

Town Tourism Committee

November 18, 2008 • 4:00 PM • Community Center

Voting members present: West Davies, Daniel Gonzales, Jeff Greer, Bob Hart, Brooke Kitchens, Marcy Mitchell, Janis Moomaw, Crista Munro, Morgan Murri, Jim Smith

Non-voting members: Tamra Allen, Mary Jo Coulehan, David Mitchem

1. Call to order
2. Determination of quorum
3. Approval of October minutes – under ‘Old Business, #2’, it should read “Mary Jo will re-write all documents with relevant changes prior to the CTC meeting” not “Marcy will re-write...” Minutes were approved unanimously with change.
4. Chair Report – Bob
 - a. Announced he needs 3 more chairpersons to head up Logo Committee, Special Events Committee and Public Relations Committee.
 - b. Committee heads will report to the rest of the board during regular monthly meetings.
 - c. Conflict of interest policy review – Anyone on TTC can chair a committee, but if there is any conflict of interest (i.e. personal benefit) members must recuse themselves from voting on an issue.
5. Treasurer’s Report – Morgan reported that YTD lodgers tax revenues are down 2.8% from 2007. Sales tax YTD is flat but fulfillment pack requests are up 19%
6. Committee Reports
 - a. Budget – Morgan reported the major cutback to the 2009 TTC budget will be in staffing. The ED position will be cut back to a part time marketing and administrative position as Barnhart is currently fulfilling many of the duties that Dianne was hired to perform. The proposed budget reflects the 10% and 15% reduction scenarios that town council requested, which could be implemented in the event of a major downturn in 2009.
 - b. Fulfillment pack – Crista reported that the committee met and agreed to create a companion piece for the lure brochure which will include more specific recreational information about Pagosa Springs, using the brochures currently being mailed out by the Chamber. Beginning in January, the fulfillment pack would only contain these 2 pieces. Only 12-13,000 of the new booklets will be created to match the number of remaining lure brochures, which are expected to last into May of 2009. Crista also said the committee talked about working with the Pagosa Sun to turn their current visitor guides into the official Pagosa Springs Visitor Guides for distribution in fulfillment packs and at trade shows. Crista met with Terri House, who was receptive to the idea. The details remain to be finalized, but if all goes well the new guide will be rolling off the presses in May at a significant savings to the TTC over producing such a piece in house.
 - c. Marketing – Marcy said that the Google Pay Per Click marketing (at \$750/mo.) is not included in the scope of the Barnhart contract so we will keep that management in house. After analyzing returns on previous year’s print, TTC will not be advertising in Inside/Outside or Mtn. Gazette in 2009. The best response to ANY ad placed by TTC so far has been the free one acquired by Barnhart in Endless Vacation, a timeshare magazine. Marcy thinks this is potentially because it’s very bright, clean and there’s no dilution of the brand as there is with co-op ads. Some of the 2009 marketing budget will be shifted from print to internet. We will be able to cut Barnhart’s budget back during 2009, but we do have a signed contract with them that won’t exceed \$170,000 for everything. West pointed out that Pagosa’s representation on Colorado.com is very weak. Marcy said the TTC new hire will need to make it a priority to have this material updated. West volunteered to help and Marcy said she’ll also sic Barnhart on them.
 - d. Web site – Marcy said that Kimberley currently makes updates on the TTC web site. We are looking at adding an Opt In section with information on Real Estate, Building, Lodging, etc. where people can choose to have this information sent to them. Participating businesses would pay a fee each time their brochure gets mailed out or downloaded. Marcy is also researching a

