

Minutes
NEW MEXICO TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING
Las Cruces Convention Center
680 E. University Avenue, Las Cruces, NM 88005
May 16, 2016
3:00 PM

Acting Chairman, Commissioner John Garcia called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Commissioners present:

Commissioner John Garcia
Commissioner Jennifer Kimball
Commissioner George A. Brooks
Commissioner Scott Hutton
Commissioner Belia Alvarez
Commissioner Emerson R. Vallo

Commissioners not present:

Interim Chairman Chris Stagg

Approval of Agenda: Motion was made by Commissioner Garcia to approve the May 16, 2016, agenda and passed

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Garcia to approve the February 8, 2016, minutes and passed

Introduction of Guests:

Commissioner Garcia asked everyone attending the meeting to introduce themselves and to state the district or organization they represent.

Commissioner Garcia welcomed and introduced the guest speaker, Peter Nickolenko of Virgin Galactic, saying that VG is a great partner with Tourism and Industry here in New Mexico.

Guest Speaker: Peter Nickolenko, Head of Space Lab Engineering and Chief Engineer, Operations, Virgin Galactic Team - Virgin Galactic Update

Mr. Nickolenko thanked the Commission for allowing him to share an update on the status of the Virgin Galactic venture in New Mexico, and overall. He said Virgin Galactic is comprised of three entities:

- The Spaceship Company – Builders and developers of spacecraft and aircraft

- The Launcher I Program – Intended to promote and send small satellites into lower earth orbit. They are based at and fly missions from Long Beach, CA
- The Virgin Galactic Operations Team (his group) – To operate manned sub-orbital space-flight missions out of Spaceport America, in a regular, repeatable fashion, in regular commercial service. There are 700 customers lined up for the experience as “future astronauts.”

Mr. Nickolenko started with Virgin Galactic about two and a half years ago, having taken early retirement from NASA after 23 years. He viewed VG as the next closest space-flight venture, signed on, and moved his family to Las Cruces.

Update on VG’s current activity

- Air-launched the spaceship – the launching vehicle is the “White Knight 2” (WK2), a dual-pylon aero-dynamic carrier aircraft, to carry heavy loads up to 30,000 feet, and the workhorse of their program. They’ve had 200 flights of the WK2. They recently brought it to Spaceport America for profile flights and demonstrations.
- WK2 is also the primary pilot training vehicle, because the cockpit is effectively identical to their spaceship; this allows them to fly WK2 just as if they’re flying the actual spaceship, giving them proficiency for both the spaceship and the WK2.

Maintenance and Inspection Program

- The “UltraMain” program was devised by USI and is used by other airline platforms worldwide. It was developed to use for managing and tracking the work on the aircraft, ordering parts, scheduling preventative maintenance, and inspections.
- A few weeks ago (shows pictures), the WK2 had a demonstration exercise at the Spaceport, which gave all seven pilots the opportunity to fly WK2 and to coordinate with NM Spaceport Authority and other airspace controlling authorities in New Mexico.
- From chase vehicles, they can take photos, confirm and assess performance, speed brakes, and view landing gear and other aero-surfaces, to make sure all is working properly. They have engineers and ground support staged to support upon landing.
- They’re expecting to bring WK2 for a week in the fall; they’ll share those dates as soon as the timing is set.

Spaceship2 (serial number 2)

- They’d conducted several test flights with Spaceship1; it had the accident in October 2014. He said much has been learned as a result of that accident and from the NTSB report last year. They’ve put in place preventative controls, now enacted on Spaceship2, also called “Unity,” which was rolled out Feb. 19th of this year. He said they’re going through the final systems installations and expect to finish over the next few weeks.
- They’re also working on Integrated Vehicle Ground Tests – tests on “systems of systems,” or on-the-ground performance tests. They’ll follow with a series of flight tests.

- Virgin Galactic's intention is to offer and promote superior customer service, to fall into line with the culture of all the Virgin companies. One of their partners is Jaguar/Land Rover, and they use a specially-equipped Land Rover as a tow vehicle for the WK2.

