

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

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

June 27, 2013

Present: Jennifer Brown, Karen Cullen, Gwenn David, Tim Haas, Ken Jaray,
Marcy Morrison, Julie Vance, David Symonds, Matt Carpenter

Staff: Leslie Lewis, Marcy Morrison, Floyd O'Neil

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development (iManitou) Board of Directors was held on Thursday, June 27, 2013 in Manitou Springs City Hall City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 8:34 am by President David Symonds.

A. Action Item: Approval of May Minutes

Ken Jaray made a motion to approve the May Minutes as presented. Tim Haas seconded the motion. Marcy reported that the staff had reviewed the Minutes and wanted to let the Board know that we still need 10 – 15 new members to reach the budget goal. She further reported that we have not received any feedback from the City as to the adequacy of the flood insurance coverage on the building though the content coverage was increased to \$50,000. There is question as to whether the cost of coverage would be reduced if we were included in the City package. The annual payroll is projected to be approximately \$30,000 under budget at this point. The motion for Approval of the Minutes passed.

B. Action Item: Approval of the May Financials

Jennifer Brown reviewed the Special Events Revenue on the budget comparison. She pointed out that with the Wine Festival revenue, the Special Events revenue will increase to approximately \$58,000. We will still be approximately \$27,000 short of budget with the Ice Cream Social and Coffin Races to bring in that revenue. The Board discussed the need for an additional fund raising event to reach the projected budget. Because it is so late in the year, Jennifer reported that iManitou will probably not reach the projected Dues budget and the Board should look at how to increase memberships next year. The manitousprings.org budget line will also fall short as well. She suggested that the board discuss ways to increase the revenue streams in the brainstorming session.

In looking at the expenses, the Economic Development line has \$17,000 budgeted and \$4,512 has been spent to date. Expenses in ED has included the stipend paid to Marcy

each month, the sign on Highway 24, and will cover the iManitou portion of sealing the parking lot. Jennifer recommended the Board define what Economic Development is under the umbrella of iManitou and how to better utilize those funds. There was a separate information sheet handed out on the Marketing budget with more detail on how those funds have been spent. The postage expense will go up and should end up close to budget by the end of the year.

On the Balance Sheet, one of the CDs (Canon National) was cashed in at maturity and the funds were deposited into the Pikes Peak National Bank saving account. We can keep an eye on rates and move the money when it makes sense.

The 2012 Audit was handed out. In order to give the Board time to review the document, Jennifer requested discussion of the Audit be placed on the agenda for the July meeting. The standouts are the Marketing, Special Events and Payroll variances. There were no standouts listed in the Management Letter. Jennifer asked if there should be an explanation of the lease comments.

Tim made a motion to approve the May Financials as presented. Julie seconded the motion and it was approved.

C. Action Item: Approval of New & Renewing Members

There was only one renewing membership which was Cooper Postcards. Karen Cullen made a motion to approve the renewal. Tim seconded the motion and it was approved.

D. Board Opening

There is currently one opening on the Board of Directors. Additionally, the City position on the Board of Directors is still “in limbo” with Marcy serving as the interim COO. In discussing with Councilman Carpenter, there was confusion as to whether the City was waiting for iManitou or iManitou was waiting for the City to come to resolution. The By-laws state there must be a minimum of 7 members on the Board but the Board voted to expand the number to 9 several months ago. Karen had a conversation with the Bank at Broadmoor about having someone on the Board and Leslie has been in contact with Farley McDonough, Adam’s Mountain Café, about the opening. After discussion, the Board decided to wait until September to push filling the vacancy.

