



# Minutes

## Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board

Tuesday, September 8th, 2015

Pagosa Springs Visitor Center

4 pm

Meeting called by: Steve Wadley

Attendees: Voting Members;, Larry Fisher, Bob Kudelski, Stephen Durham, Matt Sprowls, Criselda Montoya, Don Volger

Absences: Steve Wadley, Nick Tallent, Jon Johnson, Steve McKain

Non Voting Attendees; Jennifer Green, Greg Schulte, Darren Lewis, Morgan Murri, Mark Weiler, Matt Roane

Please review: August Meeting Minutes

Please bring: Agenda, Committee reports

1. Call to Order
  - a. Meeting called to order at 4:03pm
2. Determination Of Quorum (6)
3. Approval of Minutes – August
  - a. Larry Fisher motioned, Bob Kudelski seconded, all approved
4. Chair Report
  - a. Don Volger did not have an update, as he was filling in as Chair
  - b. Jennie Green introduced Ross Barrable; Ross has lived in Pagosa for 22 years, he builds Wind Harps for a living ([www.soundscapesinternational.com](http://www.soundscapesinternational.com)) and has expressed interest in donating a harp to the Town for use on a pedestrian bridge
    - i. Ross provided a video demonstration with audio to show the audience the concept. He had placed one harp, temporarily, on

two of the pedestrian bridges earlier in the day to show what it would look like and the attraction to those walking by

- ii. Concept of Singing Bridges, volume increases up to a certain level, but volume maxes out at a certain level, regardless of wind speeds; winds from different directions cause different sounds
    - 1. Group agreed it was very pleasant and soothing
  - iii. Group asked about maintenance, Ross explained the strings are made of type of nylon and can be installed by owner or by utilizing musically inclined students and / or locals to assist
  - iv. Vandalism was expressed as a concern, however Ross indicated that he has had over 100 installations in public spaces, including one in Congress Park in Denver, and no harp had ever been vandalized
  - v. Group asked about durability; Ross explained they were built to handle harsh conditions and to live outside year round
  - vi. Donation worth in excess of \$4,200
- c. Bob Kudelski motioned to recommend accepting the generous donation, Larry Fisher seconded, all approved; the Parks and Recreation Commission will review during their October meeting and a recommendation will be taken to Town Council if both advisory boards agree

## 5. Tourism Director Report – Jennie Green

### a. Media / Group FAMs – CTO and Grand Circle

- i. Hosting three groups over next 6 weeks – Sept 29th Mexico Trade FAM overnight, September 30th German Media FAM overnight and October 15th Grand Circle Media FAM – total of 25–30 media and trade representatives
- ii. Jennie is working with lodging properties to accommodate groups; Tourism Board is paying for the rooms

### b. Holiday Palooza

- i. Jennie asked group about continuing Holiday Palooza efforts; expense is minimal, but compiling data is time consuming for staff; Jennie asked if efforts were worthwhile and if Board wanted to continue
  - 1. General consensus was that efforts were not worth staff time – having snow in December would be more impactful; Jennie explained holiday events would be promoted with Weekly Live Music & Events that is provided to all

lodgers, Jennie will advise Sun that it is not needed for Winter Guide

c. CAST Meeting Update (Greg Schulte)

i. Greg provided a recap from a recent meeting in Vail that Jennie and he attended

1. All mountain towns experience similar challenges – vacation rentals, best practices; meeting included presentation from one of main researchers for the recently released

a. Issues and trends in vacation rentals – explosive and innovative industry; cities are slow to respond, finding it difficult to respond given rapid growth

b. Communities are moving from prohibition to regulation; litigation is on the rise as well

c. Anything put in place should be reviewed every 6 months, as things are changing rapidly

d. Lost tax revenue is one issue, affordable housing is being impacted

2. Luis Benitez, Director of new Office of Outdoor Recreation Industries spoke, focus on conservation and stewardship, outdoor industry anchor businesses based in CO

