

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

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

November 20, 2014

Present: Justin Armour, Karen Cullen, Rachelle Cully, Tim Haas, Ken Jaray, Marcy Morrison, Julie Vance

Absent: Gwenn David, Joy Vernon, Sarge Mac Donald

Guests: Farley McDonough

Staff: Leslie Lewis

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitor Bureau & Office of Economic Development Board of Directors was held Thursday, November 20, 2014 in City Council chambers of Manitou Springs City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 8:38 a.m. by President Marcy Morrison.

A. Executive Session: Matters of Personnel

Julie Vance made a motion to suspend the regular meeting of the Board of Directors and go into Executive Session. Ken Jaray seconded the motion and it was approved at 8:40 a.m.

The Executive Session closed. No vote was taken. The regular session of the Board of Directors meeting resumed at 9:44 a.m.

B. Action Item: Interview/Appoint Board Member Applicant

Farley McDonough was introduced to the board. Her application for the Board of Directors was included in the Board packet. Farley expressed an interest in being on the Board to contribute and become more involved with the business community again. She will bring the perspective of operating a business on the east end of Manitou Springs as well as having rental properties and employing people who live in the downtown core and has children in the schools so has a lot of experience in many areas. Tim Haas made a motion to accept Farley's application and appoint her to the open position on the Board of Directors effective immediately. Julie seconded the motion and it was approved.

C. Action Item: Approval of October Meeting Minutes

Tim made a motion to approve the Minutes of the October meeting as presented. Justin Armour seconded the motion and it was approved. Farley will be emailed the Minutes of the all of the meetings held in 2014.

D. Action Item: Approval of October Financials

The Balance Sheet and Income Statement were all sent to the Board. A new Income Statement was provided with corrected Forecast numbers. Ken asked if there was a guideline of what the

cash reserve should be. No one was aware of a set formula. Discussion of the reserve continued. Karen Cullen recommended the Board determine what a reasonable reserve amount should be. Tim suggested that happen at the end of the year. He reported it was very good that the Chamber is operating in the black this year and no longer pulling from reserves for operating expenses. Julie made a motion to accept the October Financial report as presented. Ken seconded the motion and it was approved.

E. Presentation: Preliminary 2015 Budget

The budget reflects the same contribution from the City (\$250,000) as in 2014. Tim stated that staff had not asked for additional funding from the City for 2015 with the thought that the additional money coming into the City in Sales Tax should be put toward mitigation efforts. He felt if additional funds were requested, those funds should go toward additional marketing. The preliminary budget has approximately \$20,000 more in revenue than expenses but does not include any salary increases or reflect an expense amount in Economic Development. There is currently \$180,000 allocated to marketing which is slightly less than 2014 if you include the additional \$25,000 line in the Marketing Emergency Reserve. Karen asked about the Payroll and Benefits expense at less than paid out in 2014. Karen and Ken wanted to see the Payroll and Benefits expense number be increased. Tim asked if the current staffing is adequate to fill the obligation that the Board is directing the office to do. Tim asked if the number from marketing was what the marketing task force had requested. The marketing number includes the grant from the Office of Economic Development but not the CTO as we have not received notification on that grant application. Ken explained the Task Force had looked at the number and is trying to figure that out. With the additional grant, the expense would be just over \$200,000 but that does not include someone to manage the Marketing so that would be potentially \$225,000 - \$235,000. Karen pointed out there is no revenue number for website advertising. Staff wants input from Marketing Task Force as the costs of the banner ads have not yet been determined.

Karen recommended going to the City and asking for additional funds if we do not receive the CTO Marketing Grant for 2015. Staff feels it is too late to ask the City for additional funds in 2015 as the City is working on their final budget approval. Ken suggested that could be done when the City has their mid-year review of their budget. It would be important to have a firm plan of how any additional funds would be spent prior to approaching City Council with a request. Staff recommended the board discuss the funding request and building a plan for 2016 in July.