Flight Test Program – Over the next month or so are a series of flight tests:

- Captive Carry Flight – where the spaceship will remain “captive mated” to the WK2 aircraft.
- Series of glide flights – the spaceship will fly with the WK2 to an altitude of about 47,000 ft., at which point it'll release the spaceship, and the pilots will fly it down to the runway landing at Mohave.
- Series of Powered Flights with the rocket motor (main propulsion into suborbital flight) installed.
- Glide flights – the rocket motor team is qualifying the rocket motor, testing to see that the configuration is exactly what is needed. Just last Friday they completed the fourth rocket motor qualification tests.

In the meantime, the team with the Launcher1 Program in California is developing liquid rocket motor supports for unmanned payload-carrying capability. In parallel with these tests, test flights begin about one year after starting the Spaceship2 test flights. At the Spaceport America Gateway to Space, they're working closely with the NM Spaceport Authority to complete a series of interior fit-outs, starting with operational spaces. Maintenance engineering is move-in ready for full occupation.

For the Customer Spaces

- Outfitting the Mission Control Center (his main interest) – they'll have a fixed-space simulator, a training mock-up, and other facilities on the east side of the Gateway to Space. This should be ready by early 2017, when they'll move the rest of the Operations Team there. They'll perform a few remaining test flights before they begin with the first commercial flight.
- They're planning a training experience for customers and are trying to anticipate how the training program sequence-of-events will go. They expect customers will receive about 3 days of training before flight mission day.

Staffing, Businesses & Outreach

- They have 18 permanent staff at the Las Cruces office, plus others like him, who commute between Mohave and Las Cruces. Two interns from NMSU will be starting next week to work with his team; four more locals will also start soon with his group.
- Many local businesses, like transportation and lodging, have been working with them. They recently had seven future astronauts visit T-or-C to do the Ladder Ranch tour and a tour of Spaceport America - all of which informs them of what New Mexico has to offer.
- They work closely with the New Mexico school system and outreach. Last year, the Future Astronauts founded a charitable foundation, Galactic United, to reach out to children. This past winter, the astronauts and VG staff shared information and did Q&A with Las Cruces

6th-graders. The plan is to continue the outreach during January-March of 2016. Now, in addition to going ahead with the implementation of build-out and testing, they're concentrating on outreach and partnerships.

Commissioner Garcia called for questions from the group.

In answer to how many positions they'll be filling, Mr. Nickolenko said that they have 80 members on the Operations Team, and expect to add 40-50 more, a combination of operations and engineering, supply chain, hospitality, safety and security, facilities, and customer training. "They need a potpourri of people," he said, "some from NASA, aerospace, Department of Defense, general aviation, and other international air travel."

To answer Commissioner Kimball's question on the estimated time for the first commercial flight, he said it's hard to anchor a time-line to what they're doing, but they'll fly when they're ready. He expects it to be in 2017.

To a question about the golf tournament, he told the group that it's to benefit the Galactic United charity, and will be held at Red Hawk Golf Club in Las Cruces, on June 3rd.

Regarding Commissioner Garcia's question on infrastructure completion, Mr. Nickolenko said that the 23 miles of southern access road from I-25 to Spaceport America is still not paved. He said the expectation is that the paving will be completed by the time Spaceport America holds the opening flights.

Virgin Galactic understands the commitment by the state of New Mexico, and of so many businesses and citizens of New Mexico, who're helping make this venture work, and they're committed to make it positive and successful, he said.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Mr. Nickolenko for his talk and for attending the meeting, then introduced Secretary Latham for a Tourism Department update.

NMTD Report:

Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Latham

Secretary Latham welcomed the group and said she so appreciates the wonderful turn-out for the Governor's Conference. She said she's thrilled that NMTD is a sponsor and is very much looking forward to the conference.

The Legislative Session

Everyone had a tough session, primarily the legislators, but also for all of us who are dealing with the decrease in revenues from the oil and gas industry, she said.

- NMTD started with a strong request for a budget increase of \$4.7M, recommended by the Governor, but closer to the session, revenue projections changed, and they went into the session with a proposed \$2.3M increase.

