



Minutes

Pagosa Springs Town Tourism Committee

Wednesday, July 11th, 2012

Ross Aragon Community Center

4 pm

Meeting called by: Bob Hart

Attendees: Voting Members; Larry Fisher, Bob Hart, Jon Johnson, Jim Smith, Valerie Green, Morgan Murri

Absences: Chirag Patel, Kimberley Siler Bradshaw, Thad McKain

Non Voting Attendees; Jennifer Green, David Mitchem, Mary Jo Coulehan

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

Please bring: Agenda, Committee reports

1. Call to Order
2. Determination Of Quorum (6)
3. Approval of Minutes – June
 - a. Jon Johnson motioned to approve the minutes, Morgan Murri seconded; all approved
4. Chair Report – Bob
 - a. New Chamber Member Appointment
 - i. Stacy Boone – Step Outdoors
 - b. New Lodging Association Appointment
 - i. Carla Shaw – Springs Resort

- ii. The group discussed both nominations with very high regard and were pleased with the selections
- iii. Morgan Murri motioned to approve Stacy Boone as the Chamber of Commerce representative and Carla Shaw as the new Lodging Association Representative, Jon Johnson seconded; all approved

5. Treasurers Report – Thad McKain

a. Monthly Town Lodging Receipts report –May collections

i. Jennie Green provided the update

- 1. May 2012 represented a 9.8% increase in lodgers tax collections over May 2011, or a difference of \$2,133.33.
- 2. Year to Date collections are up 10.81% over 2011, or an increase of \$13,480.57.

b. Current finances

- i. Monitoring budget and revenues closely until we can see impact from fires; there is room to reduce 2012 budget if necessary

6. Subcommittee Reports

a. Budget – Thad McKain

b. Fulfillment – Jim Smith

c. Marketing, website, trade shows – Chirag Patel

i. Jennie Green provided the update

ii. June lead generation update

- 1. June 2012 showed a 112% increase over 2011 – 4,444 leads generated versus 2,092 in 2011.

- a. Welcome leads have increased again, plus increase from Madden Media

d. Central Reservations- Valerie Green

i. No update

e. Events – Jim Smith

i. No update

- f. Visitors Center report – Mary Jo Coulehan
 - i. Downtown visitor center was down 4.8% versus 2011, however with uptown visitor center, total traffic was up 2.3%
 - ii. Downtown visitor center is up 2.1% over 2011, combined visitor center traffic shows an increase of 8.1% overall versus 2011
- g. Special Projects – Jim Smith
- h. Lodging Compliance Program – Valerie Green
 - i. Plan to present an update during July 25th join Town / County worksession to determine next steps
 - ii. Tax Compliance Guide and Brochures have been created to help educate property owners
- i. Wayfinding and Signage - Jon Johnson
 - i. Powerpoint presentation provided that highlighted the positive things the TTC has underway (through pictures) – new signs, marketing efforts, social marketing and much more
 - ii. New gateway sign enhancements are being designed; should provide a lower cost solution to updating the entrance to Pagosa
 - iii. Shade sails have been added to overlook
 - iv. Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 17th at 10am
- j. Reservoir Hill Task Force – Thad McKain, Larry Fisher
 - i. Bob Hart indicated that the TTC was awaiting direction from Town Council and introduced Mark Weiler, who had asked to speak
 - ii. Mark Weiler showed a tourism video from the province of Alberta, CA
 - 1. A Red Camera (<http://www.red.com>) was used for Alberta video – Parelli has 4 cameras
 - 2. Mark feels the community has struggled to get behind the Reservoir Hill plan as proposed to Town Council and would like to see the TTC pivot the discussion to something more palatable; he encourages us to focus on what Pagosa currently has to offer
 - 3. Video production would cost an estimated \$90k - \$100k
 - iii. CDC would like downtown business representation on their board