6. Treasurers Report – Stephen Durham

a. Monthly Town Lodging Receipts report – Update

i. July was up over 5% versus 2015; year to date collections are up 0.72% over 2014

b. Current finances

i. Bills being paid; fulfillment expenses have exceeded budgeted amount

7. Subcommittee Reports

a. Budget

i. Budget meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 17th at 3pm, following Marketing subcommittee meeting at 2pm

b. Fulfillment – 35,000 Travel Planners have been mailed, second printing of 50k is expected any day

c. Marketing

- i. 2016 Marketing Plan – Meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 17th at 2pm
- ii. Outside Online proposal
  1. Mark Weiler introduced idea to enhance shoulder season, based on comments from board member during Budget Work Session that they didn't need help in July, they need help in the off season. Mark indicated he had heard this for years from almost everyone
    - a. Mark Weiler developed the idea that we target Outside Magazine's online audience offering a discounted package with lodging, meal and activity during the off season, capitalizing on the recent Best Towns to Live In voting and subsequently naming Pagosa #9; in return for the discounted package, we ask the participants to tell us via focus groups on what we need to do to bring them to Pagosa during the shoulder season
    - b. Mark approached Outside Magazine about advertising; 3.3 million viewers – \$15k – 25k for 500k to 1 million impressions; Online audience looking for best value; print audience is different
      - i. Jennie indicated we received 850k impressions for \$15k with campaign in Spring 2014; Mark explained it would be up to us to negotiate and place ads
  2. Mark feels that we need to create events that brings audience to Pagosa and leverage marketing impact of Outside Magazine contest; the focus group should include GECKO and Tourism Board with test marketing questions
  3. Greg explained that we would need support from lodging, restaurants and activity(ies)
    - a. Package is lodging, meal, possible activity, plus participants have to debrief with focus group
      - i. Jennie asked what the incentive would be for participants to provide feedback after they have already received package deal
      - ii. Criselda explained that Wyndham has a lot of legal terms that participants agree to, including paying a very large "full price" rate if they do not attend required sessions
        1. Morgan Murri explained that we needed to make the message "fun

and campy” – convince them to want to visit and give us feedback

4. Mark explained that we have less than a week to pull together in order to capture audience from Best Towns contest
  - a. Don Volger explained that one week was not feasible; group discussed timeline and determined packages would need to be pulled together by September 21st; staff would then need to have creative developed, negotiate media buy, work with partners to get package details finalized and landing pages in place; Mark felt campaign needed to launch as soon as possible, with offer valid between Oct 15th – Nov 15th
5. Stephen Durham expressed concerns about proceeding at all
  - a. Stephen explained that events are difficult and expensive and shoulder season is tricky with unreliable weather; the only event he has heard that thrives in adverse conditions is the Cyclocross events
  - b. Stephen reviewed growth in shoulder season since 2008 and noted that lodgers tax had doubled during shoulder season months during that time; he disagreed with Mark that we didn't have a plan and expressed our results indicated otherwise
    - i. He also indicated that we can't expect July numbers during off season and needed to set expectations accordingly; and, as the operator of a licensed airbnb property, he is booked this year during the off season
  - c. Stephen felt it was not a well thought out plan and he had concerns with expected results
6. Larry Fisher motioned to move forward with the Outside Online / Focus Group idea by working on discounted lodging packages, Matt Sprowls seconded, 4 in favor, 2 against

d. Events & Events Infrastructure – Larry Fisher

i. Bike Racks

1. Stephen Durham was tasked with researching bike racks, he has involved biking enthusiasts in the community; they have identified expandable 2 bike units for \$125 base rate, available in different colors



1. Requirements have changed and designation is easier to attain now – requires organization of committee, trail maintenance (currently being handled locally through Step Outdoors, LLC) and / or annual event
- ii. Matt Sprowls explained that on September 22nd at 12pm, a CDT representative will be at Res Hill Grill for a 1-hour meeting; everyone is invited to attend to learn more about program
  1. Since we are nearing end to 2015 CDT season, a decision is not needed immediately; general consensus determined that group can work towards designation for Winter / Spring 2016, seek approval from other groups and discuss any needed budget in 2016; decision will be brought to Board during October meeting

b. Public Comment

- i. Invitation to attend Volunteer Appreciation Celebration on September 20th from 3-5pm on Reservoir Hill; Jennie explained that 40,111 visitors were assisted between June 1st and August 31st.

c. Tourism Board Ideas and Comments

- i. Don Volger thanked Stephen for his comments, he appreciates lively discussion during a meeting

10. Adjournment – Bob, Matt, all approved