- The legislature was incredibly supportive of TD's budget increase, but also very specific about how they want that money spent. By the very end, the Senate Finance Committee had to impose across-the-board cuts, and we ended up taking a net loss to our over-all general fund budget. However, because we've been so diligent in our research, and diligent in showing what TD has the ability to do, the overall impact to our budget was minimal compared to other agencies.
- The Governor and legislature both truly believe in our industry and what we're doing, but they told us the amount in our budget must be put into fly market advertising, since that's the only program of ours that delivers a 7:1 ROI.
- This resulted in cuts to personnel, the ability to hire key positions, and loss of some contracts. Our challenge is to figure out what we can do more of, less of, what we can live without in regard to staffing, and to take a hard look at the assets we have available. We'll move forward with our current budget and with the fly market advertising of \$1M-plus, recycling some of our assets, looking at making the dollars for our grant programs work harder.
 - In this budget cycle we had \$900K in general fund grant, \$600K for co-op, and \$300K for event sponsorship programs.
 - Moving forward, we now have only \$800K for general budget, \$500K for co-op, and for event sponsorships, we'll have to find new ways to promote them.
 - In the fall, we plan to launch a Tourism Development Grant that can grow and cultivate younger events that have deeper product potential. And we can give a little infrastructure assistance to region boards with a great product to promote. We'll budget \$350K for this.
 - Also for FY17, the Governor this week announced \$700K in Clean & Beautiful grant awards. The C&B grants are not funded through the general fund, but by fees from license plate registrations and renewals. Andrea will address the program highlights shortly; this grant program has evolved to hit larger, more impactful projects.

Secretary Latham said she felt very blessed at the end of the session to have an intact co-op program at all, and fortunate to be able to work with our tourism industry in promoting and leveraging New Mexico True.

Grant Programs: Andrea Lawrence, Clean & Beautiful Program Update:

- We are very excited to be funding some projects around the state this year. We're the state leader as far as start-ups for Keep America Beautiful, with 20 KAB affiliate communities around the state.
- We're fortunate here in Las Cruces to have two – Dona Ana and Las Cruces. There are spotlight projects such as the transformational downtown corridor walkway project in the City of Gallup.
- We also have the City of Ruidoso, and at Ruidoso Downs, there's an outdoor learning center where children are taught about cultivation and landscaping vegetable and fruit gardens. They're also working with the local farmers' markets to beautify parks.

- There are children's books coming out of Las Cruces and Bernalillo County that marry aspects of tourism and C&B – handling litter, improving recycling, and beautifying the communities every day to Keep New Mexico True.
- The highlights of the program are listed on our website under "Partnership Opportunities," and there are more pilots listed in the Governor's Press Release, located there as well.

Secretary Latham explained the New Mexico True Certified Program

There are 3 categories:

- 100% Made in New Mexico – includes items entirely created in the state, such as manufactured foods (tortillas, salsas), jewelry, tiles, etc.
- Grown in New Mexico – produce and products, such as chile, pecans, pistachios, lavender
- Verified Born & Raised in New Mexico – livestock, or products from livestock, such as beef, wool from alpaca or native sheep, etc.

In addition to using the New Mexico Certified mark, other benefits come to producers accepted into the certified program:

- a business listing on newmexico.org
- an opportunity to be featured in the "New Makers" section of New Mexico Magazine
- an opportunity for our partners at CliffDweller Productions to review these unique producers for possible inclusion on New Mexico True TV

When we launch our new (newmexico.org) site in the fall, there will be an e-commerce section where members will have a presence, leveraging New Mexico True, and generating millions of impressions of New Mexico outside of the state.

A recent case study from Montana illustrates a link between tourism and authentic products; it found that travelers who prioritized finding local products spent on average \$185 more per trip. These travelers wanted to buy these products during their visit and again when they returned home. This demand could create new markets for these products in stores around the country.

Here are current examples of leveraging the New Mexico True Certified Mark:

- Flagship Foods in Albuquerque (pilot project) – they manufacture 505 Brand sauces, chiles, and also have NMTC on their frozen food products
- Del Charro Saloon in Santa Fe – has the NMTC mark on their menu for their green chile cheeseburgers (that all the ingredients are sourced from New Mexico)
- Blue Window Bistro in Los Alamos and the Corn Maiden at the Hyatt Tamaya Resort & Spa – both have NMTC beef in their restaurant products
- Nuevo Cerveza has been NMTC-approved, and will show the certification on their updated packaging
- NMTC is expanding to hotel properties who provide the products in their guest rooms, restaurants and gift shops

Secretary Latham said that an announcement would be made the following day of a partnership with EXPO New Mexico for a New Mexico True Festival that has a strong element of New Mexico True Certified, with craft beer, wine, and NMTC products. She said there is a partnership with the Wine Growers Association and the Craft Brewers Guild.

