



# Minutes

## **Pagosa Springs Town Tourism Committee**

Wednesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Ross Aragon Community Center

4 pm

Meeting called by: Bob Hart

Attendees: Voting Members; Larry Fisher, Bob Hart, Jon Johnson, Thad McKain, Valerie Green, Morgan Murri, Kimberley Siler Bradshaw

Absent: Jim Smith, Chirag Patel

Non Voting Attendees; Jennifer Green, David Mitchem

Please review: May Meeting Minutes, any committee reports that you receive

Please bring: Agenda, Committee reports

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1. Call to Order
  - a. Meeting called to order at 4:05pm
2. Determination Of Quorum (6)
3. Approval of Minutes – May
  - a. Thad motioned to approve May minutes, Jon Johnson seconded; all approved
4. Chair Report – Bob Hart
  - a. Chamber Member Resignation and New Appointment
    - i. Madeline Lyon resigned from the Chamber of Commerce and effectively the Town Tourism Committee last month

1. She is going to teach for another year, but would like to help on Holiday subcommittee, as available
- ii. Chamber of Commerce has recommended Bill Schwab to the TTC
  1. Group began discussing bylaws and came back to Chamber seat once seat allocations were determined
  2. TTC Director asked how long Bill Schwab had remaining on his Chamber seat
    - a. Kimberley Siler-Bradshaw indicated Bill's term ended in January 2013
    - b. Group asked that Chamber appoint a board member with more time left on the Chamber Board, so that they have a chance to get involved
- b. Jennie indicated that RD Whittington was no longer with the Springs Resort and his at-large seat was now open
- c. TTC Bylaws
  - i. Review proposed changes
    1. Bob Hart explained that the Builders Association no longer needed a seat on the TTC, as the group was less active; Bob Hart serves as the Builders Association representative
    2. Bob Hart explained that the Chamber of Commerce board members have not been as committed with time and subcommittee participation as other board members, likely as a result of their responsibilities to the Chamber Board; Bob acknowledged that the TTC requires a lot of time and commitment
    3. Bob Hart read a letter from the Lodging Association asking for increased representation on the Town Tourism Committee
    4. Morgan Murri supports adding one seat to lodgers and keeping the two chamber of commerce seats
      - a. Morgan Murri motioned to remove the builders association seat and add one seat for lodging association; Larry Fisher seconded; all approved
    5. Morgan Murri motioned that Bob Hart be appointed to open at large seat, Valerie Green seconded, all approved

6. Jon Johnson recently received a letter from a potential buyer that was turned off by the constant negativity in the local media
  7. Jennie read a letter received from a local business owner regarding possible sale of their business; potential sale was turned off by negativity in local media, speaking with locals, lack of activities for tourists and unwillingness of community to embrace any change
  8. Thad McKain explained that they recorded a 38 minute show last week discussing positive things about Pagosa with Mark Weiler, Thad McKain and Rich Lindblad; although he has been told that if he steps down from TTC, it would be best for the organization because on his involvement with the Reservoir Hill project; he has also been told his family's construction business will suffer if he continues to serve on TTC and support Reservoir Hill
  9. Valerie Green indicated that she only hears negativity about the TTC in her social circles
  10. Larry Fisher spoke that he has more of an issue of an individual's integrity being attacked recently; the discourse has gotten ugly
  11. Morgan Murri feels that we get support and appreciation in the areas that we handle well, but feels that we haven't been effective in communicating the Reservoir Hill proposal
- ii. Bob Hart explained that family was recently visiting from Oklahoma, with kids aged 11 and 8; Bob struggled to find activities for the family to do, helped Bob realize how little there was to do for families
  - iii. Bob Hart felt that the media had been unnecessarily unfair to the TTC recently
    - a. Jim McQuiggin indicated that he has reported on tax numbers and is not supposed to be a cheerleader for the TTC
      - i. Jennie indicated we did not need cheerleaders, but would appreciate if the media would also report on all of the other areas the TTC is focused on, such as tourism marketing, area signage, events, etc.
    - b. Group discussed placing articles in the Pagosa Sun, similar to the ones by the Chamber, PAWSD, etc to explain all of the areas of focus the TTC covers
      - i. Jennie indicated that previous discussion with Pagosa Sun editor was that the TTC is a government / Tax

funded organization and therefore cannot have a weekly article in the paper, as it gives government a chance to sell their opinions to constituents ; any article must come from Jennie (not TTC), has to be generic on marketing and cannot mention competing local advertising options

1. Morgan Murri and Larry Fisher agreed to schedule a meeting with Karl Isberg to discuss further

c. Kimberley asked why the TTC did not have an insert in Chamber newsletter

- i. Jennie explained that the TTC recently asked to have an insert, however we were never given deadlines or asked to submit materials; when most recent newsletter (via email), Jennie realized that she was not told of the deadline; we will correct this

iv. David spoke up thanking the TTC for their efforts and indicated that the Town Tourism Committee is the best tourism board he has ever worked with

5. Treasurers Report – Thad McKain

a. Monthly Town Lodging Receipts report –April collections

- i. April 2012 reflected a 0.8% decrease in lodgers tax collections as compared to April 2011, or \$134.06
- ii. April and May have shown the least amount of growth compared to other months, since collections began in 2007.

