

**Mat-Su CVB
Board Meeting MINUTES
February 13, 2024
Mat-Su CVB Office**

Board Members Present

Mark Austin
Jennifer Brandon-Hanks*
Kierre Childers
Jeff Curtis*
Sam Dinges*
Heather Dudick
Mandy Garcia*
Roberta Warner*

Board Members Absent

Mark Fleenor
Travis Taylor

Staff Present

Casey Ressler
Tasha Belka
Justin Saunders

*attended remotely

Mark Austin called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. The roll was called.

AGENDA

Heather Dudick moved to approve the agenda as presented. Kierre Childers seconded. Motion passed.

MINUTES

Sam Dinges moved to approve the January 26, 2024 board meeting minutes. Jennifer Brandon-Hanks seconded the motion, which passed without opposition.

STANDING REPORTS

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Gateway Visitor Center kick-off meeting was a success and the project is moving forward as planned. Mark Austin, Kierre, Casey, Katie Reeves and Justin Saunders attended the meeting with representatives from Wolf Architecture and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The current building plans were reviewed and Mat-Su CVB staff offered suggestions that would improve functionality and allow for future growth of the staff. Gary Wolf (Wolf Architecture) will take suggestions into consideration and return with a 2nd revision of the plans once this is complete. Mat-Su CVB owns their digital assets so there will not be additional costs incurred for use in the exhibits. The bid package is slated to go out June 1st with a turnaround time of 5 weeks, so there is potential to break ground this fall.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Travis was absent from the meeting. Casey noted there were no substantial changes in the financials since the January 26th board meeting. Current financials were available for review.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Casey met with Mat-Su Borough manager, Mike Brown, to secure funding for FY25. He negotiated \$825,000 which will meet the CVB's funding needs for the year. It is the position of Mr. Brown to allocate bed tax revenue to various recreation projects within the borough. Applying a formula to our funding as in years past is not part of his current budget strategy. Casey looks forward to continued collaboration with Mr. Brown and the Assembly, focusing on data driven conversations which highlight the direct impact our programs have on bed tax revenue. Mark Austin agrees, adding that the board can meet proactively with assembly members to showcase Mat-Su CVB programs as well.

Kim Sollien presented the Mat-Su Borough Comprehensive Plan at the last member luncheon. Justin Saunders, Marketing Manager, represented the CVB at the Travel & Adventure show in L.A. and the Travel Secrets event at the Anchorage Aviation Museum. Arctic Winter Games is gearing up for their start on March 9th. Our office will be closed the week of March 11-15 to help facilitate the Games. We will host national travel writer, Susan Barnes, to cover the events and Alaska Travel Industry Association is funding coverage from 5 social media influencers. Casey will facilitate their travel from event to event.

MAT-SU CVB FY25 BUDGET

The draft FY25 budget was presented to the board. Questions were answered. Jeff Curtis moved to approve the budget as presented. Heather Dudick seconded. Motion passed. Sam Dinges left the meeting. It was determined a quorum was present in his absence

NEW BUSINESS

Cannabis Member Policy:

Mat-Su CVB will offer a Tourism Support membership for cannabis business owners. This membership classification does not include advertising, which allows for inclusion of cannabis businesses without violating federal regulations. Kierre Childers motioned to approve the Cannabis Member Policy as presented. Jeff Curtis seconded. Motion passed.

Letters of Support Policy:

Casey presented the draft Mat-Su CVB Letter of Support Policy; a 5-point metric to utilize while considering requests for letters of support from its members. A 4-point procedure outline is also included in the policy. This policy and procedure ensures consistency and alignment with the CVB's mission while considering such requests. Mandy Garcia moved to approve the Letters of Support Policy as presented. Roberta Warner seconded. Motion passed.

Alaska Trail Request for Support:

The board reviewed Alaska Trail's request for letter of support submitted by Stuart Leidner, Superintendent of the Alaska State Parks, Mat-Su Region. They are seeking support for CAPSIS funding requests to the legislature on behalf of State Parks. If approved, funds will facilitate Alaska Long Trail projects as well as upgrades to state park trails within the Matanuska-Susitna Valley. The board agrees this request meets the requirements set forth by the Mat-Su CVB letter of support policy. Kierre Childers moved to approve the request for letter of support. Mandy Garcia seconded. Motion passed. Casey will draft the letter of support and forward to Mr. Leidner.

Zartico:

Casey confirmed with Zartico that purchases made through online booking engines are not captured within the platform. Visitor volume and locations will be tracked using GPS on personal devices, which does not rely on cellular coverage. Board agrees there is still potential for valuable data and would like to move forward on a trial basis, reviewing at the end of the contract year to determine if continued use of the platform is valuable for the CVB. It is hoped that data retrieved will add value to our membership as well as future conversations with Mat-Su Borough representatives.

Approval of Branding RFP:

The board reviewed the draft branding RFP. The draft included edits suggested by the board during the planning retreat. Questions were answered. Casey will solicit interest from branding agencies and provide responsive firms with the RFP on March 1st. Proposals are due back by April 30th at which point a board committee will review and select the firm to contract with. Roberta Warner moved to approve the branding RFP as presented. Heather Dudick seconded. Motion passed. Jeff Curtis left the meeting. It was determined a quorum was present in his absence.

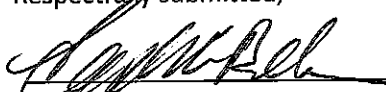
NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting will be scheduled after branding proposals have been received.

ADJOURNMENT

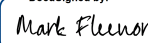
An executive session was called to discuss personnel matters. The board entered the executive session at 10:52 a.m. The board exited executive session and Mark Austin adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Tasha Belka, Recording Secretary

5/13/24
Date

Attest,

DocuSigned by:

Mark Fleenor, Secretary

5/13/2024
Date