Karen recommended we add a number in the Economic Development line as that was what allowed the organization to fund/sponsor items such as ManiFest in 2014 to help the community. Karen also recommended we add Wi-Fi to downtown again. Ken suggested a line be added that was called Arch to Arch improvements. Economic Development could also cover trying to recruit businesses for vacant spaces. The Board recommended \$10,000 be added to the Economic Development line.

Ken asked why Special Events revenue was budgeted at \$80,000 for 2015 as 2014 revenue is currently at \$83,000. The revenue projection is conservative because the events are weather dependent. The Dues revenue projections were also discussed. Ken asked about the

percentage of businesses that are members. The percentage varies by the type of business. Leslie and Tim will work on the budget as discussed today and bring back to the December meeting for approval.

F. Action Item: Approval of New & Renewing Members

We received an email from Angler's Covey stating they had put a check for membership in the mail. The Craftwood Inn ownership change (Craftwood Colorado LLC) was discussed. The new owners are from California. Karen suggested staff contact Sunwater Spa and Colorado Mountain Brewery so they can be included in the 2015 Visitors Guide. Staff has spoken with both organizations already. Rachele Cully will speak with the Colorado Mountain Brewery/Borriello Brothers group opening the restaurant in the spa. Other restaurant changes going on were discussed. Serrano's (at the west end) is now closed. Suzie Q's BBQ is closed frequently now. Staff recently spoke with Susie Q's regarding membership recently. Staff suggested if any board members go to the Manitou Brewing Company regularly, they are not members but would be a nice addition to the membership. Ken made a motion to approve the New & Renewing members as presented. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

G. Marketing Report & Discussion

Karen reported that we have not received approval of our CTO Grant application. Both the CSCVB and Bed & Breakfast Innkeepers of Colorado received notification last week that their applications were approved. If we do not receive the grant, the Marketing budget will change.

Karen addressed concerns of the increased amount of the Facebook contract that were discussed in October and explained the increase is because the Board asked Susan to put together Social Media roundtable meetings, manage facebook ads which require constant maintenance, and Karen thinks we get what we pay for. Susan spent 12 – 16 hours on Coffin Race weekend with posts and increased the number of fans on that page by nearly 2,000. Susan posts 5 – 10 times per day and does share our member information. Susan will also be writing a blog each month. Staff keeps Susan aware of whom the members are. Another benefit of having Susan manage our social media is that she knows Manitou Springs and the members. Ken made a motion to approve the CafeRace contract for 2015. Rachele seconded the motion and the contract was approved. Karen will notify Susan.

Brittany and Karen went to Denver for training on the new website with Xcite Media. They are working on modifications. We still need additional photography. The website is performing about the same as last year as far as Karen can tell. The website is a work in progress. Karen is going to be working with Xcite and has a call in to them to discuss how we manage new requirements we have and changes to the website. Karen doesn't think we are ready to have a media release on the site.

The Marketing Task Force received a proposal for services in 2015 from Blakely + Company that was reviewed on Tuesday. The contract encompasses development of the creative, graphic design, and public relations. For 2014, the contract for Blakely was \$12,000 and the proposal for 2015 is just over \$29,000. After a lot of discussion, Karen believes most of the Marketing Task Force doesn't believe we are receiving a return on investment for that amount. There have been problems with late deadlines and creative, as well as the situation with the Red Cross Grant, so

the Marketing Task Force is recommending either looking at another agency or bringing it in-house and hiring someone to help. Ken asked who would be in charge of marketing and ultimately responsible. The board discussed what would be needed to bring that role in-house and discussed expertise needed, not just a body.

Amy Mogck, Theo's Toys, has joined the marketing task force. Amy has a marketing background and brings new energy to the task force.