Aimee Barabe updated the group on the status of our NMTC applicants. Since the launch one month ago, she said, there's been lots of enthusiasm. There've been nearly 30 applications, primarily for "made in," and some for "born & raised," from Albuquerque, Corrales, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and Deming areas. Twenty-four of these are pending approval, just awaiting final paperwork requirements.

Earned Media Update: Heather Briganti

- New Mexico True Certified - Heather said that the NMTC news had brought 56 media hits, in TV, radio, and print, mostly in-state, but also had coverage in the Houston Chronicle, ABC News, Minneapolis Star Tribune, and the Colorado Springs Gazette. The total reach for that is potentially 38 million, and expected to grow.
- National Parks Week was covered by a travel writer who came out for a visit. She went in-depth about her experience at Bandolier National Monument, and also mentioned the Four Seasons Resort Rancho Encantado, White Sands National Monument, the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, and Carlsbad Caverns. The result of that was a total of 5 articles, with a potential reach of 32 million. That was picked up by FoxNews.com, the Chicago Tribune, and the Orlando Sentinel.
- A lot of New Mexico events were included in an AP Travel Roundup. These were picked up in 19 outlets across the U.S., with a potential reach of 50 million, including the Washington Post, ABC News, Minneapolis Star Tribune. They included the Gathering of Nations, the Las Cruces Country Music Festival, Outside Bike-n-Brew in Santa Fe, the Flamenco Festival, International Folk Art Market, and the Los Alamos Science Fest. Just as a snapshot of the bigger hits we've gotten from the beginning of March through last week, we've had 279 hits.

Secretary Latham addressed the Chair and asked to go back and discuss the statement from the legislature that mandated the department do more in the fly market, and why NMTD would choose to do a tourism development grant that is not fly-market advertising.

- The intent-to-return research that TD conducted a few years ago showed these numbers are just lower than our competitive set, and a lot of that has to do with high household incomes and what they search for in repeat trips. It's not that people are dissatisfied with their New Mexico trip, but when that group was asked what they did last summer and what they planned to do the next summer – for those who had come to New Mexico last summer, the number was smaller for those who planned to return to New Mexico in the next 12 months.
- Through our research, we know that the biggest way to move that needle for return trips is with tourism development, she said. Overall, \$350K is a minor investment that can make a

major impact in generating earned media, and also all the surrounding assets that can go towards a tightly defined tourism product in New Mexico.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Secretary Latham and asked the Commission if they had any questions.

- Asked how many people are in the program, the Secretary replied that there are about 30 – 4 to 5 have signed licensing agreements, and there are 24 applications pending. She advised that applicants should read through the application to be sure they have all information at hand to complete it on-line, as there is a third-party verification required.
- Regarding locating the application, she informed the group that it is posted on the NMTD industry website at nmtourism.org.
- In response to a question about the NMTD's updated website, Secretary Latham said that NMTD will be doing a re-launch of the website in the fall after a re-building of the site by a contractor hired through the RFP protocol. The contract cost was \$100K.

Commissioner Garcia thanked the Secretary and others department members who contributed to the department update. He introduced the first guest speaker, Simon Brackley, who is to provide an update on the Santa Fe Municipal Airport.

Guest Speaker: Simon Brackley, President and CEO of the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Brackley said he would like to recognize Randy Randall from Tourism Santa Fe and also Chris Stagg, to recognize his support and leadership, for their assistance with the initiative to promote the Santa Fe Airport.

- There's a tremendous investment going on at Taos Ski Valley, with new hotels, facilities, and infrastructure on the mountain. Mr. Brackley said that he and Chris Stagg have had ongoing discussions about customers flying into Santa Fe. He said circumstances have come together to inspire creation of the New Mexico Air Alliance.
- The Santa Fe airport is served by American Eagle Airlines, with daily flights to Dallas/Ft. Worth (DFW), and United Express, to Denver. There is very strong private aviation out of Santa Fe, too, he said.
- Up until Oct. 2015, there were also direct daily flights to Los Angeles on American Eagle, which were unexpectedly stopped without any notice, American saying they'd found more economic uses for their planes and equipment. With capacities upward of 70-75%, it was assumed these flights were making money and would continue into the future. Mr. Brackley said part of the issue was not having a full-time permanent airport manager at the time.
- He told the group that Mayor Gonzales has made clear, as part of his administrative priorities, that he wants to increase service at the Santa Fe Airport, which includes improved airport facilities and a new airport manager. The Chamber of Commerce has been lobbying a number of years for facility improvements there. Now, construction is on-going, and almost completed – they've added an additional gate, improved customer service, restaurant service, security, and parking. Thanks to Governor Martinez, there is

also another \$800K in capital improvements approved during the legislative session, so there will be more improvements coming.

