

Minutes

Pagosa Springs Town Tourism Committee

Friday, September 17th, 2010

River Pointe Cafe

9:00am - 4:00pm

Meeting called by: Bob Hart

Attendees: Voting Members; Daniel Gonzales, Larry Fisher, Bob Hart, Jon Johnson, Morgan Murri, Angel Preuit, Pam Shoemig, Jim Smith, Chirag Patel

Absences: Thad McKain, Doris Green

Non Voting Attendees; Jennifer Green, David Mitchem, Mary Jo Coulehan, Kathie Lattin, Shari Pierce, Bill Hudson, Jim McQuiggin

Please review: Any committee reports that you receive

Please bring: Agenda, Committee reports

9:00am – 9:20am: Introduction

1. Call to Order
2. Determination Of Quorum (6)
3. Approval of August Minutes – Daniel motioned to approve August minutes, Jon Johnson seconded, all approved.
4. Board Training Video – Board watched a video to learn how to minimize liability for public appointees and government board members

9:20am – 11:30am: 2009 / 2010 Subcommittee Progress & Accomplishments; 2011 Plans

1. Chair Report
 - a. Bob Hart provided an overview, goals, structure and board member expectations of the meeting
 - b. Bob Hart thanked all TTC board members for dedicating so much time and effort to tourism
2. Financial Report – Angel Preuit

- a. July 2010 was up 3.53% over 2009, 16.11% up over 2008 and 18.67% above 2007
- b. YTD through July 2010, lodgers tax is up 8.69% over 2009, 18.57% over 2008 and 11.24% over 2007
- c. 40% of lodgers tax collections are received in the 1st 6 months, 60% are received in 2nd half of year

3. Fulfillment – Jim Smith

- a. Completed two RFP processes – visitor guide production and fulfillment services
- b. Winter Visitor Guide, produced by the Pagosa Sun, will be available in mid October
- c. Hunting Pocket Guide, produced by Cassio Group, available now
- d. Develop Annual Vacation Planner, produced by Cassio Group
 - i. Available Mar 2011
- e. Create additional pocket guides, produced by Cassio Group
- f. Incorporate variety of formats for guides – phones, interactive digital / online, etc.
- g. Budget:
 - i. Visitor Guide: Break Even (no out of pocket)
 - ii. Postage: 35,000 * \$1 = \$35,000
 - iii. Fulfillment Services: \$20,000

4. Marketing / PR / Website – Daniel Gonzales (interim)

- a. Advertising
 - i. Tested Trip Advisor and Texas Monthly to okay, not exceptional, results leveraging CTO grant
 - ii. Enhanced social marketing efforts – Facebook, twitter and tripadvisor.com
 - iii. Leveraged placement in Colorado State Vacation, with 2-page spread on page 17-18
 - iv. COSVG format changing in 2011

v. Increase Social Marketing efforts – time cost versus monetary cost

1. Tripadvisor.com, facebook, more videos

vi. Print:

1. CO State Vacation Guide (reduce to one full page due to placement in back of guide)
2. Durango Herald SW CO Summer & Winter Guides (Page 5 placement)
3. Local publications / trade

vii. Online:

1. Targeted Seasonal Banner Ad Campaigns
 - a. Promote snow totals / winter vacation packages via colorado.com, regional news websites (9news.com, Alb stations, denverchannel.com, etc.)
 - b. Hot Spring Break promotion – Pagosa in the Spring
 - c. Fall Getaway – fishing, hunting, fall foliage
2. Take advantage of ALL online listings!!

viii. Email:

1. Send out newsletters every 3 weeks, versus monthly – increases from 12 to 17 e-newsletters annually
2. Leverage newly collected Itinerary Builder data
3. Surveys to track marketing efforts and visitor experience (Starting in Oct)

ix. Promote local events w/ banner ads on tripadvisor.com, visitpagosasprings.com

