

**Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau
& Office of Economic Development (iManitou)**

Board of Directors

**Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2012**

Present: Tim Haas, Ken Jaray, Jack Johns, Jay Rohrer, David Symonds, John Webster, Matt Carpenter

Absent: Marcy Morrison

Staff: Leslie Lewis, Roger Miller

A regular meeting of the iManitou Board of Directors was held Thursday, February 23, 2012 at Manitou Springs City Hall in City Council Chambers. President Tim Haas called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

A. Action Item: Approval of November Minutes

After discussion, it was determined without a quorum from the November meeting, the minutes should be entered into the record as presented.

B. Action Item: Approval of January Minutes

John Webster made a motion to approve the January minutes as presented. Ken Jaray seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with Jack Johns abstaining from the vote.

C. Action Item: Approval of January Financials

In January all "pre-paid" revenues are posted to the revenue accounts (dues and Visitors Guide) as well as prepaid expenses (the State Vacation Guide, Colorado Springs Guide) posted to the expense side so both revenue and expense sides are higher than most months. Jay asked if it would be beneficial to talk with the City about the City distribution being paid differently than monthly installments but staff explained some of the larger bills are paid toward the end of the year so we didn't need the larger distribution necessarily at this time. Bills will be sent out in March for the Visitors Guide advertising that have not yet been paid which will increase the cash on hand. Ken asked about getting a report that would include better indicators as to whether the organization is on track financially. Roger stated staff would work on getting a cash flow put together. Roger expressed concern regarding the banner sales on both sites as well as the membership dues projections.

iManitou needs to generate \$312,000 for the 2012 budget. The Wine Festival is the event that contributes the majority of the revenue for the special events budget. Staff has found some additional issues with the web site and the ability to track results for the advertisers which is being fixed. Staff is correcting the issues prior to selling additional advertising on the site. We will be adding a "book it" button to lodging properties which will go to that property's booking

page. There needs to be a way to convert the visitor from looking to a reservation without having them leave the site.

There is concern regarding the advertising rates for manitousprings.org and those will be reevaluated. Staff will check pricing from other sites and have that comparable information for the pricing discussion to be on the March agenda. With only 3 advertising spaces on the page, Roger would like to start looking at other options, such as co-op ads, for additional advertisers. Matt Carpenter pointed out that the events on the web site are not current. This will be corrected by staff.

John will work with staff to come up with ideas for reporting that would provide the board with more information that would be helpful in the area of financial information. The Board agreed to look at a quarterly or mid-year adjustment to the budget.

For getting additional members, especially in the downtown, Roger asked the Board to talk to the businesses they know, that are only receiving the City provided basic membership about joining the organization at the expanded level. Dave suggested referral cards be printed that could be given to customers to present to businesses when sent by someone in the office or a board member to give the businesses a better idea of the membership value.

Dave Symonds made a motion to approve the January financials. Jay seconded the motion and it was approved.

D. Action Item: Approval of New and Renewing Members

In addition to the New and Renewing Members list, a current membership list and a list of the businesses receiving just the City sponsored basic membership were handed out. Cornerstone Plumbing and PJ's Continental Bistro applied for membership. Dave made a motion to accept the New and Renewing Members for January. Jack seconded the motion and it was approved. Headings will be added to the Membership list. Board members were asked to look at the businesses on the Basic Membership list and let us know who the contact is if we don't have a contact and talk to those businesses about the benefits of having the expanded membership.

Tim brought up that when Rob Stephens was on the Convention & Visitors Bureau Board, he suggested they print cards for the Board members and print the benefits of membership on the back side of the card. He helped them increase their membership through that suggestion. Staff will try to reduce benefits to bullet points that could be included on the back of a business card to implement this program.