Karen feels Blakely + Company has provided groundwork and a basis for moving forward. We have the plan that they created which can be tweaked. The public relations and media roundtable they provided was a tremendous asset which gave the media positive information about Manitou Springs for the summer. Tim thought it would be helpful to have a budget from the Marketing Task Force that matches the overall marketing budget so that needs to be reconciled. The Marketing Task Force will come up with a budget recommendation before the next Board meeting. Ken asked Leslie to put together Marketing Manager position description for the Marketing Task Force to consider.

H. City Report

A City representative was not available to provide a report. Our City Council liaison has not returned Leslie's phone calls so we are unsure of Councilman Mac Donald's schedule and if our meetings are no longer convenient for him to attend.

I. President's Report

There was an article in the Independent about the Red Cross Grant, which Marcy felt was a better article on how we were presented than she thought it might be. There is also an article about the Jenkins family and the property they own in the county. The Manitou Springs property was not mentioned.

Marcy also had an article from the Gazette on the new summit house on Pikes Peak. She has been very involved with the organizational group pushing for a new building. The new summit house will be a tremendous asset for Manitou Springs that will attract more people.

The URA is meeting is the day after this board meeting. The public meeting for the Westside Avenue Action Plan keeps getting pushed back. The City is concerned that the money may be spent the redevelopment reaches the Manitou Springs section. Marcy will ask board members to come to a meeting in the future to push Colorado Springs and the County to start moving faster on the project. If the head of the design company is scheduled for a URA meeting, Marcy will notify board members so they can attend and hear the plans.

Marcy encouraged everyone to pay attention to the elections in Colorado Springs for April as Colorado Springs does impact Manitou Springs.

J. Executive Directors Report

The Coffin Races were successful. We had a larger crowd than ever before which created parking and traffic issues. We will make changes for next year to alleviate those concerns. We reordered t-shirts as we sold out at the event so we do have shirts available for sale. We still have expenses coming in so a more accurate financial report will be available in December.

Fox 21 is in downtown Manitou Springs today. They are filming in several stores for Small Business Saturday and will air the story on Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Santa will be in downtown Black Friday and every Saturday and Sunday from Thanksgiving weekend through the weekend before Christmas. Chuck Englund has generously donated a vacant space to be used for Santa and free gift wrapping each weekend. Kass Johns has an extra tree that we will be using for decoration. Standard Parking is going to block a free space for Santa every Saturday and Sunday.

The Christmas Crush date was discussed and adjusted based on several board members of town on the initial proposed date. The new date was set for Monday, December 15.

December 19 Leslie will be participating in a panel at the "State of the Chambers" luncheon sponsored by the Colorado Springs Business Journal. A question specifically for Manitou Springs will be on the Storm water issue. Leslie met with the Mayor for input on that issue. Other questions for all of the area chambers will be on the impact of medical and recreational marijuana on business and high property tax in Colorado for business. Leslie will send the list of questions for input from Board members.

Leslie met with Annie from the Collaborative. They are possibly interested in putting on the Fruitcake Toss. Marc, Cool Science, has put on the mini fruitcake toss at the MAC but the Collaborative is looking at the larger event.

We received a request from Bobby White, Manitou Springs Fire Department, for Manitou Money to be given to middle school and high school students in need so that they can shop for their parents for Christmas. Marcy made a motion that we donate \$350 in Manitou Money to the Fire Department to be given to students to shop for parents for Christmas. Julie seconded the motion and it was approved.

We also received a request from the Temple Jazz Orchestra, Temple College, Temple, Texas, who will be traveling through Manitou Springs on their way to participate in the Big Band Bash in Estes Park. They would like to do a concert in Manitou Springs and are asking if we can provide a meal for them or discounts on lodging. They are saying 30 – 40 people will be traveling with the group. They will be here Monday, June 8. Rachelle said she would be willing to do something for the meal portion of the request.

K. **Unscheduled Appearances**

The Boy Scouts are selling trees in Julie's parking lot again this year. Sales will begin Thanksgiving weekend.

Having no other business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.