



# Minutes

## Pagosa Springs Town Tourism Committee

Tuesday, July 8th, 2014

Ross Aragon Community Center

4 pm

Meeting called by: Bob Kudelski

Attendees: Voting Members; Larry Fisher, Chirag Patel, Jim Smith, Bob Kudelski, Stephen Durham, Carla Shaw, Nick Tallent, Matthew Boyle, Steve McKain, Matt Sprowls

Non Voting Attendees; Jennifer Green, Greg Schulte, Mark Weiler, Bill Delaney, Bill Hudson, Ed Fincher, Cynda Green, John Egan, Greg Schulte, Kathie Lattin, Clint Alley, Don Volger, David Schanzenbaker

Please review: June Meeting Minutes, Subcommittee Minutes

Please bring: Agenda, Committee reports

1. Call to Order
  - a. Meeting was called to order at 4:01pm
2. Determination Of Quorum (6)
3. Approval of Minutes – June
  - a. Steve McKain motioned to approve June minutes, Bob Kudelski seconded, all approved
4. Chair Report – Bob Kudelski
  - a. Town Council Update
    - i. Everyone introduced themselves, as there was a large number of attendees present
    - ii. Bob Kudelski provided overview of goals and areas of focus, providing an update of discussions during the April TTC retreat

- iii. John Egan asked for the differentiation of the roles between TTC and Chamber
  1. Jennie Green explained that the TTC focuses on visitors, Chamber of Commerce focuses on businesses and the CDC focuses on bring new businesses to the community
  2. Group discussed; it was determined as the visitor center transition continues, the roles are being more clearly defined
- iv. John Egan asked for the mission statement of the TTC
  1. Jennie Green read the mission of the Town Tourism Committee: It is the mission of the Town Tourism Committee to raise awareness of Pagosa Springs as a vacation destination and improve visitor experience. The result is a solid, growing tourism industry that generates economic prosperity for the residents of Pagosa Springs.
  2. Chirag Patel read the Chamber mission statement, according to their website: It is the mission of the Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce to assist the members of our business community with development opportunities, resources, advocacy, services and education.
- v. Bob Kudelski asked about County Lodging Tax and their efforts to bring visitors to Pagosa
  1. Greg Schulte explained how the County lodging tax has been distributed and indicated the potential for opportunity to collaborate
  2. Discussion ensued on visitor center funding; Greg indicated that formal agreement with the County will need to be solidified
- vi. Both John Egan and David Schanzenbaker asked about the annual budget
  1. Jennie Green explained that the annual collections were approximately \$440,000, the annual budget has been based on a projected modest growth in lodging tax
  2. Needed reserves was estimated by Mike Branch for Lodgers tax at 10% of annual revenue; TTC currently has approximately 35% in reserves

vii. David Schanzenbaker inquired about economic incentives and whether enough was being done to promote the availability of 50% lodging tax rebate

1. Jennie Green explained that the lodging tax economic incentives were passed by Town Council 5 years ago, including in the Town's economic incentive program
2. David asked whether enough had been done to promote the availability of the rebates
  - a. Jennie explained that information has been shared with Lodging Association many times and promoted through Town's promotion of the incentives

viii. David Schanzenbaker asked about whether TTC could determine busy times based on advanced reservations to help area businesses know when to expect more people

1. Group discussed how it would be difficult to discern; Central Reservation System is a pass-through to lodging property's inventory system, the information would need to be collected from the various properties and compiled
2. Group discussed ways to notify more businesses to anticipated busy times, such as bike races
  - a. Jennie explained additional collaboration with local media could assist, and also informed audience that she would host a monthly radio show, beginning this Thursday on KWUF
3. John Egan asked who determined the marketing plan
  - a. Jennie Green explained that based on board discussions, staff compiled a plan, subcommittee reviews in detail and it is approved by the TTC Board; any changes, new additions, new opportunities are reviewed with the marketing subcommittee as needed
  - b. John asked if the TTC had ever considered an agency to handle all of the marketing efforts
    - i. Jennie Green explained that in 2007, Barnhart Communications was hired to handle everything (placement, ad development,

PR, etc) and well over \$175,000 was spent and lodging tax dropped in 2008; Jennie Green was hired in 2009, the TTC works with various agencies to assist, based on their specialty located through bidding process – such as a graphic design firm, PR agency, etc.

ix. Various discussions on signage, event infrastructure, etc

x. Town Council members left at 5:25pm to attend their next meeting

b. Recreational marijuana businesses – visitor center / website listings

i. TTC Staff is seeking policy decision from TTC Board on promotion of retail marijuana on website and in visitor center

1. CK Patel asked if the TTC allowed all tourism-related businesses currently on website

a. Jennie Green explained that yes, as long as they are in the “region” – requests from nearby communities are granted if the activity is not offered in Pagosa, such as historic trains

ii. Town Council has a moratorium in place until 2015 for retail and medical marijuana and cultivation; Town currently permits according to state statute on personal use and possession

iii. Jim Smith asked if Town was comfortable with advertising marijuana given federal restrictions in place

iv. Larry Fisher motioned to table the discussion until the August TTC meeting in order to give Board members a chance to review the various aspects of the situation, Matt Sprowls seconded, all approved

c. Open at large seats (1)

i. Letter of Interest from Criselda Jay Montoya

ii. Jennie Green suggested a “governance” subcommittee to review Board procedure, assist in nomination process and help create charters for subcommittees to guide future Board members

iii. Group discussed option of asking Town Council to reduce Board seats from 11 to 9, as the last 6–9 months staff has con-

stantly advertised new seats and assisted new Board members with understanding goals, direction, etc

1. Group determined to schedule interview with Ms. Montoya and await potential discussions with Town and County to recommend changes to TTC Board