E. City Report

Since the January iManitou meeting, the Parking Authority Board had a Special Meeting to make sure the company being considered for the Residential Parking Plan had deliverables and implementation in that plan and that it was not another study. There was a final meeting for the public on Manitou Springs Forward. On February 7, City Council approved a Flash Mob for the Roundabout. They also had a first reading on the Water and Sewer rates, which will be going up

quite a bit. The City has not passed the increased costs from CSU to the water/sewer customers and the City is now better allocating the actual costs to the fund. Downtown improvement 5B has been pushed back a little but is now moving forward. Council approved the Nelson Nyguard residential parking plan 7 – 0 and 6 – 1 to have funds from the Barr Trail parking lot pay for most of it. The Agreement with CSU does allow the City of Manitou Springs to use the funds from that lot to pay for the area around the Barr Trail including Ruxton Avenue. As the Residential Parking Plan encompasses more of the City than just Ruxton, the City sent a request to CSU asking to be able to use those funds to pay for the Plan and has not received a response from CSU. Matt felt it was important to stick to the terms of the Agreement. If the IGA on the Incline is approved, CSU won't mind the funds being used for the whole program.

Matt felt the Membership Meeting on February 9 was well attended and stated that it was neat to have a meeting where people weren't being mean to each other. He commended Roger on a good job of presenting a lot of information.

There was a Special Meeting on February 14 in which City Council gave final approval on the increased rates for Water and Sewer as well as a work session where they drafted the IGA for the Incline and had a draft review of the agreement with the Cog. On February 15 there was a meeting on Soda Springs Park which will be covered by Roger. On February 18 the City had Carnivale which Matt felt went really well.

On March 6 Commonwheel received approval for their Arts Festival. Swirl's request had to be postponed as they are currently operating under a conditional use permit which would also need to be modified. Council heard recommendations on the PPRTA Capital projects. In 2004, voters approved a 1% tax which was used for the downtown revitalization project. In 2012 the voters are again being asked to approve a PPRTA tax. There are 5 projects in Manitou Springs in plans which are the Manitou Avenue west end improvements to the arch; transit shuttle or surface or structure parking lot; Canon and Park Avenue pedestrian and drainage improvements; creek walk trail; and neighborhood sidewalk, drainage and utilities improvements. Dan Stuart has asked Roger to help talk with the voters about the importance of passing this tax.

A representative from Manitou Inn & Suites came in to the meeting and asked if they were on the agenda. Because staff had not heard from them since a meeting staff attended with them earlier in February they were not but were told they would be on the March Agenda. Manitou Inn & Suites was removed from the membership last July because of concerns regarding the number of times the Police had been called to the property in the preceding 6 months. The Board was advised that they should set some clear standards of membership to easier define the issue of concern about any business. When a business is a member, it sends a message to the public that the organization recommends that business. The Board, at that time, voted to revoke their membership. Staff met with the owners of the property approximately 3 weeks ago, spoke with them about changes they have made to improve the situation and toured one of the rooms. The business was going to send information that could be sent to the board prior to the meeting. Additional information will be provided to the board prior to the March meeting.

The Garden of the Gods Trading Post Master Plan modification changing a portion of the property from residential to commercial to put in additional parking was approved on a 6 – 0 vote and approval 5 – 1, overturning a Planning Commission denial, to rezone the land around the parking lot from hillside low density residential to commercial.

Roger would like to have a meeting with the City to clarify the City's direction as far as how the planning and development process works and the differences in how the Planning Commission views growth compared to how Council views growth. Roger has had a meeting with developers who have the rights to sell Castaways/Rodeway Inn, La Fon, Loaf n Jug and Park Row Lodge. There is concern that the Planning Commission controls growth through Conditional Use permits which are not conducive to financing for development.

City Council had a work session to discuss the IGA on the Incline. There will be a Special Meeting next week (February 28) to vote on the Incline IGA. Matt encouraged everyone to attend and voice their opinion so Council has more public input. The IGA is online and can be viewed prior to the meeting.

