

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

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

July 24, 2014

Present: Justin Armour, Karen Cullen, Rachelle Cully, Gwenn David, Tim Haas, Ken Jaray, Marcy Morrison, Joy Vernon

Absent: Amanda Galloway, Julie Vance, Sarge MacDonald

Guests: Natalie Johnson, Jason Wells

Staff: Leslie Lewis

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development Board of Directors was held Thursday, July 24, 2014 at Manitou Springs City Hall in City Council chambers. President Marcy Morrison called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

A. Update: Creative District Designation

Natalie Johnson requested time to provide information to the Board on the Creative District designation Manitou Springs recently received. With the initial approval, there is a two year program with a lot of steps until the final designation. There were approximately 30 communities that applied for the program this year. Manitou Springs is one of six communities that received initial approval. Natalie handed out packets that show everything that needs to be accomplished in the next year. Most of the activities are connected to economic development, not to the arts. The focus is around how Manitou Springs tells its story, how the arts are promoted in the community, how “creatives” and creative industries are brought to, and supported by, the community, and how the arts are recognized in the policies created by City Council. Natalie will keep the Chamber informed, either with a liaison or through reports, so the board is aware of what is happening with the designation. The first year, the program will receive \$10,000 and each year that amount increases until the final designation when they will receive \$60,000 - \$80,000 per year for 5 years. Natalie thought there were 8 communities that have received full designation. The program was created through the State. A significant portion of the funding has come through the Boettcher Foundation, as well as donations through companies and private individuals. Typically, the application comes through chambers or cities; however, the Arts Council spearheaded the application for Manitou Springs. In the process, there is access to trainings. Natalie will get information to the Board on the trainings that are available. There are in-kind contributions required so Natalie requested the Marketing Task Force keep track of anytime the arts are included in advertising and provide that information to her to include in the reports. The Manitou Art Center is providing Natalie’s salary to administer the program.

Natalie stated the Manitou Art Center is considering making some changes which would include adding some co-operative work spaces and maker spaces and increasing use of their wood and metal shop. The Manitou Art Center is planning their participation in ArtWalk Weekend.

Natalie was thanked for her help in setting up the space for the EDAT meeting. She reported that she is working with a couple of the people she met through that meeting on the ideas of the work and maker spaces so it proved beneficial for her as well.

B. Introduction of Jason Wells

Marcy welcomed and introduced Jason Wells, the new City Administrator; the Board introduced themselves. Jason came to Manitou Springs from the City/County of Denver, working in the Public Works Department, Right of Way Services division. Prior to that, he had worked in Silverton and Ophir in City Administration. Coming to Manitou gave him the opportunity to return to the work he loves and not be as isolated as the previous mountain communities had been. When asked about his expectations he feels the west side improvements and URA area are important to the economic development and business enrichment perspective. He understands there are still things that need to be done in the downtown development core but he hasn't gotten too deep into those issues yet. Ken Jaray asked if there could be a place to call when someone walking around notices something that needs to be repaired/cleaned up that would be like a "rapid response" line. The phone system is currently being revamped and Jason thought that might be something that could be added. Ken asked if the area behind the restrooms in Soda Springs Park could be placed at the top of the list.

Joy Vernon asked what Jason's job is. He equated it to if the city is a business with a budget of about \$7 million with revenue and expenses, he would be the CEO. His position is a managerial role, being responsible for making sure each department head is fulfilling the obligations of those roles through their staff and being involved in the operational activities so he understands all that is going on. Karen Cullen asked how he feels about the flood issues and how they are being handled. Jason said he is amazed. We are fortunate to have the team in place that it has including Mike Schaub from the state, Roger Miller and Bruno Pothier working on the various areas of town. Mike is working on a letter to the state detailing the impacts of the floods in the product area. The recent rains brought a lot of water that undercut the work that had been done. Everything has to be documented and sent to NRCS. Karen asked what Jason thought the top 3 challenges for Manitou Springs are. Jason stated with the flood mitigation and recovery aside, he understands that there has been a disconnect in branding and what Manitou's message is/should be. Is it a day visitor destination, a high end art community or a long term global destination? The recreational marijuana is now in the forefront. He feels getting solidification on the message is important. Ken asked about possibly setting up a meeting with Jason, the Police Chief and a representative from City Council to discuss how the road closures and sirens are handled to make sure things are working for the business community and the residents and how to best minimize the negative impact of those situations. Jason thought a work session with City Council would be a good place to have this conversation and will check to see when the first available work session would be.

