



MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The Hive; 512 Main St, Ste 160

Combined with **Hotel BID Board of Directors Meeting**

VRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESENT

C. Johnson
J. Scheitler
K. Buntrock
M. Pawelski
M. Derby
P. Dame
R. Zebroski
S. Landguth
T. Johnson
W. Lampert

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

L. Lehmann
J. Brockelsby
R. Jeffries
M. Thomson

ABSENT

K. Cook
L. Montague
S. Dowling

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Mayor Jason Salamun
J. Biegler
C. Baltzer

HOTEL BID BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESENT

D. Dathe
L. Steffens
S. Hull
W. Lampert

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

L. Lehmann
K. Buntrock
B. Kaufman

ABSENT

G. Fawbush
K. Houk
L. Montague

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Mayor Jason Salamun

VRC STAFF – Brook Kaufman, Domico Rodriguez, Stacie Granum, Ally Formanek, Dani Benne, Tyson Steiger, Cody Wiseman, Shelby Solano

SPECIAL GUESTS – Taylor Davis, Matt Senftner, Lt. Tim Doyle

Call to Order

K. Buntrock called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. at The Hive.

Consent Agenda

W. Lampert made a motion to approve the consent agenda including the meeting agenda, August VRC/BID meeting minutes, and July/August/September 2023 financials. D. Dathe seconded motion. Motion carried.

Board Business

SkillBridge Presentation

T. Davis, of Elevate Rapid City, gave an overview of the Department of Defense (DOD) SkillBridge program which provides retiring and transitioning service members the opportunity to participate in industry training programs while transitioning out of their military careers. The DOD covers military pay and benefits during a service member's program, meaning the program is of no charge to participating employers. Elevate Rapid City has assisted approximately 20 service members through the program in 2023.

Downtown Rapid City Update

M. Senftner shared results of a downtown safety and commerce survey responded to by downtown business operators.

Lt. Doyle discussed the homelessness issue in Rapid City, including the downtown core. He shared the Rapid City Police Department has been able to become more proactive in summer months by using school liaisons to assist with patrol downtown. Doyle explained how the Downtown Ambassadors act as a deterrent and would like to see the program continue. B. Kaufman reminded the Board VRC gave funds to Downtown Rapid City to assist with funding the Downtown Ambassador Program this summer.

Lt. Doyle reported the Hope Center will be closing its current location on Kansas City Street on December 8th. Doyle encouraged Board members to share with members of City Council how the homeless population affects their business. The City of Rapid City and Pennington County are currently working together to deter homelessness according to a recent press conference.

A discussion began regarding how to combat homelessness and panhandling in Rapid City, including educating locals of the effects of panhandling and the newly installed giving meters. Doyle encouraged Board members to attend a meeting regarding winter sheltering for the homeless population on October 31.

CEO Report

Kaufman shared VRC's new brand will go live December 5. A slow roll-out of the brand is currently underway.

The Executive Committee recommended to continue the trolley program for at least another 2 years.

Kaufman shared results of the 2023 City View Trolley season:

- Program generated \$18,000 in revenue
- Program expenses totaled \$39,000 excluding the \$17,000 purchase price of the trolleys
- 2024 program improvements to include route updates, increased ticket prices, enhanced marketing efforts to drive ridership

Kaufman reported 1,439 visitors have been helped in VRC's office YTD, which is an increase of 29% from 2022. She shared that this is a large distraction to professional staff working in the open workspace. All agreed in the importance of continuing to offer visitor services. Staff will continue to brainstorm a better

solution for location of visitor services.

Kaufman shared Katie Houk, Hotel BID Board member, will be stepping down as she is moving out of state. She encouraged Board members to recommend possible hoteliers who may be interested in the position.

Kaufman shared the idea of creating a second business improvement district is currently being socialized to local hoteliers. All, thus far, are supportive as long as all agree on what the money generated will fund.

Ex-Officio Reports

Reptile Gardens

J. Brockelsby reported a normal summer season in regard to visitation to Reptile Gardens. Admission to the park was raised after many years of no increase.

Black Hills & Badlands Tourism Association

M. Thomson shared the Black Hills & Badlands Annual Meeting is taking place next week at The Box. The Annual Meeting will provide attendees with visitor statistics for 2023, forecasts for 2024, a Highway 385 construction update, and the annual awards presentation.

Central States Fair/BHSS

R. Jeffries reported on a normal Central States Fair in regard to attendance. Planning for Black Hills Stock Show is underway. Jeffries shared the possible addition of a youth wrestling tournament during the BHSS.

Legislative Update

M. Derby expressed interest in the conditions of interstate billboards across South Dakota. He asked for support from the visitor industry during the upcoming legislative session if legislation arises.

City Council Liaison Update

L. Lehmann shared homelessness and the closing of The Hope Center have been the main topics before City Council recently.

Rapid City Regional Airport

P. Dame shared a groundbreaking ceremony for phase 1 of the terminal addition is taking place next Monday, October 23 at 10:00am. A new carrier may be announced in the coming weeks.

Other Business

Upcoming Dates

- a. Upcoming CTA Classes – October 18, November 29
- b. Executive Committee Meeting – December 7
- c. VRC/BID Board Meeting – December 14

Adjournment

Motion made by P. Dame, seconded by D. Dathe, to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Ally Formanek, Director of Operations
Visit Rapid City