E. Marketing/Internet

Floyd O’Neil reported that since the last meeting, iManitou has contracted with Electronic Storefronts for hosting the web site on their server. In order to contract with them for SEO and because we were having unexplained changes on our site, it was determined moving the site to their server was the best option. We still have the issues

of the SEO and fixing the problems with the plug-ins in Word Press as well as updating Word Press to the most current version. Now that the site has been moved, we can move forward with the proposals received. ESI has given us a quote of \$375 - \$525 for the SEO. The other quote received was from Mediawerx, Dave Wolverton, who is a member of iManitou, to take care of all of the evaluation and repair of the plug-in issues. ESI was asked for a proposal for the plug-ins however, Jim Clemens was unable to put a firm price on the process without jumping into the site. He stated it would be \$75 per hour with no idea of how long it would take. Dave Wolverton provided a quote of \$2,000 for all of the necessary changes to the Word Press site. All of the proposed changes will come out of the Marketing budget. There is still \$8,000 unspent in the Internet budget line.

Karen expressed concern regarding working with Dave Wolverton based on previous experience and recommended working with ESI for all of the necessary changes. The Board discussed the benefits of working with one company to take care of all of the needed work. Ken made a motion to authorize Leslie to sign an exclusive contract with ESI for the necessary work on the web site. Julie Vance seconded the motion and it was approved.

Ken has been working with Crystal Peak Design to build the “Mind and Body” pages that will be added to the mantiousprings.org web site. They are close to having the pages complete. Ken thinks there will be 8 content pages when complete. He would like authorization to take those pages to ESI and have them add SEO and add the pages to the iManitou site.

F. Social Media Update

Marcy and Leslie have attended two meetings, with Pikes Peak Country Attractions Association and CSCVB, to discuss marketing following the Black Forest Fire. The first meeting was to discuss how to handle marketing once the fires calmed down. The group talked about setting up a media meeting to discuss turning the message from the fires to all of the positive things in the area once containment was attained. In 2012, a similar meeting was held and the news teams went to the attractions and had live broadcasts showing things were ok for residents and visitors. The second meeting was with the media. They were very receptive to getting back out and showing positive images of the area again. The repetitive message in both meetings, because of limited budgets, is to use social media. We have had Floyd and Rhonda out taking pictures showing blue skies and lots of activity in both downtown and at the attractions. Brittany has gone to all of our members Facebook pages and “liked” them so that we can receive, and share, their content. She then created a matrix that shows all of the members, who has Facebook pages, who has “liked” So Many Things in Manitou

Springs, and when the business last posted to their pages. The Board discussed the importance of sharing each other's content for increased exposure for everyone. All photos should be time-stamped so that we are showing "here and now". Posts should be positive and sites should be relatively current at least.

Ken asked if we had anything targeted to attracting the Hill Climb racers. We are currently posting a lot of their information. He suggested next year we should have an organized effort to reach out to the racers and invite them to Manitou Springs. Staff is working with Lisa Haight to try to bring Hill Climb activities to Manitou Springs next year. Ken also asked if we were connected to fundraiser as there was a post about them raising money for the Emma Crawford Coffin races. He was told that was our on-line fund raising mechanism.

A guest representing Manitou Yoga, managing their social media and Facebook page with Laura Ettinger, and working for The Nature of Things to develop an on-line presence had come in. She came to find out more about iManitou and hopefully get involved.

G. Discussion: Business Since Fire

The Board discussed business since the fire. Dave believes business recovered more quickly because the national exposure of the fires went away very quickly. Lodging has not recovered as had been hoped. There are properties not full for the 4th of July and reservations for July are down.

The Visitor Center numbers will be up for the month of June. It was reported there are approximately 650 lodging rooms available in Manitou Springs. Ken asked about getting occupancy number from lodging properties. Staff will request that information. Gwenn reported that she felt we are still experiencing effects of the Waldo Canyon Fire. She has had guests that told her they didn't want to come to the area, but family talked them into it, and they were surprised that there was not more damage from the fire.

The Board discussed the evening news filming the trickle of water in the creek and talking about the flood potential for Manitou Springs. Gwenn reported she had guests leave because of their concern for a flood with a 20% chance of rain. The news and sand bags around town do create a concern in people.

It was reiterated that we need to do more to help lodging as if people are staying in town, they will shop and dine.

