

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

**Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes**

**September 24, 2015**

**Present:** Karen Cullen, Rachelle Cully, Gwenn David, Tim Haas, Ken Jaray,  
Farley McDonough, Marcy Morrison, Annie Schmitt, Julie Vance

**Absent:** Justin Armour, Christina Larson, Nicole Nicoletta

**Guests:** Greg Springman, Melissa Warden

**Staff:** Leslie Lewis

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development Board of Directors was held on Thursday, September 24, 2015 at the Garden of the Gods Trading Post. President Karen Cullen called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

Staff received an email from Christina Larson submitting her resignation from the Board. She has moved back to Kansas for personal reasons.

Guests Sgt. Melissa Warden, Manitou Springs Police Department, and Greg Springman, Public Services Director were introduced.

**A. Police Department Update**

Sgt. Warden reported that the Security teams are doing pretty well and making some impacts. The teams may not always be providing the information the Police Dept, wanted. They may be stopping activity instead of contacting the police when illegal activity is happening. Sgt. Warden believes the Chief will be having a meeting with the security company to make that change. The time on the contract with the security company was discussed. Board members expressed they believe having the security team in town has helped with the panhandling issues.

Dispatch was discussed. One board member reported her staff experiencing delays in reaching dispatch. Sgt. Warden believes there are regionalization conversations taking place. El Paso County will be taking over dispatch for Fountain and will be bringing in additional dispatchers. Ken Jaray asked about documentation of events with dispatch that can be taken to City Council to discuss possibly bringing dispatch back in-house. Marcy Morrison asked Sgt. Warden to ask Chief Ribeiro how often the contract gets renewed, when that next renewal is and if the contractual arrangements get revamped at that time. Ken asked if there is data that shows how long it takes dispatch to answer a call. Cell phone 911 calls go to Colorado Springs dispatch and then are transferred to Manitou Springs.

Ken asked about enforcement of the tickets that are written. Sgt. Warden thought there were 39 that didn't show up out of 100 scheduled for court (July tickets). Warrants are issued when people don't show up for court. Many of the transients that received tickets are leaving the area because the weather is changing. Those transients will be picked up when they return to the area next year.

Karen asked about the homeless communities at the west end. Sgt. Warden reported they will be doing a collaborative effort with several other agencies (Hot Team, El Paso County) to get the people to move out of the camps and then have those teams go out together regularly. The clean-up of the area becomes the responsibility of the property owner. The groups will be encouraged to take their stuff with them but some of the camps have belongings from previous groups.

Crime in downtown was asked about. Sgt. Warden didn't have numbers but believed crime has increased. Cars are being broken into, some of them were left unlocked.

The department is still trying to hire additional officers. An ad went out and they received 3 responses that day. The application period will run until December. The Chief is going to ask for additional funds to hire more officers.

Annie Schmitt reported that some of the interaction she has seen/had with the security team has not been responsive to the public. There have been concerns about the team expressed recently. Code enforcement officers as an alternative were discussed.

## **B. Public Services Update**

Greg Springsman reported El Paso County entered into a maintenance agreement with CDOT which resulted in the overlay to the devolution line. There is now a web site for the West Side Avenue Action Plan so the public can be informed about the project (also accessible from a link on the City's Facebook page). They are hoping to be at 90% design by November. One of the major hurdles still to be overcome is getting Colorado Springs Utilities to start committing. The original scope of the project covered 30<sup>th</sup> Street to the pool in Manitou and the cost came in a little over \$20 million. There was only \$15 million for the project. The value engineering removed the area from Loaf N Jug to the pool entrance from the project. CDOT agreed to re-pave and stripe Manitou Avenue from the devolution line to City Hall at the end of next summer. The area will be changed to 3 lanes to create a dedicated turn lane. Colorado Springs also reduced their coverage area to begin at 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. Those areas will still contain some utility work so the project is only about a million over the budget.

Julie Vance asked about repairing Manitou Avenue (potholes) between the new paving and City Hall until the area is repaved. Greg said he is working with CDOT and they are providing the materials for Manitou Springs to do emergency fixes when CDOT crews are not available for the road repair.

The Rainbow Falls and Garden of the Gods Place bridges are both on CDOT's schedule to be next year.

The west end of Manitou Avenue (Manitou Avenue West End and Pedestrian Drainage Improvements) is in the budget for PPRTA. It involved from Tubby's to the roundabout and will have the same streetscape as the area from City Hall through downtown. The funding (\$4.2 million) is coming from PPRTA and CDOT Tip grant funds. Greg does not have the timing on the project but the engineering design has already been done.