Dave stated that he felt the issues we have had with a few businesses are really a City issue and that if there are excess police and fire calls the City needs to take a look at the business licenses of those locations. One of the properties has said if a guest calls the police, they tell them to move. It was stated that the wording from the by-laws – Section 3.2 (b) “conduct or actions deemed to be injurious or prejudicial to the purposes and/or reputation of the CCED.” – is very broad and should be better defined. Roger will research by-laws of other organizations and present additional information to the Board for consideration prior to the next meeting.

F. Soda Springs Park Task Force

Chief Myers has put together a Task Force to try to deal with some of the issues with Soda Springs Park and the surrounding area. The initial meeting included representatives from the School, Police Department, Councilman Carpenter, Councilwoman Toll, a member of Colorado Springs Hot Team, and Tessa. Chief Myers was looking for co-chairs and Roger and Laurie Wood (Partners for Healthy Choices) volunteered for those positions. They will be meeting every other week. Chief Myers drafted a Mission Statement that the group will be working on. There will be additional people (students, Restorative Justice representative) added to the group. Jay asked how a resident would have heard about the group being put together. Roger stated that he brought it to the board looking for input as to who else should be included and find out if there was representation of the community missing. Chris, from the Mate Factor, was also at the meeting and expressed concern that their business is being negatively impacted by the activity in and around the park. Tim suggested a report from the meetings should be a regular agenda item.

G. East End Update

Roger met with William Robby and his partner. Mr. Robby is the representative of Remax who has the listing for the Castaways and is looking at redevelopment opportunities for the Rodeway

Inn as a mixed use type development. Mr. Robby says they have the rights for the La Fon, Loaf n Jug, and Park Row Lodge as well. Roger talked with them about the information that had come from the Manitou Springs Forward meetings and suggested they meet with Jack Benson and Dan Folke. He also suggested they meet with Dave Symonds, as president of the Metro District, as they are also looking at opportunities for mixed use parking development at the Wichita lot. They have been looking at Manitou and have looked at the Tajine Alami property as well.

H. COO Report

Staff is finishing up the Manitou Card with the businesses that have expressed interest in participating in the card and no longer trying to sign up other businesses for the promotion.

We are working with Business Catalyst to resolve some of the issues with coding on the manitousprings.org web site.

We have an opportunity to receive Walter (the Cliff Dwellings vehicle). Because iManitou can't take the vehicle as a charitable donation, and give the Cliff Dwellings a tax credit, Roger spoke with Jack Benson about having the City accept the vehicle as a donation. It would be donated so that it could be used for events (Coffin Race stage, in the Homecoming Parade, etc) but Jack was not sure the City could accept it either. Roger could accept it through his 501(c)3 and then pass it to iManitou. We would need to take care of insurance, maintenance, and storage of the vehicle. Dave asked the cost of renting a stage for our events compared to the cost of the storage and maintenance. The Cliff Dwellings was hoping to keep the truck in Manitou Springs. After discussion, the board determined that iManitou really didn't have the funding to justify the costs and suggested the Cliff Dwellings might want to talk with the School District. Staff will provide the Cliff Dwellings with contact information for the school.

I. Building – Update and Budget

Roger handed out a drawing of the building that he created. Chuck England has offered to look at it and put his stamp on it for iManitou. The areas we need the architectural stamp are the header beam to take the load of the wall that will be opened to increase the size of the Visitor Center and possibly putting a door into the back area from the east side of the building. We would like to increase the counter size and add a terminal that can be used for reservations. We will be requesting additional bids for the flooring. Pikes Peak Country Attractions will be moving out on Friday (Feb. 24) with the moving company picking up their furniture on Tuesday, February 28. The Board asked if there was a way to create a separate meeting room with the reconfiguration of the building. Unfortunately, the space is too tight for a separate room so a conference table will be put into Roger's office. There was no money built into the budget for the remodel. Roger explained that we are trying to do everything as inexpensively as possible. Roger is projecting \$10,000 - \$11,000 in hard costs for the project. Both Tim and Dave brought up the question of the lease on the land. There has been some uncertainty on whether the City is willing to renew the lease or if they want to sell the land. A letter was sent several months ago but staff has not received any response to the letter. By consensus, the board determined no money should be spent on the building until we know the status of the lease with the City. Matt