H. CTO Grant

Karen sent an email when she received the Grant information and stated it would be a great way to get a dollar for dollar match of up to \$25,000. The benefit would be

increasing our marketing budget by \$25,000 but we would have to guarantee to the CTO that we have the \$25,000 to put up. It is an extensive application. Karen has been part of a CTO grant previously that she was successful in receiving. In meeting with staff last week to discuss ideas for the grant application, Karen felt SEO should be included, and suggested we put together an interactive map that would include a data base. Hiking, parks and the springs could be included. She feels this could be a money-maker in that we could allow members to be on the map for a nominal annual fee. She has gotten a proposal from ESI of \$1,200 for additional SEO and \$4,700 for the map. She thought a Facebook promotion could be included for \$1,000 per month and an ad words campaign as well. Leslie looked at additional print options to include. Marketing efforts that we already do cannot be included in the grant but we can do things to expand our market. The efforts can be split between 2013 and 2014. The grant must be submitted August 8 and will be awarded in mid to late September. Karen thinks, based on our story, we have a good chance of receiving the grant. Ken has been talking to a company about getting a proposal to rebrand Manitou Springs as the place of health, healing and well-being and wondered if that could be included. He feels this would be marketing to a new group and it would be a huge market. Karen thought we could produce a more in-depth brochure on the Incline that could also be included. The grant has to be based on a region and based on new marketing efforts. It requires you to spend your money before the grant money can be spent.

Karen did state that if she is working on the grant, she doesn't have time to chair the High Altitude Happy Hour.

I. Special Events Update

The Pancake Breakfast was very successful for the Fire Departments. It was used as a fundraiser for them. Manitou Springs Fire Department put up the money to buy all of the supplies and Kiwanis members cooked. There has been talk of moving the event away from Memorial Day weekend and have it in conjunction with the Hill Climb next year.

The Wine Festival was also very successful. The weather was perfect for it. The wineries were very happy. The five food vendors also did very well. Some of the merchandise vendors did well, others reported very low sales. Karen asked if any of the Living Social purchasers stayed in Manitou. Staff was not sure. She suggested we offer lodging properties tickets for people staying two nights next year. Dave suggested that we consider selling tickets with shifts (like the Craft Lager Festival) next year. Marcy reported there were a lot of military who attended the event. We will look into getting presale tickets to the military installations in the area for next year.

Julie suggested we have the ability to provide more bags and save the 6 bottle totes for people buying tickets on-line as they may be the ones buying wine. We have bags that were reserved for people buying tickets in advance and Living Social that were never claimed. Tim suggested the bags be saved for people buying wine as there were people leaving with no wine in the bags.

The Ice Cream Social is July 8. Sinton Dairy is working with Colorado Creamery on the ice cream. Patsy's is donating the cones. The pie contest application has been sent to all previous contestants but not many have come back yet. We have all of the judges in place. Manitou Kitchen Shop is unable to provide the prizes for contest this year. The Board suggested contacting Manitou Kitchen Shop to see if we could purchase those prizes at half price.

The Coffin Races has the fund raiser page. Staff thinks \$50 - \$60 has been donated so far. There are 15 teams registered already. Floyd is working on sponsors. The Denver Hearse Club will not be invited to participate again. We may have a few hearses but not as many as in previous years. Karen suggested the hearses be charged a fee to participate and that they not come back through town on the parade route. We have not yet received an estimate from the City for the cost of the Coffin Races.

J. City Report

Councilman Carpenter reported that the stickers for the enforcement times have been added to the parking kiosks. The kiosks now flash times if someone tries to pay outside the enforcement hours. There are still some signage issues that need to be addressed. The email system was sending notices to people to pay after hours so that system has been updated. They are considering a print option instead of automatically printing receipts for every transaction. The original enforcement time proposal was 6 am – 6 pm and it ended up being 7 am – 8 pm. The City has decided to leave it as is for now. There have been minimal complaints. There is a complaint about sign clutter. Matt reported May started out slow because his business is weather dependent but he ended up with a banner month that he attributes partially to paid parking because employees are no longer parked on the street and the turnover in spaces is higher. He has been told the average time in the lots has increased.