5. Treasurers Report – Carla Shaw

a. Monthly Town Lodging Receipts report – Update

- i. May Lodging tax was up at least 12.5%, with multiple payments outstanding – TTC Director anticipates May to be at least 20% above 2013, based on previous payments

b. Current finances

- i. Bills are being processed

6. Subcommittee Reports

a. Budget – Carla Shaw

- i. No update

b. Fulfillment – Jim Smith

- i. No update
- ii. TTC Director will meet with Jim to review discussion from last marketing subcommittee meeting regarding digital guide needs versus enhancement of itinerary builder

c. Marketing – Chirag Patel

- i. Jennie Green provided update
- ii. Jennie will forward report for Town Council to TTC later this week with all of the recent marketing results
- iii. Continuous work with ad placement, creative development
- iv. CSG Communications approved to hire during last marketing subcommittee meeting for remainder of year; TTC Director has begun to discuss plans with them
- v. New and updated brochures in development for visitor center and area businesses – goal is to make visitor information as consistent as possible for visitors in the area
- vi. Multiple media writers through town in next few weeks

vii. Everything is trending well – social media, etc

d. Events & Events Infrastructure –Larry Fisher

i. Infrastructure use

1. Group discussed requests from event organizers that did not apply for funds in the 2014 process and whether they could utilize infrastructure items this year

a. Group determined to only allow event organizers that applied for use / funding in 2013 for 2014. Subcommittee will revisit for 2015, with input from Charlie at A&P tents

ii. Security Deposit

1. The TTC tried to work with event organizers on an honor system for 2014, however, damage has incurred

2. TTC Director has worked with town staff to determine recommended security deposits for Town Council approval

e. Special Projects – Jim Smith

i. No update

f. Wayfinding and Signage – Steve McKain

i. Subcommittee reviewed various potential projects:

1. landscaping at entrance signs (underway / previously approved)

2. river overlook enhancements

3. banners on hot springs blvd

4. signage at Piedra Rd

5. flag posts at entrance signs

6. forest service signs at visitor center

7. Parks & Rec / Res Hill signage

8. signage at clock / bell tower

9. Visitor Center signage

- ii. Subcommittee will meet in next few weeks to determine 18–24 month plan, based on above and present to Town Council for their review

g. Visitor Center subcommittee – Carla Shaw

i. Visitor Center Hours:

1. Monday – Friday: 8am – 5pm
2. Saturday: 9am – 3pm
3. Sunday: 9 – 3pm (expanded Sunday hours beginning 4th of July weekend until at least Labor Day)
4. Considering extending summer M–F hours until 6pm

ii. Volunteers:

1. 20 active volunteers, with at least 60 hours of volunteer time scheduled each week
2. 2 active outdoor ambassadors, with 4–6 hours of volunteer time each week
3. Held 1st Monthly “Thank You” Social on Tuesday, June 17th at 5:30pm at visitor center. The July monthly social will hopefully be a brewery tour (TTC cannot purchase alcohol). Event was well received, volunteers had a chance to mingle with other volunteers. Pizzas were ordered from Marconi’s, Pagosa Peak and DSP (different vendors will be chosen for future pizza parties!)

iii. Updates:

1. Town Council approved 2nd reading of ordinance to purchase Visitor Center building from the Chamber on Tuesday, July 1st
2. Hired part time visitor center coordinator, Gail Vollmer. Gail’s first day was July 1st. She will work 25 hours each week – summer hours are Friday (12–5), Sat (9–3), Sun (9–3) and Monday (8–5) – Gail
3. Phone lines will be switched by mid July, so that Visitor Center receives visitor–related calls; TTC Director cell phone receives all visitor inquiries through Town phone system (for tourism, press ??) – this will be directed to VC once phones are transferred.

4. New brochure organization in place, thanks to Liz – volunteers love it, as it is very simple to locate brochure in storage room with empty slot in lobby
5. Inventory has been removed – visitor center is not currently selling anything; investigating selling maps, given lack of option to purchase topi maps on Sundays in the summer

#### h. Catch & Release

- i. First public meeting was held last month to seek public input on Catch & Release
  1. Audience was mainly 20+ catch and release supporters
  2. Additional meetings will be held to engage larger audience and more diverse feedback
- ii. Formal designation through Parks & Wildlife will be a slow, uphill battle
- iii. Option for Town to consider “voluntary” catch & release
  1. Larry Fisher indicated he was not aware that Parks & Wildlife has only designated “wild”
- iv. Larry Fisher suggested, in the short term, using portion of 2014 funds designated for stocking to add signage along river on catch & release practices / proper handling of fish
  1. Parks & Wildlife indicated that they were willing to let Town use their verbiage for signs

#### 7. TTC Director Report – Jennie Green

- a. Jennie Green explained CADMO (Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations) meetings attended at end of June – meetings are extremely informative and great information share of destinations in Colorado regarding best practices, board governance, etc. Goal of group is to strengthen destinations with best practices, provide input to Colorado Tourism Office, and grow tourism in the state in a collective effort
  - i. Meeting attended by 27 destinations in CO, including regional partners, such as Durango, Montrose, Ouray and Alamosa

#### 8. Old Business

- a. None

## 9. New Business

- a. Public Comment

- i. Mark Weiler spoke in support of the efforts of the Town Tourism Committee, felt Town Council did not fully understand the economic impact of tourism to the community and also that the TTC Director was a gem and should be appreciated

- b. Any other new business to come before the Committee

- i. Nick Tallent mentioned that the Chamber's Renaissance and Pirate Festival was cancelled for 2014, as of a few hours prior to the meeting

## 10. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 6:36pm; Steve McKain motioned to approve, Stephen Durham seconded, all approved