In discussing the business community response to flood warnings, and business owners being extremely busy this time of year, it would be difficult to hold a meeting. Farley McDonough created a very thorough evacuation plan while Adam's was still in the Spa building. Staff has contacted her about getting the power point presentation of the plan and will put a link to that presentation in the newsletter.

C. Action Item: Approval of June Meeting Minutes

Ken made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes as presented. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

D. Action Item: Approval of June Financials

Tim Haas met with Leslie to review the financials. Most time was spent on the Income/Expense statement. In regard to discussion of changing the forecast numbers (basically the budget projections), Tim thought they would be a better indicator if the budget needed to be changed for the following year instead of making adjustments to the numbers at this time. He feels the organization is in solid shape. The Marketing Committee Revenue line is money that the BID passes to the Chamber to be placed on holiday promotion which will come in later in the year. The special events revenue is expected to exceed the budget projection and dues will probably fall short of the projection. The other revenue area that will fall short is the manitousprings.org advertising. Karen stated it had been discussed last month and those advertisers have not been billed. The advertisers were not approached for renewals and staff has learned that the back end tracking for banners is not, and has not been, working properly so we are unable to provide advertisers with exposure and click thru rates. It was agreed that these oversights were errors on staff's part. Karen has come up with a couple of fund-raising options that might raise those funds prior to the end of the year. Tim felt it had been a good idea to create the marketing reserve in case we have a major weather event. He also discussed the payroll expense line that will be under budget as a full time position was included in that line that has not been filled.

Tim has had a couple of conversations with the SBDC and they do still have money available for grants. Anyone impacted by the September floods is eligible to apply for, and receive, those funds. The grant amounts have recently been increased and there have been additional changes to the program. Staff will contact SBDC and get additional information to the membership. Ken mentioned how different property owners have accomplished different levels of mitigation on their properties and it would be nice to have someone assist owners with advise on what needs to be done and possibly the actual work. Marcy thought some of that is included in Phase 3 of the mitigation and suggested he contact Roger Miller.

Karen asked about the expenditures from the Red Cross grant and if not much has been spent. Leslie will check with the Mineral Springs Foundation regarding the funds for the designer and find out if anything has been paid on that item. The money in the CTO grant toward the Mineral Springs experience can only be used on cups. Karen made a motion to approve the financials. Gwenn David seconded the motion and it was approved.

E. Action Item: Approval of New & Renewing Members

Staff received a new member application from the European Café and renewal applications

from Hell's Kitchen and Flying Eagle. We are losing Pikes Peak Gourmet Popcorn, L3 Screenprinting and Heart of Jerusalem was sent a letter as their payment is past due. Tim made a motion to approve the New, Renewing, and Non-renewing members as presented. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

F. Marketing & Website Update

Karen reported we continue to increase our email distribution to visitors and have an open response of 23.6%. Karen reported the digital campaign has increased traffic to the website. The task force is getting additional photography for the new website. She and Gwenn have spent a lot of time on the content issues and are doing some testing. There is more testing still to be done. All of the social media icons have been added. Karen pulled up the site so the Board could see the preview. The interactive map will be added as a member benefit for 2014. She suggested in 2015, we create a plan to add revenue through charging a fee to be linked on the map. She stated she anticipates launching in a couple of weeks. Tim asked if it would be a problem to go live in the busy season and Karen explained that would be a good time because it will give a clear picture of the impact and the users will see a huge improvement from the current site.

G. Special Event Committee Report

Joy reported the group met with Julian Herron, the organizer of the Craft Lager Festival. The group discussed bringing the event back to Manitou Springs, transferring it from Penrose Event Center (they gifted the non-profit to them) to our organization. They also discussed having the event on the Coffin Race day as there is already a crowd in Manitou Springs. They felt it would extend the day and keep people in town so they visit the shops. The Craft Lager Festival was the focus on the meeting. They stated we need to move quickly for the event to happen this year. Julian feels it is important to have the event this year and the organization would be the "savior of the Lager Fest" though they would use a different name, Monster Brew Ball brought by the founders of the Lager Fest and honor the tickets from last year that were not honored at the Penrose Event Center. Joy thought it would be easier to get brewers because there is a crowd in town and it is a slower time for them. Tim asked if the bar owners and restaurants would be concerned about the event taking business away from them. Rachelle Cully thought there was enough business to support everyone. Karen thought the benefit would be more people staying in lodging properties and being in Manitou Springs the next day. She reported the event has made \$135,000 and upwards in previous years and it would be profitable for the Chamber. Joy felt people spending money on beer festival tickets are more likely to spend money in town and she also didn't believe it would take money from the bars. Gwenn agreed more people would stay overnight that weekend. When the festival was in August, it was hard to get a hotel room with the festival in Manitou. They are looking at having the festival from 11:00 am – 6:00 pm. Ken asked about starting the event later and not competing with the coffin races. Ken thought it would need to be a separate group running the event this year. Leslie sent an email to Agave Underground to see if they are interested in sponsoring and participating again this year but has not yet heard from them. Ken asked if there was an opportunity to put together a planning group, outside of staff, to help with the coffin race. Ken suggested that for large events, there should be a group, not just, staff putting the events together. Gwenn agreed. Logistics and