Ken asked about work in the plans for Ruxton Avenue. Greg said there is a Ruxton Avenue Drainage Improvements on the PPRTA books but the funds he is receiving from them are for the west end. Ken reported the public comment is going on until October 9 on the Regional Transportation plan and there are several public meetings. Greg explained how the PPRTA works.

## **C. City Update**

Leslie reported there was a "glitch" with the Tajine Alami contract so Council delayed authorizing the

Mayor to sign the contract for the purchase. One of the primary reasons for the purchase is the parking. Marcy suggested we try to get more information on the intended use of the building before the retreat. Leslie understands that Council has not determined the use for the building yet or if the building should be torn down.

**D. Action Item: Approval of August Meeting Minutes**

Farley McDonough made a motion to approve the August meeting minutes as presented. Rachelle Cully seconded the motion and it was approved.

**E. Action Item: Approval of August Financials**

Tim Haas reported he believes the cash balance is appropriate for this time of the year. Expenses are in line and Tim feels we are on budget. Ken asked if the Marketing Committee revenue and manitousprings.org revenue lines should be adjusted. Leslie stated the manitousprings.org line should be adjusted. The advertising opportunity was sent out to all members with the visitors guide advertising. Two members will be advertising in the newsletters next year but we still don't have anyone interested in the website advertising. The Marketing Committee revenue will come in in December when the BID provides funds for the holiday advertising. Julie made a motion to approve the Financials. Ken seconded the motion and it was approved.

**F. Action Item: Approval of New & Renewing Members list**

The New & Renewing Members list was sent out this morning. Colorado Xplorers has applied as a new member. Marcy made a motion to approve the New and Renewing Members list. Tim seconded the motion and it was approved.

**G. URA Update**

Karen suggested rearranging the agenda to accommodate Marcy's schedule. The Mayor had presented information on the proposed purchase of the Tajine Alami property to the URA Board. Marcy believes the next City Council will be the ones to determine the use of the property. The URA board has tried to put pressure on the Westside Avenue project to clarify what is happening. The URA Board is also working on "workforce housing". The URA will be putting money into the decorative aspects of the streetscape (lighting, colored sidewalks, etc) in the Manitou Springs section of the West Side Avenue Action Plan.

**H. Action Item: Letter of Support Karsh Aquifer**

Joanne Garrison, on behalf of the Mineral Springs Foundation, has been trying to bring attention to the fact that Karsh Aquifer is potentially in jeopardy based on the flood mitigation. The area is a recharge zone and when the channel was being poured, Dave Wolverton was able to get holes in the concrete so the water could seep through. Unfortunately, those holes are plugged. One of Joanne's strategies is to get the aquifer on the Endangered Places so it will draw attention to the risk of the aquifer getting reduced. Karen asked if the water board had been alerted to the problems but Ken was not sure. Phase 2 of the Aquifer Study will involve having a test well in Williams Canyon. The Board discussed the draft of the letter sent by Joanne. Ken suggested Leslie rewrite the letter. Ken made a motion for a Letter of Support naming the Karst Aquifer to the Endangered Places list be written. Gwenn David seconded the motion and it was approved.

**I. Marketing and Web Site Update**

Karen reported the Marketing Task force has been meeting monthly but will begin meeting every three weeks again. They are working on the Colorado State Vacation Guide and Colorado Springs and the

Pikes Peak Region Visitors Guide ads. They are also getting bids for television advertising and running the video that was recently created. The video will be tweaked for the Colorado Tourism Office grant.

Karen and Leslie met with Jason Wells and Rebecca Davis this week. We requested \$30,000 in addition to the funds allocated by the formula. The last several years, the Chamber has received \$250,000 which was made up of the formula with additional discretionary funds from Council to make that amount. With just the formula this year, the funding will be at \$256,000 in 2016 so we requested \$30,000 in discretionary funds to help maintain our marketing budget plus payroll funds for a part time economic development person. The City asked what the Chamber's reserve fund was. Karen told them we would be willing to take money out of reserves to help create the budget in addition to requesting the additional funds from the City. Because we received \$60,000 in a grant last year that will not be available in 2016, we would like to keep our marketing at the same level. The State received a national award for the "Come to Life" campaign. Gwenn suggested board members go to Colorado.com to view the commercials.

Ken announced that there is a new director of Outdoor Recreation for the state. His name is Louis Benitez and he was appointed by the Governor. Ken suggested we invite him down.

