

TTC Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2008

In attendance: Angela Atkinson, Danyelle Leentjes, Daniel Gonzales, Bob Hart, Robin Carpenter, West Davies, Brooke Kitchens, Janice Moomaw, Marcy Mitchell, Mark Garcia, Mary Jo Coulehan, Dianne Calderon, Crista Munro

Guests: Mike Heraty, Jon Moor, Larry Fisher, Mike Stoll, Bart Cook, Steve Van Horn, Rich Lindblad, Mark Weiler, Bill Hudson, Suzin Daniels, Cappy White

- I. Call to order – reviewed and approved minutes from February
- II. Old Business
 - a. Lure Brochure – the brochure is almost done and will be the last project with Hill & Co. Will have finished product with changes next week (March 25/26). We'll initially print 25,000 – 50,000, enough to last 1-2 years. TTC will get workable file (Adobe In Design, etc.) so that it can provide a template for future brochures.
 - b. Some TTC members met with Scott McKenzie from CenturyTel to get technical background on Wi-Fi throughout the town. After a brief discussion, the board decided it still needs to seek proposals, but that the RFP should include a bid for ongoing operation maintenance costs and eventual expansion to West End, phased in over time.
 - c. The winter survey is currently happening at Wolf Creek and we should be getting results back in mid-April, at least enough to form a baseline for future studies.
 - d. Gateway signage – NK presented 20 designs, some of which were well-received by the various sub-committees. The next meeting will be April 16 at 5:30 at Town Hall and Angela encouraged all TTC members to attend. Dianne said that comments were pretty consistent about what people want, but it was hard to get them to agree on the logos.
 - e. Occupancy/ADR form – the form is ready and will be distributed to town lodgers to fill out and turn in with monthly tax payment. The Lodgers Association will try to create a form that can be used for county properties as well. Concerns were expressed that there is no incentive to provide the occupancy stats. Various suggestions were made: Bob Hart thought perhaps a 1% tax rebate; Marcy suggested giving hotels who participate a larger listing on the lodging section of the TTC web site. Ultimately the board decided to put the form out there and hope that enough hotels participate to get accurate percentages. Angela said there is a national company who can compile occupancy statistics for fairly cheap with only 4 or 5 hotels participating.
 - f. New Marketing Firm RFP – Angela explained that the old model of hiring one comprehensive firm who can provide every function is outdated so the new RFP has been structured as a 3-prong approach: 1. Marketing; branding, advertising, internet; 2. Public Relations; 3. Market Research. Firms can bid on any or all of

the three parts. Communication and cooperation are vital elements of the winning proposal. The RFP will be launched Friday (March 21) on the web site. The new firm should be hired sometime in June.

III. New Business

- a. Trade Shows – Dianne just returned from a show in Dallas and was pleased to report that Pagosa had strong name recognition in that market (60%). She said we will rely on lodgers to attend the smaller shows and Dianne will only attend the larger, more professional shows.
- b. Email blast – The first one went out over the March 15-16 weekend. The message was focused on Wolf Creek’s extended ski season and the new air service into Durango by Frontier Airlines. Future blasts on April skiing will emphasize less crowds and cheap lodging due to off season.
- c. Budget – 4th Quarter lodging tax revenues were way down from projections. November was blamed for most of the decline. Also contributing were multiple pass closures. We need to be careful in the future with fourth quarter budgeting. It was pointed out that lodging tax returns are paid on the honor system (town doesn’t audit) and that town accounting is accrual-based so income is posted when it comes in, not for the quarter in which the hotel stay occurred. Bob Hart suggested the Town might want to start doing period, random audits to ensure compliance.
- d. Town reorganization – Mark created an Assistant Town Manager position, which has been filled by Tamra Allen. Tamra will now be overseeing the TTC board. The chain of command functions as follows: Dianne takes direction from the board but reports to Tamra.
- e. Retreat – April 3rd; 3:00, Centerpointe Church. We will be clarifying the TTC/Visitor Center functions, as well as looking at contractual agreement on budget, staffing, roles and responsibilities. By the retreat, the subcommittee on combining the TTC/CTB will have a report on progress (meeting March 24).
- f. Special Event Funding
 - i. Square Top Repertory Theater – asking for \$2412. The board needs more numbers – how many people will attend shows this season. Need to at least gather zip codes if funding is provided. Dianne will contact the group.
 - ii. Farmers Market – general consensus was that if it’s in a visible spot, it is helping to promote tourism. The overlook parking lot downtown was discussed as a possible location. Dianne will contact the group for budget clarification and a specific \$ amount requested.
- g. Dianne’s report – We are having good luck garnering coop partnerships for advertising. We are partnering with Cumbres & Toltec RR for NM Magazine and AAA Encompass Magazine. Various ads were included for review in the meeting packet. Danyelle suggested adding “easy to get to – 45 minute drive from Durango Airport” to ads. Dianne showed a copy of Pagosa’s ad in a Colorado newspaper insert of which 1,000,000 copies will be inserted into various

newspapers. All ads being placed have unique URLs and phone numbers for tracking purposes.

- h. Regular business was concluded. Comments from the public were invited. Mike Heraty spoke first, offering two comments: 1. The TTC needs to get specific advertising to the Phoenix/Scottsdale market. He said it's a high spending market and an affluent area. Danyelle said that the TTC has not sought out affluent markets because we don't believe that Pagosa can deliver on the promise to that market yet (few high end restaurants and lodging). 2. TTC Reserves – Mike said it would be “appropriate to get behind 4 events in the community” over the next several months to pull Pagosa out of the economic slump. His 4 ideas were a river event, a running race, a bicycle event and a horse event. He suggested that the TTC put up some of its reserves as prize money for these events. Crista said that it's nearly impossible to pull a large event off in the first year with only a few months of planning, and that it's difficult to find someone to organize the event. Mark Weiler said the TTC needs to start using “viral marketing.” He also guaranteed that if \$50,000 was made available for prize money that we would have people coming out of the woodwork to organize an event. He expressed his concern that the TTC hasn't accomplished much in its 18-month history and he challenged to board to try being aggressive and groundbreaking by “thinking outside the square.” He suggested that a proposal be sought out to put on a multi-day event that would be a tourist draw. The event would have to take place on a Sunday – Thursday during the upcoming summer or fall season and should be athletic in nature. Angela said that the board would commit to developing criteria for event proposals by email. Mark Weiler then challenged the board to make a decision on the spot to commit \$25,000 if the funds were matched by anonymous donors present in the room. Bob Hart made a motion for the TTC to offer \$25,000 toward prize money for a winning event proposal. Daniel Gonzales seconded the motion. Crista abstained from voting. All other voting members present voted yea. The motion passed.

IV. Adjournment