additional parking and shuttle service would be required. Tim asked if the group was confident it could be added this year. Karen thought if it was kept smaller, just to keep the event going, it was manageable. Marcy asked, since Penrose has been taken over by Anschutz, if anyone had seen paperwork that indicates the contractual arrangement between Penrose Event Center and the Craft Lager Festival has been terminated. Karen said it was on the list to be done. Joy said this would be separate from the Lager Fest. Julian was going to make sure all of those details are taken care of. The group wanted to bring the item to the Board for approval to move forward. Tim asked how much money would be needed from our organization to make the event happen this year. Joy was unsure and will get additional information on the numbers. Gwenn thought there needed to be a general consensus to move forward and then a scope could be created. Another special events committee meeting will be set up. Ken offered to look at the paperwork. Ken suggested a Letter of Intent be put together covering what our organization will do as well as what Julian will do to start the process. Marcy suggested the letter be drafted and sent to the board for approval.

H. City Update

Councilman MacDonald was not available to provide the report, but Marcy felt we had received a lot of that information from Jason Wells.

I. Executive Director Report

Mike Schaub worked with Leslie in organizing the EDAT. Leslie is meeting with him this afternoon to discuss items mentioned in the EDAT summary on Friday afternoon. We are still waiting on the full report to have a complete picture of “next steps”. One of the items mentioned by the EDAT team was the need for a comprehensive (gateway to gateway) plan which will help economic development as well as City planning. The City just received a two year grant that will fund a position to work on planning and economic development. Hopefully some of that person’s time can be focused on creating a comprehensive plan. A meeting will be scheduled with the City when the report is received.

Marcy, Rebecca Tonn (Blakely), Jason Wells, Chief Ribeiro, Mayor Snyder, and Rev. Hunting met and looked at the City’s Emergency Plan. In order to ensure that the Chamber is aware of what is happening in an emergency situation, when the warning is issued, Leslie will go to the Incident Command Center and be part of the PIO team.

Leslie met with a representative of Maggie’s Farm last week. He was given membership information with the price structure of a retail store. He has not returned to the office. Staff requested clarification on guidelines for advertising. Gwenn clarified that if the publication is read by over 30% families (a child could pick it up and read it), marijuana stores cannot advertise in that publication as defined by state regulations. They could have their name in the publication but could not run an ad. Karen suggested they be told they need to advertise in accordance with state regulation but that we can’t refuse to allow them to become a member.

J. Unscheduled Appearances

There were no unscheduled appearances. Marcy reported that she has been working on the

economic development areas. She felt the EDAT meeting was excellent and produced great results with another grant. She suggested that Leslie become more involved in the economic development areas of the state. Ken asked if the spreadsheet that was started has any role now. Leslie believes it will be a great basis for the new planner/economic development person to begin with. The report has been given to the police department for emergency contact information. Leslie believes we need to develop a relationship with the new person when they begin and hope Mike Schaub can help with that relationship development. Ken's intention in starting the spreadsheet was to have it 98% complete and then have a conversation about the information and determine how it will be used.

Marcy would like to have the person that heads up the west end development speak with the board. The physical work will begin in 2015. Karen asked about status of closing the Highway 24 Ridge Road access. Marcy will try to get someone in to answer the board's questions in the next couple months. Greg Wellens, Adventures Out West, asked about coming possibly in August to present his revised plan for future development on the west end of Manitou Springs. Karen would like to have Camille Blakely at an upcoming meeting to give a presentation on the progress that has been made through marketing strategies.

Marcy handed out copies of a press release put out by the Governor's Office announcing her appointment to a Commission working on cost containment of healthcare. She is one of ten people appointed to the Commission.

The board adjourned at 10:38 am to go into an Executive Session.

K. Executive Session: Matters of Personnel

At 10:55 am, Karen made a motion to end the Executive Session and return to open session of the Board of Directors. Ken seconded the motion and it was approved.

Karen made a motion to increase Brittany Tafoya's salary to the equivalent of \$14.00 per hour following a formal review with documented goals to become effective on August 1, 2014. Justin Armour seconded the motion and it was approved.

Having no additional business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.