## **J. Special Events**

We are currently at 55 teams registered for the races. Staff met with Sgt. Pikul who will be heading up the Police Dept. involvement. We are working with him on a turn-around location for the shuttle and are looking at the Police Department parking lot for that. We have parking at Rock Ledge Ranch (600+ spaces), the Shriner's Club on 33<sup>rd</sup> and Pikes Peak (200+ spaces), the Dillon Motel (70 spaces), and Rodeway Inn. We have spoken with Dale Latty about parking at Higgenbotham as well. We are contracting with District 11 to run school buses from Rock Ledge Ranch and the Shriner's Club. The Masonic Lodge in Colorado Springs and the Masonic Lodge in Manitou Springs were suggested. We have the High School lot available but there is a football game so we cannot use the Middle School parking or the hill and will need to have volunteers on the hill keeping people from parking in those areas. Karissa went to Johnson & Wales in Denver and has recruited volunteers to assist.

Chuck Englund asked Chuck Murphy if we could have Santa in the rotunda of the Spa building this year. We are still trying to determine if we will do gift wrapping again. If so, we won't be hiring someone to wrap but using volunteers or staff to do that. Julie believes the Boy Scouts will be selling Christmas Trees from her lot again this year.

Merchant Trick or Treat will be on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> this year.

Leslie did not have time to meet with the 9Health Fair staff when they were in town this week. Patti Clavier is not going to be available to assist so we would need someone with a medical background to assist with that.

Leslie thanked the Board for sending her and Brittany to the Palisades Wine Festival. Their park is the biggest difference in that they have so much more room. They use a semi with a portable stage. They have a VIP ticket and area that they charge significantly higher ticket price for. It's a fenced, covered area with seating and food (included) that is separate. Leslie does want to talk with CAVE who organizes the Colorado Mountain Wine Festival about their organization, the number of volunteers they use and all of the benefits of VIP tickets. The board talked about using 7 minute for a VIP area and fencing part of the street so people could cross.

## **K. Executive Director Report**

There was a lot of focus on Social Media the Governor's Conference this year. Ryan Cole, PPCAA, lead a session on video. Instead of attending that session, Leslie will have Ryan do that presentation for the Marketing Task force. Leslie attended a session on the CTO grant and got great suggestions from Amy Long. Last year there was \$500,000 being awarded in grants and \$1,000,000 in requests.

Brittany is working on the visitors guide. Everyone was encouraged to return their paperwork if they haven't yet. Laura is working on updating the handouts that are given out. Several of the volunteers have had medical issues recently and are out for a while. Sundays were discussed. Lisa has gone to one day a week and Hannah, her daughter, has been working the other day of the week. We began staying open on Sundays all year several years ago to respond to the Monarch promotion. Numbers will be looked at to determine the need for being open 7 days per week year round.

Leslie received a request from the Police Dept. They are designing a new badge for Manitou Springs officers. The badge would be unique to Manitou Springs. The cost to supply badges to all of the officers would be \$2,500. Businesses could donate to the Chamber and the Chamber would make a donation to PD on behalf of all of the businesses. The information will be shared with businesses with a request to donate.

## **L. Unscheduled Appearances**

Karen brought up the Board Retreat is scheduled for October 7 at Garden of the Gods Trading Post. The meeting will begin at 8:30 am. We will arrange breakfast and lunch. There are currently three items on the agenda – Economic Development, 2016 Budget and Responsible Tourism. Tim suggested a time limit be placed on each item. More information on Tajine Alami will be added to the agenda. Tim also suggested that Events and what the purpose of Events is be added as well. After discussion, it was determined that Parking was probably the topic to discuss. Tim believes Parking is the biggest issue the businesses in Manitou Springs faces. Leslie reported that Denver has put a moratorium on events that involve a park or a public street and Boulder has said no more running events will be allowed. A lot of communities are suffering from event fatigue. Tim is not saying events should not happen but feels there needs to be an impact analysis for each event. Gwenn suggested that Randy Hodges, as chair of the Metro, be invited to attend if we could determine when Parking will be discussed. The Metro District needs to hear from the businesses about their feelings on decking the parking lot as well as the financial issues that go with that decking. The question was asked at what point Manitou Springs hits capacity. It was suggested Neal Yowell, Standard Plus Parking, and Jay Rohrer as chair of the Parking Authority Board also be invited for the parking discussion.

Carnivale and the Coffin Races were discussed.

Julie announced she will be resigning from the Board at the end of the year as she will be leaving the hotel in January. Her brother will be taking over running the hotel and Julie will be moving to Kansas.

An email will be sent to the membership announcing the opening on the board with Christina's resignation.

Having no additional business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.