

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

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

November 21, 2013

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

Guests: Camille Blakely

Staff: Leslie Lewis, Marcy Morrison

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development (iManitou) Board of Directors was held on Thursday, November 21, 2013 at Manitou Springs City Hall in City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 8:39 am by Vice President Tim Haas.

A. Action Item: Approval of October Meeting Minutes

Karen Cullen corrected section H. Update: Marketing Task Force of the October Minutes to reflect the deadline for the Colorado State Vacation Guide and Colorado Springs and Pikes Peak Region Visitors Guide was October 22, not November 15 as stated. Ken Jaray made a motion to approve the October Meeting Minutes with the correction. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

B. Action Item: Approval of October Financials

Jennifer Brown reported the Special Events revenue is higher than the anticipated adjusted projection for that category. There will still be both revenue and expenses from the Coffin Races. Jennifer reported everything appears to be on track. Karen made a motion to approve the October Financials. Julie Vance seconded the motion and the motion passed.

C. Action Item: Approval of New, Renewing & Non-Renewing Members

Additional Members with renewals received after the list was prepared were read into the record as: Bill & 2 Chucks (Manitou Lofts & Shops), Auer Woodley Hilderbrand & Sanders LLC, The May Museum, The Glass Blowers, The Christmas Shop, and Twin Bears Embroidery. Leslie had a conversation with Tracy Miller regarding her decision to not renew her membership. Tracy feels the money iManitou spends and marketing and the exposure she receives (the Visitors Guide, web site, and brochure distribution) have no value to her business. Staff will contact her to let her know about the additional grant money that has been awarded will be used for advertising/marketing. Karen suggested that Tracy be given a copy of the Strategic Marketing Plan. Ken suggested a summary of the plan be put on the web site for anyone to review. Tracy Miller is also very upset over the retail marijuana issue and is planning to move to Old Colorado City when her lease expires.

There is not currently a location on the web site for documents to be posted. The new web site will have a section that members can log into and view documents such as this plan and Board Meeting minutes when it is complete. Karen made a motion to approve the New, Renewing & Non-Renewing Members with the additions. Julie seconded the motion and it passed.

D. Update: Board Openings 2014

There will be one opening on the Board with David Symonds term ending at the end of 2013. Julie has spoken with Brad Dreher (Savelli's) as Dave is currently representing restaurants. Joy Vernon reported she had spoken with Tina Blye (The Olive Tap and Good Karma). Several other Board members had also spoken with Tina about joining the Board. Dave suggested the notice of opening be sent to the membership again as a separate email. Gwenn asked about Coquette Bistro and asked if they were staying in Manitou Springs. They have opened a temporary location through the end of the year in downtown Colorado Springs. Coquette is looking for a space in downtown Colorado Springs to purchase as well. The Board discussed the water main break and the electrical power outage as instances that have had a negative impact on Manitou businesses.

E. 2014 Strategic Marketing Plan

Camille Blakely handed out copies of the Strategic Marketing Plan following some revisions to the plan that had been emailed to the board. Karen updated the Board on the CTO Grant. Karen was finally able to make contact with the CTO office. The scope of work still needs to come back to the Board. It has been approved but the timelines have been removed.

Camille reviewed the sections of the plan. Under the Economy section, Marcy suggested the numbers on public school spending per student be verified with Ed Longfield, Manitou Springs School District Superintendent and Dave suggested there be a comparison to Colorado as well as National average. Ken asked if it would be appropriate to add projections for the Tourism Industry for the state and as specific to Manitou Springs as possible to the Industry Section. Tim Haas stated this information would be available in the Longwoods Study. Tim also stated the competition listed is all regionally selected and competition includes California, Florida, Hawaii and our national perception. In the Longwoods Study, Colorado ranks high in the desired places but that doesn't translate into the same ranking level in places actually visited. Camille will add a National tier competition level that will be competition for Colorado. Dave suggested the competition should be broken into categories such as who is competition for arts, outdoor activities, etc. In discussion, the Board determined that Rocky Mountain National Park should be included with Estes Park. Jennifer added that Rocky Mountain National Park does a great job of getting their visitors to post photos of their vacations on the Rocky Mountain National Park web site. Camille noted that will be important to include in our new web site.

The strengths and weaknesses were discussed as well as the Current Awareness Level. Joy Vernon felt the "hippie" perception was listed as a weakness but should also be listed as strength because some people think that culture is very cool. It was determined that Waldo Canyon and Williams Canyon should be removed from the lists of hiking trails for 2014 as there is no estimated reopening date. Dave suggested "Base Camp" or Central location should be added to the strengths list. Camille asked if there is a map that shows how centrally located

Manitou is to other locations and was told there is a regional map in the Visitors Guide and on the web site. Walkable community should also be emphasized. In reviewing the Current Awareness Level, the Board determined that Manitou Springs is not associated with Pikes Peak as much as it should be. Ken suggested outdoor, recreational, healthy activities needs to be added. Dave stated that we need to do more marketing to Colorado Springs as many Colorado Springs residents are not aware of all Manitou Springs has to offer.

The Board wanted to continue the conversation and discuss the target market section. The board determined the age ranges should be changed to a wider age range (on the upper end). The board discussed marketing based on school break schedules as well. Dave suggested removing "Holiday" from the Tertiary target. People get inundated with advertising during that time frame and the messages get lost.

The Board discussed the logo. In order to move into the 2014 budget, the Board stopped with the Strategies & Tactics and will complete the review of the Strategic Plan including the Marketing Budget at the next meeting.