- He said the film and TV industries in New Mexico are more successful than ever before, and industry leaders want to be able to commute to Santa Fe from the West Coast.
- Mr. Brackley said the consultant who worked with Roswell on their airport expansion advised commitment from the communities, from the public and private sectors, government, and regions: Santa Fe City and County, Taos Ski Valley, Angel Fire, Red River, Las Vegas, State General Services, State Department of Transportation, the Santa Fe Chamber, and private sector members who would like to take advantage of more direct flights.
- Also critical is regional collaboration to access federal and state funding. Both can support local airline service in marketing and equipment. Private sector money will prove community buy-in and enable qualification for available funds. Mr. Brackley would like commitment from the Santa Fe community's major employers and government employers – he plans to host a number of meetings.
- The goal is to add one more flight by December, he said. There is an incredible amount of statistics available that allow you to target your increased flights. Having analyzed those numbers, increased flights to Dallas, Denver, Phoenix, and Los Angeles are great markets for Santa Fe.
- The regional jet market is moving towards larger planes, 90-seaters (Santa Fe currently has 48- or 50-seaters). They have larger capacity to make longer flights, so Houston is within the non-stop range for Santa Fe. That kind of distance is where we have potential growth, he said.
- Santa Fe may consider seasonal demand for flight services, like similar communities in Colorado have done. Perhaps offer service three days per week, or maybe seasonal schedules based on demands.
- He encourages existing residents and business people to fly Santa Fe now – the best way to prove to the airlines that Santa Fe airport should expand flight services is to fill the planes we already have.
- The Santa Fe Chamber has a 501c3 organization formed, which will serve as the umbrella to make us eligible for federal and state funding. The airlines will not move in planes and equipment for new flights unless they have a guarantee of ticket purchases. We need to agree which destinations are most suitable for our community, guarantee those ticket purchases, and move forward with our campaign.

In answer to a question about expanding the Taos airport service, Mr. Brackley said he believes there are limits to the infrastructure there, and that the community is not currently united on the idea.

Lisa Boeke (Carlsbad Chamber) said that they had formed a marketing team to work on adding American Airlines flights to Dallas and Phoenix, and she offered assistance from their chamber.

Commissioner Garcia commented that the Belen airport, due to a deal with the federal government, has built out the runway to accept heavies. That makes Belen able to accept other heavies in the future, and that it seemed like a good strategy.

Mr. Brackley said the Santa Fe Airport has improvements already taking place. The airport master plan process is on-going, which is a 20-year horizon, and which includes increased capacity of the runway, making it accessible for larger planes (in the long term plan).

Lynn Edwards (Lea County) commented that they have United flights to/from Houston, and have secured FAA funding to extend and improve their longest runway so it can accept larger planes. The groundwork has started, and they expect it to be completed next year.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Mr. Brackley and introduced Jen Schroer to the group.

Guest Speaker: Jen Schroer, President/CEO, New Mexico Hospitality Association

The New Mexico Hospitality Association is a member-based organization, growing programs and services to better serve the entire travel and tourism industry in New Mexico.

- Ms. Schroer encouraged everyone to attend the Welcome Reception, which is at 5pm at the Hotel Encanto Patio.
- The NMHA board just passed the position statement for government affairs. It's what they'll be lobbying for during the legislative session. They'll be sending these out to the members via email and will be posting them on the website next week.
- She thanked the Las Cruces Visitor & Convention Bureau, especially Phil San Filippo and his team, who have done an incredible job, and just rolled out the red carpet to host the Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism.
- Yesterday, NMHA kicked off with the golf tournament and pub crawl, and were able to raise another \$5,000 toward their scholarship fund, which was started this year. They're now at \$15,000 and looking to endow that, and are hoping to complete it with \$30,000.