1. TTC needs to work with events to develop banner ads; assist with budget to get quality needed

b. Website

- i. Launched new www.visitpagosasprings.com, offering a variety of improvements:
- ii. Social media integration

- iii. Strong call to actions and banner ad placement
- iv. Clean, organized format
- v. Developed in open source framework to easily allow future enhancement
- vi. Averaging 20,000 unique visitors each month – increases with active campaigns
- vii. Site users are actively using website to plan vacations

c. 2011 Site enhancements:

- i. Blog / RSS feed – regular website updates
- ii. Calendar view on events page
- iii. Enhanced landing pages
- iv. Barcode links regularly updated (event calendar, etc)
- v. Enhanced Adventure Guide

1. Jennie introduced discussions during website subcommittee meeting regarding working with Norm Vance in 2011. The “adventure guide” currently resides on Pagosa.com; TTC approached Norm about possibly enhancing the guide, re-branding it to leverage TTC brand and “character” personality, provide regular updates through blog feature, and post-event updates, provide information about regular events in town (live music, art shows, etc) and create a team of volunteer Ambassadors, to serve in Norm’s capacity ongoing

- a. The Board discussed the proposal; agreed regular site updates would be helpful and could be leveraged to offload work from Jennie
- b. Daniel Gonzales motioned to hire Norm on a monthly basis to provide ongoing website updates, tourism ambassador services, enhance the adventure guide and allocate \$12,000 to the website subcommittee in 2011 for the services. Pam Schoemig seconded, all approved.

vi. Website link policy

1. Website subcommittee met and discussed developing a policy regarding which websites are linked to from the

visitpagosasprings.com website, as to avoid concerns over conflict of interest in future

2. Website subcommittee agreed that websites should provide unique content not found on visitpagosasprings.com, at least 50% of the content should be geared towards tourism, requests should be reviewed and approved by website subcommittee
3. Group discussed, attempted a motion and determined the requirements were too vague and asked the website subcommittee to formulate policy for board's approval

d. Press Relations

- i. Worked closely with CTO on FAM trips
- ii. Hosted and Entertained over 25 media writers
- iii. In 2011:
 1. Produce Media Kit Discs w/ printed labels
 2. Work with Ore Communications to active media outreach
 3. Work with CTO on 2 FAM trips
 4. Host and entertain 30+ media writers
 5. Article placement

5. Trade shows –Pam Schoemig

- a. Attended Denver Ski Show and Albuquerque Snow Show in 2009; plans to attend both in 2010
- b. Governor's Conference?
- c. Developed concept of local Tourism Conference to help local businesses understand how to reach tourists

6. 2011 plans:

- a. Upgrade Trade Show Booth
- b. Attend ski shows
- c. Investigate wedding shows – need wedding supplement, specific booth décor for wedding audience

- d. Attend wedding shows (once materials available)
7. Central Reservations- Pam Schoemig
- a. Incorporated Gateway widget prominently in new website design
 - b. Hosted meetings to help introduce Gateway to community
 - c. Conducted surveys to determine what it would take for lodging facilities to sign up with Gateway
 - d. 2011 Plans:
 - i. Get more lodgers & activities to sign up
 - ii. Concerted effort to make this system work for the community
8. Events – Daniel Gonzales
- a. Funded \$42,400 in events in 2010 (\$10,000 towards a 2011 event)
 - b. 2011 Event Funding Applications due Sept 24th
 - c. Town insisting TTC pays \$17,500 for 2011 fireworks
 - i. Discussion to approach CTC about splitting costs, locating corporate sponsors to assist and fundraising efforts to offset costs
 - d. Banner Ad development for events funded through TTC; banner ads to be used on visitpagosasprings.com and trip advisor DMO sponsorship
9. Capital Projects
- a. Signage and Wayfinding - Jon Johnson
 - i. Development of Wayfinding / Signage Plan; approved by Town Council in Oct 2008
 - ii. Refurbished banners and reintroduced to downtown area after 3 year lapse
 - iii. Gateway sign facelift –landscaping, site improvement, painting, etc
 - iv. Addition of Downtown Vehicular Directional Sign at Hwy 160 / Hot Springs
 - v. Addition of Downtown Pedestrian Events / Activities Sign at Hwy 160 / Hot Springs
 - vi. 2011 Plans:

1. Grant Writer
 2. Replace Banner project
 3. 1st Street Bridge – banner across Hwy 160
 4. Logo panel for existing signage
 5. Sign Maintenance
 6. Prioritize River Promenade (boardwalk area @ Overlook parking area)
 7. Fundraising
 8. Lewis St Sign (or other key location)
 9. Financial focus on R&D / Grants
- b. Reservoir Hill Task Force –Thad McKain, Larry Fisher
- i. Topo / Model
 - ii. Widespread Community Support
 - iii. Flyover
 - iv. 2011 plans:
 1. Improvements to Access Road
 2. Add Parking between Spa trailhead and post office
 3. Thinning / Dirt Work
 4. Apply for Grants
- c. Fishing Project – Larry Fisher
- i. Town businesses have been supplementing the Division of Wildlife’s stocking efforts for about 12 years now
 - ii. Program based on extremely successful stocking effort in Red River, NM
 1. Chirag Patel indicated the lodging property he owns in Red River sit along the river, and confirmed the success of their stocking efforts

- iii. Multi-year plan to enhance quality fishing waters in Pagosa Springs; response from large stocking in 2008 was overwhelming and has continued into 2010
- iv. 2011 Plans – downtown section from Conoco Station to Hot Springs Blvd Catch & Release; Larry Fisher has had discussions with local DOW officials
- v. Jim Smith asked about stocking other sections of San Juan, such as East Fork

10. Visitor Center – Morgan Murri

- a. Morgan Murri provided an update, Larry Fisher, Jerry Baker (CTC) have been working with Mary Jo to begin structuring management agreements for 2011

11. TTC / Town Council Work Session to review TTC accomplishments and future goals and direction

- a. Kathie Lattin and Shari Pierce attended; Group continued to review capital improvement projects
- b. Jennie introduced bar code scanning technology through smart phones and discussed ways it was being incorporated into the new downtown signage and other uses around town, such as posters in area businesses
 - a. 45% of US adults have a smart phone
 - b. Barcode adoption rate in Japan was deemed huge success within 12 months
 - c. In US, barcode scanners do not currently come pre-installed on most smart phones, however this is changing

11:30am – 12:30pm: Lunch / Break

- a. Open discussion / brainstorming on new ideas / projects during lunch

12:30pm – 3:00pm: 2011 Goals & Priorities and Budget Discussion

- a. Determine 2011 budget allocations, based on 2011 priorities
 - a. Marketing (includes advertising, PR, trade shows, Cen res, website)
 - b. Events
 - c. Capital Projects
 - d. Visitor Center

- e. Other
- b. Policy discussion regarding reserves and overall percentage needed
 - a. Jim Smith suggested allocating 5% of the reserve fund towards new projects / events, etc that come up each year
 - b. Group discussed amount needed in reserves and determined 10% in reserves, with an additional 5% designated as a “special projects” reserve
 - c. Jim Smith motioned to approve maintaining 10% of the total annual budget in reserve (or \$40,000 in 2011), with an additional 5% of the total annual budget designated as a usable reserve for Special Projects (or \$20,000 in 2011); Jon Johnson seconded, all approved
- c. Group walked through preliminary 2011 budget, based on discussions earlier in the day regarding subcommittee plans and goals
 - a. Group reviewed budget on projector and agreed on allocations, based on the attached preliminary 2011 budget
 - b. Each subcommittee will develop their portions of the 2011 budget, based on agreed upon allocations, and present during October 19th TTC meeting for final approval.
 - c. Jim Smith motioned to approve draft 2011 budget, Daniel Gonzales seconded, all approved

3:15pm: Daniel Gonzales motioned to adjourn, Morgan Murri seconded, all approved