stated the Council has not discussed this item at all. He offered to see what he could do to move the conversation forward. Any remodel of the building needs to either take place so it can be completed prior to summer or wait until the fall. Matt asked for clarification of whether the Board wants a lease or wants to buy the property. After additional discussion, Ken made a motion for iManitou to coordinate with the City to have the lease as an action item on a City Council agenda as soon as possible for the same terms and conditions, in the current lease, and have a provision that the lease can be terminated by either party with 6 months notice. Dave seconded the motion and it was approved. Roger should continue working with Chuck on the changes to the building.

J. Discussion – Special Events

In Roger's conversation with Jack Benson yesterday, they discussed the summer concert series. In previous years, there have been approximately 18 concerts that are free to the public, in Soda Springs Park and we have paid \$150 for the series. Roger was trying to confirm with Jack that the charge would be the same. Jack agreed to consider this arrangement but made no firm commitment. Under the new guidelines, iManitou might not qualify for that agreement. The events discussion, which was planned for February 28, with City Council has been moved to March. The Board suggested that staff complete the application for the Concert Series and turn it in with \$150.00. If Council determines that fee is not acceptable the Board may reevaluate then.

K. Membership Drive

With the 56 businesses in Manitou that are only receiving the basic membership, staff would like Board help in converting them to the higher level of membership.

Jay brought up the need to make additional revenue from the events and asked how money is made at the Wine Festival. In addition to the gate and vendor fees, iManitou will be adding a Wine Dinner on Friday night. Jay asked about having a booth to sell iManitou "swag". Roger stated we were considering it. With the coffin race we will be charging an entry fee this year. We have gotten some negative feedback from some of the teams but the Board felt \$50 per team was very low. Jay asked about other ways to monetize the events that are so popular. He asked about setting up concessions during events. This idea, as well as asking businesses that really profit from the additional crowds in town sharing some of the profits with iManitou, were discussed. Businesses do support iManitou through sponsorship of events and iManitou should not compete with the businesses with concessions were the prevailing thoughts.

Jay stated that the large events should have their own web pages and not be just included in the manitousprings.org site. He and Karen bought the domains for some of the major events several years ago but nothing has been done with those domains. Web sites for the events would add advertising opportunities. One of the issues that Shelly Bailey has run into is the businesses she is talking to about sponsorship opportunities is that while the Fruitcake Toss receives national exposure, there is not that large of a crowd. Businesses are interested in the Wine Festival and the Coffin Races for sponsorship. The Fruitcake Toss, Wine Festival, and Coffin Races all need their own web sites. Tim stated that he feels the Manitou businesses do

subsidize events either through sales tax or loss of sales. Staff will send an email to businesses and ask about business the day of Carnivale as it is fresh in everyone's mind. UCCS had students surveying the crowd during the event which will be shared with the Board when we receive the results. There was discussion of trying to come up with some event to try to keep people in town after the events such as Carnivale and the Coffin Races when other than the people who go to the bars or restaurants, many people leave Manitou. Dave suggested we have a Special Events subcommittee and asked about Tom Schwagart helping with that.

Susan Wolbrueck sent information on putting together a "Cash Mob". The concept was explained by Jay. Susan has offered to help to promote this so Manitou Springs is the first in this area to host the "Cash Mob". Because it is all done through social media there is no cost to try this. It was decided that the first "cash mob" should be done with businesses not owned by Board members. Jay will work with Susan on the event.

Roger has made contacts with several sports organizations to get more traffic to Manitou Springs when the organizations have tournaments in Colorado Springs. We are taking boxes of guides to those organizations.

Having no further business, the board adjourned at 11:15 a.m.