F. 2014 Budget

The Grants were moved out of revenue and listed immediately after the other revenue. The CTO Grant has been split between 2013 and 2014 based on the expectation of receiving the funding and starting some of the work that was included in the grant application. The Red Cross Grant was placed in 2014. Ken suggested the Pikes Peak Community Foundation grant should be placed in 2013 and asked if funds are still owed to Camille.

Jennifer reviewed that there are 3 major areas of spending in our budget. Those areas are the grant funding, marketing, and payroll. She asked if it would be helpful to have a breakout each month on those three areas of the budget. After discussion, it was determined that spreadsheets will be created and attached each month. The payroll will breakout in salary/hourly/contract labor lines with taxes and benefits also listed. Jennifer will work with Leslie on the design of the spreadsheets for 2014.

Dave asked if there is a plan for the \$10,000 in Economic Development. Tim suggested the bigger question is what the organization is going to do for economic development in 2014. After discussion, it was determined to leave the \$10,000 there for now and move through the rest of the budget. Jennifer suggested the minutes should reflect that something should be sent to the board in the near future.

The Payroll line is reduced by \$20,000 for 2014. Ken asked if there has been a contract labor line in the budget. The board discussed the Blakely + Co numbers. Tim expressed concern that there is no money held back in reserve for an emergency. Jennifer suggested, for our size organization, there was a nice size reserve. The Board further discussed the reserve. Staff explained that some of the funds in the bank accounts are dues that have been paid in advance for 2014 and Visitors guide ads. Tim suggested the reserves are the retained earnings. The parameters of grant are marketing and advertising but we will be re-writing the scope of work as the grant has come up much later that originally proposed. Marcy suggested some of the funds be set aside for the shoulder seasons. Marcy has asked if some of the funds can be carried for

spring of 2015 and the person at the Red Cross did not think that would be a concern. We will be providing quarterly reporting to the Red Cross on those funds. Karen suggested the Red Cross Grant needs to be included in the Strategic Plan. Tim suggested we put \$25,000 into the 2014 budget and if possible roll \$25,000 into the 2015 budget. We will delete the expense line for grants and create a "Marketing Contingency" line with the \$25,000 in that.

Dave suggested the Contract Labor not be listed with Payroll, but as a separate line under payroll, and feels Camille's contract labor should be in a Contract Labor line under Marketing and not under payroll.

G. OEM/Red Cross Grant Discussion

Marcy had told the Red Cross we would have a revised scope of work back to them the second week of December. It was suggested the Strategic Marketing Plan be sent with an explanation that the plan is in the approval phase.

There does need to be some minor changes made to the plan prior to final approval. Gwenn asked how all of the events listed in each month would be marketed. Karen didn't think there would be marketing every month but may have press releases. The plan is not specific to include all of the details of the marketing each month. The Marketing Task Force will meet again on November 26 and discuss events as well as speak with John Weiss if he is available.

H. City Report

Matt Carpenter had to leave but it was reported that as of December 1, Monday through Thursday, there will be 3 hour free parking and Friday through Sunday parking enforcement will be 9:00 am – 6:00 pm.

Ken reported City Council passed a resolution adopting joining the Healthy Eating Active Living Campaign. Ken, Roy, and Patti Clavier attended a summit of 17 cities in Denver. There were people from around the country to learn how other cities around the country are using healthy activities as an economic boost.

I. Special Events – Fruitcake Toss

Karen recommended we trademark the event and then offer it to the catapult groups to take over and organize. We moved the event to the high school to accommodate the large devices. BestWay is no longer providing services for events so the cost will increase. The t-shirt cost is usually covered by the sponsors. The board discussed the event not being as beneficial to businesses now that it is at the high school because people don't go downtown to eat or shop like they did when the event was in the park. After additional discussion, the board decided to cancel the event for 2014. Julie suggested we remove the event from the web site and see what happens. If we receive a lot of interest and inquiries, the event can be re-added.

J. Holiday Activities

Karen brought up Facebook and social media as being missing from the Holiday plans. Jennifer has become more involved with blogging recently. She brought up Josh (I love Manitou) and what a great job of photos and promoting Manitou he does. Jennifer recommended to the task force that Susan be hired for social media for the holidays and see what all she can do with it in

the next 45 days. Leslie and Gwenn thought that was already approved as part of the Holiday advertising plan. Karen dropped off the contract on Monday but it has not yet been signed. Susan won't start until the contract is signed. The contract for Susan is \$1,000 and there is an additional \$250 approved for facebook advertising. Success will be measured by the engagement and number of fans on the page. Karen recommended the contract be signed today. The contract will be signed and a check will be issued today.

K. Staffing

Dave recommended a person be hired to replace Floyd O'Neil. Ken requested job descriptions for all positions prior to making that decision. Ken would like staff to provide an organization plan with what is being done by each position, what is missing and how to fill those needs. Ken suggested the information be put together and Leslie then present a recommendation and request. Marcy suggested the committee needs to decide how much will be outsourced so that staff can determine what needs there will still be.

Jennifer asked about hiring a part-time grant writer and if Marcy felt that would be valuable. Marcy stated a grant writer may be a valuable tool if you have someone who is focused on our type of business and they would be paid based on their past experience and what they have brought in to the organization in terms of funds. The City has tried that with mixed success. Marcy further stated the organization needs to have a goal in mind when you begin the process.

Dave proposed that the Board authorize staff to hire a part-time, seasonal, administrative assistant. The Board asked what that person would be doing and suggested possibly Leslie could hand off some of the things she is doing to other staff. Additional discussion was held.

Having no additional business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.