We have three signature events each year:

- The Top HAT Awards, in the Fall (no date is set yet), where we recognize all the rising stars of New Mexico True across the Industry.
- TRENDS Conference – January 23-25, right at the beginning of the legislative session. We have the conference as well as the Unity Dinner; attending were legislators and many of the cabinet secretaries. We were so honored to have the governor there for the entire dinner, and she gave a wonderful presentation. Jen said it elevates the whole importance of the Travel and Tourism Industry, and keeps tourism on the top of everyone's mind as they're making those tough budget decisions. She expressed her thanks to the Tourism Department for continuing to support professional development for all.
- The Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism

Ms. Schroer conveyed her appreciation to Commissioner Alvarez and Heritage Hotels for being part of the reception. She thanked the City of Las Cruces for sponsoring Bri Bagwell, a country artist who will be entertaining the group.

Commissioner Garcia asked Ms. Schroer to list the Position Statements for NMHA, which are:

- The New Mexico Hospitality Association supports the state Tourism Department with a cabinet position, which only focuses on driving New Mexico's tourism market shares supporting tourism-related businesses. We want to make sure we have a Tourism Department that stands alone and at the cabinet level – we do not want it to merge with any other department.
- Increase state investment for the New Mexico Tourism Department
 - Research-based
 - Increases for tourism promotion in advertising of fly markets and/or drive markets, which incorporates both out-of-state and in-state travel
- Policies that provide for the commercially viable development of tourism and capital investment, including: infrastructure, roads, broadband, internet, and tax credits for similar incentives.
- With regard to all the incentives in funding for workforce that comes through economic development – tourism does not currently qualify. We need to fix that.
- Fair and equitable contributions to lodgers tax for all lodging establishments, including short- term rentals:
 - Modification of lodgers tax to eliminate ambiguity
 - Preserve the integrity and intent of the lodgers tax statute to grow tourism in New Mexico
 - The evaluation of the entire liquor license code for recommendations to create a fair, equitable, and reasonable solution without disproportionate burden to those already owning liquor licenses
- NMHA will oppose anything that is detrimental to the hospitality industry as a whole. For any legislation that does not fit within these guiding principles, we will not take a position.
 - This is a member-based organization, and she invited people to join, saying, if anyone has questions about what type of services are provided, please consult with Gabriella Chavez-Lopez, their new Strategic Partnerships Manager.
 - Ms. Schroer discussed two strategies NMHA is working on this year:
 - The pilot program launched for Hospitality Training in Farmington, both online and live classes. They've received very positive feed-back, and are doing final scrubbing on this prototype before launching it state-wide.
 - A state-wide strategy on Travel and Trade was started to increase the group tour business in New Mexico. They just had a board meeting and have formed a committee to focus on it.

Updates from Commission Members

Commissioner Vallo – Provided a hand-out/packet for the group about the AIANTA organization, a federal organization (American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association) that is parallel to our tourism department as to what they do, he said. Some of the projects they've done have enhanced visitation to Native American communities.

- They are promoting a bill in Congress to further develop Native American tourism, the Native American Tourism & Improving Visitor Experience Act (the "NATIVE Act"), which requires federal agencies with recreational travel and tourism functions to include Native American tribes and tribal organizations in updating management plans to develop Native American tourism.
- The packet has some background on how native communities enhance the visitor experience here and all across the U.S. According to the Department of Commerce, the overseas visitors who visit the Native American communities tend to stay a lot longer than those who do not, they spend more, and they visit more outlying rural areas. It is culturally and economically helpful for the native communities all across the country.
- The NATIVE Act is intended to enhance and integrate native tourism, empower native communities, and expand unique cultural tourism opportunities in the United States. The bill has passed the Senate and is expected to pass the House. Commissioner Vallo said this bill is very important in that he expects it to have a positive effect on tribal economic development and building of infrastructure.
- He said statistics show international tourists who visit Native American communities most often visit Utah and Arizona – why not New Mexico? We have 19 pueblos here, and we'd like more marketing for drawing these visitors to New Mexico, he said.
- AIANTA has developed and just released a travel guide entitled, "American Indians and Route 66," which discusses how the Route 66 highway from Chicago to Santa Monica, California, impacted Native American peoples.

Commissioner Brooks – Reported on the Santa Fe ski season:

- It took off strong with a great early season through early January; the snow was still great, but the reported weather conditions did not draw late visitors. They did not break the million-visitor point, but numbers were up about 3.1%, to approximately 938,000 ski visitors.
- The ski areas are developing more year-round activities for visitors. During the legislative session, the ski industry was successful in proposing and having a liquor law change that will allow all ski areas to have the entire ski area footprint as their controlled area for liquor control. That means a lot of summer activities that previously had to get a special use permit can be managed by the ski area. They'll have more control over planning their events and can commit sooner to entertainers and event sponsors.