b. Current finances

6. Subcommittee Reports

a. Budget – Thad McKain

- i. No update

b. Fulfillment – Jim Smith

- i. No update

c. Marketing, website, trade shows – Jennie Green

- i. May lead generation update

1. Reports will continue to evolve as data populates the system; also working through understanding all of the various data elements available to provide meaningful information
2. Overall, fulfillments declined in April and May; decline has largely been isolated to Colorado.com welcome leads – they launched new website mid March and welcome leads have dropped nearly in half since the new website launch – Internet Honey confirms that this has been the case with all of their CO clients
3. Madden Media leads have begun arriving; albeit at a slower pace than expected
4. Visitor guide requests through [www.visitpagosasprings.com](http://www.visitpagosasprings.com) , beginning in April, now appear as the original referring site (change occurred when new request info form launched with direct integration in IH)
5. Requests for printed materials may be on the decline, based on the abundance of other sources – phone apps, mobile sites. Online guides, etc

d. Central Reservations- Valerie Green

i. Book Direct Update

1. The booking engine is live on website, mobile site and facebook
2. Book Direct still working on integration for 3 properties - Healing Waters, Pagosa Central Reservation, Sunetha (high priority for Book Direct; new integration for them)
3. 3 properties need to add inventory – Fireside Inn and Cabins, Hartland Ranch and Team Pagosa
4. Activities issue – none of our area activities have an existing online booking engine tied to inventory; Book Direct does not have a stand alone solution for activities as they offer for vacation rentals; investigating options – lodgers should develop packages to include on book direct to bring more activities in the mix
  - a. Pagosa Outside, Hub Bike shop and Ski & Bow Rack are interested once we have solutions in place

e. Events – Jim Smith

i. No Update

- f. Visitors Center report – Mary Jo Coulehan (provided by JG)
  - i. Downtown visitor center traffic in May was up 9.6% over May 2011 (2,808 versus 2,563)
  - ii. West side visitor center saw 115 people in the month of May, up significantly from 20 in April
  - iii. The downtown center is now open 7 days a week with M-F 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - iv. The west side center is open Monday, Friday & Saturday 10-5 and Sunday 11-3.
- g. Special Projects – Jim Smith
  - i. No Update
- h. Lodging Compliance Program – Valerie Green
  - i. Jennie Green explained that she had developed a Tax Compliance Guide to assist property owners with understanding how to become compliant and benefits of collecting taxes – form both Town and County
    - 1. Will work with County and Town to finalize
    - 2. Once finalized, guide will be readily available on county and town websites; work with title companies to provide guide at closings, etc.
- i. Wayfinding and Signage - Jon Johnson
  - i. Area sign / map updates
    - 1. New signs being installed in next few weeks
    - 2. Landscaping work session tomorrow evening, Thur Jun 14<sup>th</sup> at 5pm; meet at Chamber parking lot
  - ii. Gateway sign enhancements
    - 1. Meeting scheduled next Tues, June 19<sup>th</sup> at 10am at Town Hall to review designs and discuss overall vision for project
- j. Reservoir Hill Task Force – Thad McKain, Larry Fisher
  - i. No update
- k. Other Capital Improvements
  - i. Fish stocking began a few weeks ago

- l. Visitor Center subcommittee –Morgan Murri
  - i. Morgan Murri indicated that the group had not met due to various schedules; they intend to meet soon
  
- m. Ambassador Program
  - i. Anticipate having ambassadors by 4<sup>th</sup> of July week
  - ii. Jennie has received list of interested volunteers from Visitor Center; however, based on feedback from the Chamber, fears that the volunteers are choosing to work outside, versus indoors (such as new West Side Visitor Center)
  
- n. Holiday Subcommittee - Kimberley Siler-Bradshaw
  - i. Bob Hart asked if Kimberley Bradshaw would assume the role of chair for Madeline Lyon; she agreed
  - ii. Red, White n’ Brews update
    - 1. Shaping up to be a big event – need to promote it throughout 4 corners region
    - 2. If no fireworks, we are working on a light show option
    - 3. Noise ordinance extended until 11:30pm for event
    - 4. White Buffalo will be playing on the back of a truck during the parade; they will also be shooting a music video
    - 5. We need posters distributed in South Fork, Alamosa, Durango, etc.
    - 6. Lodgers are asked to sell tickets to guests when they check in for 4<sup>th</sup> of July visit
  
- o. Climbing Subcommittee – Morgan Murri
  - i. Progress is being made; group will be visiting in town over 4<sup>th</sup> of July
    - 1. Waiting on key folks to return from Denali
  - ii. Funding will be issue, but opens possibility for rock climbing and ice climbing
  
- 7. TTC Director Report – Jennie
  - a. What a difference a month can make! Since Circus, Director has been able to focus on marketing efforts and has felt proactive again

- i. Lots of progress made on website, new content, facebook, banner ads, area signage, book direct, information posters, etc, etc.
  - b. Discussed quantities for information pieces – group determined that a quantity of 2500 – 5000 rack cards and 150-250 posters to distribute around town
    - i. Table tents are designed and can be printed if interest is expressed
  - c. Facebook continues to roll out new changes (new revenue model introduced after IPO – must keep investors happy); constant monitoring to see what works to grow fan base and reach largest audience
    - i. Facebook limits the audience reach within fan base since IPO, but allows paid upgrades
      - 1. TTC Director is strongly against paying for posts to reach our existing audience
      - 2. Currently, one post per day gets the most attention – must include photos!
        - a. Aiming for 25% of fan base that see postings on their page

8. Old Business

- a. None

9. New Business

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

10. Adjournment

- a. At 6:00pm, Jon Johnson motioned to adjourn; Morgan Murri seconded; all approved