The shuttle program reports they are seeing approximately 100 people per day ride. The highest use is in the morning. The weekend numbers are much higher, showing 300 – 400 people riding per day. Ken asked if anyone was monitoring the number of people parking in the Tajine Alami lot and was told there is no formal monitoring of that information. Matt shared graphs that he has created from the Standard Parking numbers showing use in the paid lots. There is a restaurant with a comment basket

asking customers for their thoughts on parking. Jennifer reported that she has spent time in town this week asking retailers and restaurateurs about their thoughts on parking and asked if there would be a time to present that information to City Council. Matt invited her to come at any time. She can present the information under “Comment on Non-Agenda Items” but suggested she start with the Parking Authority Board. The Board further discussed use of the kiosks. Matt suggested the comments be consolidated and sent to the Parking Authority Board and City Council.

Ken asked if there was further conversation regarding setting up an Enterprise Zone now that the parking is making money. Matt reminded Ken that the numbers are not profit at this point and don’t account for paying Standard Parking. Tim requested Matt email his information to the Board. Jennifer asked if there was thought of changing to a standard time of enforcement in line with most cities around the state or nation. Matt again stated they were not looking at changing times of enforcement yet. The current plan includes free parking on weekdays from December to March.

The Iron Mountain trail day went well. 35 people worked on the new connector trail. There is 800 feet of trail needed and 450 feet got completed. It will connect Crystal Park Road to McGee’s Road. It is the proposed route for the front side of the mountain.

Council passed pay raises for safety personnel. The “No Smoking in Parks” ordinance passed 6 – 1 on first reading. Matt shared many photos he had taken of the cigarette butts in areas of the parks as well as damage to the stage in Soda Springs Park. Matt stated the police would not go to the parks and start issuing tickets but would use the ordinance to educate people that smoking in the parks is not allowed. Julie expressed concern that we should not have an ordinance that is not enforced and it seems the problem with cigarette butts all over is a violation of a Littering ordinance. Most people will see a “No Smoking” sign and obey that information however there will be some who will ignore the signs and the laws.

K. COO Report

iManitou purchased weather radios through a collaborative effort with the City. It is an excellent tool for business owners and anyone living near the creek. Walmart gave us a substantial discount so that we were able to purchase the radios. As we have only sold half so far, Board members were encouraged to purchase radios (if they haven’t already) and asked to encourage other businesses to purchase them as well.

The Board decided to reschedule the brainstorming meeting and set a target date for September 17. The meeting will be held from 4:00 – 7:00 pm. Marcy will check availability of Susan and Tweed for that date.

L. Staff Report

The Visitors Center numbers will be up for June.

The BID finally got the hot water power washer and has been able to clean all of the sidewalks. Hawk will go back through town with the power washer again starting next week. Complaints have been received regarding the music from the Heart of Jerusalem, as well as the fact that he has painted some of the sidewalk in front of his door.

The Board discussed that it would be nice to have the ability to play music through a central system (particularly during the holidays) that can be heard throughout town. Leslie clarified that the conduit was put in place under the sidewalks but no wire has been strung. The costs of the speaker system and the ASCAP fees are the unknowns. Dave suggested using Direct TV so that they take care of the ASCAP fees. Leslie will suggest the BID look into adding music capability to downtown. The BID did not hold a June meeting as there were no pressing issues on their agenda. They are looking for Board members. iManitou staff is working on updating the map on the back of the Community Board at the Wichita lot.

M. Unscheduled Appearances

Karen asked that if we don't currently have a way to track advertising, that we build that into ads and set aside Manitou Money, or some other giveaway, that can be tracked to calculate ROI. Leslie reported that the tracking on the 800 numbers really isn't a good tracking mechanism anymore as more people call the regular line with their cell phones.

Having no additional business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:28 am.