Commissioner Kimball – Event dates upcoming for Santa Fe: Folk Art Market is July 8-10, and they're expecting another sell-out for the first night; Spanish Market is July 30-31, and Indian Market is August 19-21st.

Commissioner Hutton – Said he is aware of how hard NMTD has been working to get some of the outside communities to embrace New Mexico True, and he personally thanked David Hayduk of HK Advertising, for getting Santa Fe County to participate.

Commissioner Alvarez – She thanked Jen and her team, and Phil San Filippo. She's thrilled to have everyone in Las Cruces for the Governor's Conference and is looking forward to seeing everyone at Hotel Encanto for the upcoming reception. She said the future is bright for everyone with Virgin Galactic going forward. Each of the 700 astronauts that are signed on will be bringing from 20-200 people with them, which won't just benefit Las Cruces, but the entire state. The astronauts will be training for 4 days – so they're looking at several days for the travelers' experiences here in New Mexico.

Commissioner Garcia – He thanked Commissioner Alvarez for the hospitality in Las Cruces.

- For Central area news, he asked Tania Armenta of the ACVB about the change in tag-line for them. She said they've changed their organization name. At least 80 CVB's across the country are already operating with the term "visit." It's action-oriented, easier to understand, and symbolic of a new time in our organization as well, so it was the perfect opportunity to do so, she told the group.
- It was the 50th Anniversary of the Tram on May 7th, with new cars. They had a great celebration. The Abruzzo family and the Forest Service worked collaboratively on this, and it's a great tool for tourism development.

Public Comments

Bill Lee – expressed his thanks to Rebecca and her team for coming to the recent State Fair Commission Meeting. We're very invested in the New Mexico True Certified brand that's upcoming and excited about what's going to be happening at the state fair with New Mexico True, he said. When he was placed on the commission, he said, he was tasked with the tourism portion of the fair. Rebecca and the team had a wonderful presentation. Everyone will be excited to see what new things are coming, and visitors will come to the State Fair and have a real New Mexico True experience.

Next Meeting -

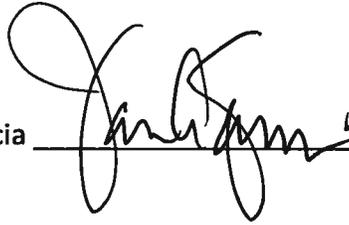
- Commissioner Garcia said that the commission has been invited to Red River in August, possibly for the next meeting.
- Secretary Latham told the group that Red River holds their annual chili cook-off and music festival the 3rd week in August. This event also includes the state championship New Mexico Green Chile Cook-off. The next quarterly commission meeting will be quarter one of the next budget cycle, which would include July, August, and September. It's something to consider that you've been invited to have the meeting in conjunction with that event, she said.

With that, Commissioner Garcia thanked Secretary Latham & all her staff, and accepted a second to the motion for adjournment.

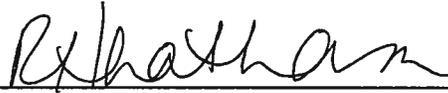
Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Acting Chairman, Commissioner John Garcia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Garcia", written over a horizontal line.

Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Latham

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Latham", written over a horizontal line.

AGENDA

NEW MEXICO TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING

Las Cruces Convention Center

680 E. University Avenue, Las Cruces, NM 88005

May 16, 2016

3:00 PM

- Call Meeting to Order
- Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes of February 8, 2016 Meeting
- Guest Speakers:
 - Bruce Jackson, Vice President of Export and Compliance; and Mark Butler, Senior Program Manager – Virgin Galactic Update
- Department Update: Rebecca Latham, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Tourism Department
 - Legislative Session
 - Grant Programs
 - New Mexico True Certified
 - Earned Media Update
- Special Presentations:
 - Simon Brackley, President/CEO Santa Fe Chamber – Initiative to Promote Santa Fe Airport
 - Jen Schroer, President/CEO NM Hospitality Association – NMHA Government Affairs Committee
- Updates from Commission Members
- Public Comments
- Next Meeting
- Adjournment