Chair Sean Jurgens suggests we need a report like this to include all lodgers, CEO Kara Franker agrees.

ACTION ITEM: Accept financial statements as presented

Chair Sean Jurgens asks for a motion to approve the financial statements as presented.

Director Pat Murphy moves, Secretary McShan Walker seconds. All vote yes. Financial Statements are approved.

VEP EMAIL ACCOUNT UTILIZATION

Discussion on use of VEP specific emails for public records requests. It is determined that if a board member prefers to use their personal email address, they should use both that email and their VEP email.

TREASURERE POSISTION DISCUSSION

It is determined that Secretary McShan Walker will continue his roll as both Treasurer and Secretary until further board decisions are made.

ADJOURN:

The meeting is adjourned.

Upcoming Meeting: Regular Board Meeting on May 25th, 2023 via Zoom.

*Claire Mollie*

Recording Secretary

DATE: Dec 5, 2023

*Mcshan Walker*

[Mcshan Walker \(Dec 5, 2023 11:18 MST\)](#)

Mcshan Walker Secretary

DATE: Dec 5, 2023










# VEP April 27, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes by Claire\_for signature

Final Audit Report

2023-12-05

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