- iv. Mark asked the group to consider a funding option to add 2% to the Town's lodgers tax; portion of the lodging tax increase would help finance the amphitheatre, tower and infrastructure (estimated costs at \$2.3 million)
 - 1. Of the 2%, ½ would be earmarked for Reservoir Hill and ½ would go towards downtown development
 - 2. Mark indicated that a slight increase in lodgers tax would amount to an increase in area lodging occupancy
- v. Mark introduced crowd-funding, an evolving means of funding, as introduced through the recently passed JOBS bill – meeting in Durango July 12th at 4:30pm at Library, hosted by Sen. Bennet
- vi. Community Benefits Agreement was discussed during Planning Commission meeting on July 11th; Mark seemed to feel there was a lot of support for a CBA
- vii. Discussion of increased 2% continued
 - 1. Both Pam Schoemig and Valerie Green (lodging property owners) expressed concerns about the lodgers shouldering the economic development for the entire community, currently tourism is the key driver and all efforts are driven through the lodging tax collections; restaurants, shops and activities do not contribute currently towards funding tourism marketing efforts
 - 2. Bob Hart and Morgan Murri both felt that an increased tax would not be noticed by tourists
- viii. Morgan volunteered to lead a subcommittee to vet the tax increase, where funding would go towards and who would manage funds
 - 1. Larry Fisher explained that alternate ideas for Reservoir Hill have been discussed and researched recently, based on input received
 - a. Jennie Green asked David Mitchem to clarify that TTC has been awaiting an opportunity to present to Town Council regarding Reservoir Hill
 - i. David Mitchem agreed
 - 2. Valerie Green wants the community to work together
 - 3. Jon Johnson asked group to consider various options for Reservoir Hill; Jon acknowledged the efforts of the Task Force and appreciated the tremendous amount of effort that had been put in already
 - 4. Reservoir Hill Task Force meeting on Friday at 5pm at DSP Pizza to review alternate proposals for Reservoir Hill

- a. Numbers / data for each proposal have been researched by TTC Director and will be discussed during Fri meeting
 - k. Other Capital Improvements
 - i. No updates
 - l. Visitor Center subcommittee –Morgan Murri
 - i. Group would like to schedule meeting next week
 - m. Ambassador Program
 - i. Shades were put up before 4th of July
 - ii. Effort being managed through volunteers; June heat plus dry conditions turned a few volunteers off
 - n. Holiday Subcommittee
 - i. Red, White n’ Brews recap
 - 1. Event was very well received by attendees, however, every possible factor worked against us for a successful inaugural event- no fireworks, international media fire coverage, etc
 - a. Jim McQuiggin spoke that he was incredibly impressed with the music and felt strongly about the event
 - 2. TTC Director suggests TTC purchase non-dated merchandise from Buckwild Productions to off-set their losses and for TTC / event to sell at future events
 - a. Jim Smith motioned to purchase merchandise from Red, White & Brews; Jon Johnson seconded, all approved
 - o. Climbing Subcommittee – Morgan Murri
 - i. No update; the climbers are still in Alaska (but safe!)
7. TTC Director Report – Jennie
- a. Jennie has submitted her name to the CTO to be on the “Advertising, Marketing and PR Committee” – should receive response by the end of the month, unsure of how many openings they currently have
8. Old Business
9. New Business

a. Public Comment

- i. Jim Smith suggested that the TTC continue to consider more ways to keep people in town longer; felt that the increased lodging tax will eventually plateau without additional amenities / activities
- ii. Jim McQuiggin spoke regarding his departure from Pagosa and indicated he was leaving at the wrong time, as he was excited about the direction currently, he also indicated he respected the TTC and has tried to be fair in reporting and has always held TTC to a high standard, based on their responsibility to the community
- iii. Michael Whiting asked what efforts were underway to capture the USA Pro Cycling Challenge audience traveling to Durango for the event start
 1. Group discussed adding “welcome” banners at Gateway signs, handing out new tourism rack cards and other suggestions; event begins Aug 20th
 2. Morgan Murri indicated that Colorado was being heavily promoted during Tour de France
 3. Michael felt that most traveling from Denver (majority of audience) will pass through the community

b. Any other new business to come before the Committee

10. Adjournment

- a. Morgan Murri motioned to adjourn, Jim Smith seconded, all approved