- central reservations booking system for the TTC web site that would be revenue generating. On November 24 from 11:00 to noon there will be a branding roll-out meeting at Town Hall Chambers.
- e. Special events – Janis volunteered to chair this committee. Morgan, MJ and Daniel will serve on the committee. They will meet soon to discuss 2009 funding requirements.
 - f. Logo – West volunteered to chair this committee. Bob would like a recommendation by the next meeting as to how to proceed (i.e. go with company Bob hired for \$250 or use Barnhart for logo development for \$4000). Bob wants a smaller committee to narrow down the choices to just a few, then the TTC will vote to recommend that choice to Town Council. Marcy said that the logo must agree with the brand/message that Barnhart will roll out on Monday. Morgan suggested waiting until after the meeting on the 24th, then working with Bob's company again with the new brand ideas. Marcy clarified the difference between a brand and a logo: the brand is the colors, fonts, photos, feel, experience, image, etc. It is emotionally resonating. It is everything in the ad BUT the logo. Tamra pointed out that the logo is more timeless so it may not always be totally congruent with the current brand (which changes). If the Town puts the new logo on its trucks, signs, etc., it cannot afford to change it every few years. Jeff said logos need constant repetition to be effective.
 - g. In-house PR – this committee will be promoting Pagosa Springs locally with a limited budget. It needs a chairperson.
 - h. VC report – Mary Jo said VC walk in numbers are down 13% YTD but fulfillment requests are up 20% (not including the highly effective Madden piece). They've sent out 280 packets from the Endless Vacations ad so far. Web site hits are staying consistent YTD. Marcy said that in October, the pagosa-springs.com web site went down due to the VPS migration, resulting in decreased traffic. Mary Jo said that in the summer, VC walk-ins number about 1000/mo. and in the winter about 400-600/mo. One thing that hurt numbers this year is that the hunting center moved to the Forest Service building. Marcy wondered how accurate the numbers are. Mary Jo says she thinks they're pretty accurate, but it's best to look at broad trends, rather than month to month comparisons. David (town manager) said that he and his wife received extraordinary service from the VC, and were asked to sign in before leaving.
 - i. VC contract – Bob pointed out that the agreement should just be between the Town and the Chamber, and that the County doesn't need to be involved at this stage. Mary Jo said it's been challenging making the revisions because there are so many entities giving her direction. Bob and Mary Jo will work on the final draft for next month.
 - j. Out of the Box Brainstorming – Jim said he has assembled a committee but there are currently no members of the TTC on that committee. He welcomed anyone to join. This committee feels it would be a good idea to open a VC branch/storefront in Durango. Along the lines of out of the box thinking, Jeff said he's working with the Chamber and CTC to create Pass Closure Days – a variety of activities and events that are automatically triggered when the pass closes due to avalanche activity. Mary Jo said the idea is to make those days fun and memorable. Marcy said it's important that we get an email blast out to participating businesses first thing on the morning of closures. On Jim's idea, David thought it might be more realistic to have a kiosk in Durango rather than an actual commercial space.

7. Old Business

- a. Bylaws – Changes look good
- b. Attendance – Fred Schmidt has missed too many meetings. Marcy motioned to recognize the vacancy of the lodger's seat on the TTC and that the board recommends Pam Schoemig to fill the position for remainder of Fred's term. Daniel seconded. The motion to present this recommendation to Town Council passed unanimously.
- c. Approval of budget to recommend to town council on December 2 – Crista motioned to approve; Janis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. IGA – Janis emailed Bob a preliminary IGA crafted by the County attorney. Town Council and the County Commissioners would ultimately have to sign off. Tamra suggested putting it on the

agenda for the 11/19 joint meeting between the town and county (11:30-1:00 in Town Chambers). Bob will be there; Janis will email the agreement to all board members.

8. New Business

- a. Staff changes – Dianne resigned formally on Sunday, Nov. 16 in an email to Bob. She is unable to move to a part time position. Her resignation is effective Dec. 20. Marcy has put together a job description; immediate action is required for a smooth transition. Tamra, Bob, David and Marcy will meet ASAP to discuss the position and finalize the hiring details.
- b. Jeff congratulated the new chairman, Bob Hart, for a job well done.
- c. West wants to know if the TTC has been in touch with the Springs to find out how the new building will be marketed. Marcy said the TTC would like better co-op advertising between the two entities to create a partnership. She would like to see coordinated PR/web marketing and email blasts.
- d. Southwest Colorado Region – annual dues are \$4000. Mary Jo said we get a LOT for that: they do regional marketing in USA Today, banner ads on the web, heritage marketing. They have a media writer coming in December from a bi-lingual publication. Also National Geographic Adventure has been in touch about an article. Mary Jo reported that she is working with this group to promote a brewery tour of Southwest Colorado and a golf tour that will cover the area from Montrose to Pagosa Springs.
- e. Monthly meeting packets – Bob wants everyone to print and bring the meeting agenda and previous minutes to meetings. Daniel suggested moving to computer (Power Point) so we can project the info and not have to make so many copies every month. Tamra said the town owns a projector. This might be something to integrate with the new hire, as someone will have to prepare the monthly packet.

9. Executive Director report – Occupancy numbers are still not being reported to the town. Bob would like to go online with Smith Travel Reports ASAP; all we need is 4 local properties and we currently have 3. The service is free to them. Properties get to compare their report against other local properties but the info is anonymous. They would supply local occupancy data to the TTC for \$500/year. Daniel said lodgers must be accurately reporting in order for the system to work. Marcy said the more properties, the better the info. Bob wondered if anyone's started to fill out the occupancy info on the Town's tax report form; no one knew the answer.

10. Adjournment