

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

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

January 28, 2016

Present: Justin Armour, Karen Cullen, Rachelle Cully, Gwenn David, Tim Haas, Farley McDonough, Jay Rohrer

Absent: Annie Schmitt

Guests: Whitney Hedgpeth, Anthony Mogck, Joe Ribeiro, Greg Springman

Staff: Leslie Lewis

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development was held on Thursday, January 28, 2016 in Manitou Springs City Hall in City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 8:36 am by President Gwenn David.

Guests and Jay Rohrer, the new City Council liaison, were introduced.

A. Public Works Update

Greg Springman, Public Services Director, was asked about the status of all of the changes on Manitou Avenue with CDOT. Greg reported he thinks that CDOT is still in design on the west end ramp bridge and believes they were at 30% last month. With all CDOT is working on, Greg started with reporting that CDOT is also doing all of the design for the Westside Avenue Action Plan which ends at the devolution line (Loaf N Jug). The Westside Avenue Action Plan is a 3 agency project involving Manitou Springs, Colorado Springs and El Paso County. The consultant, FHU, is at about 90% design. Greg thinks the utility work will begin late summer, followed by Section 1 which is the Manitou Springs section. The whole area (the devolution point to 31st Street) will be changed to 3 lane with the center turn lane to help with the flow of traffic. There will also be bike lanes through the area. A significant amount of the work will be at the bridge at the Garden of the Gods RV Resort.

The original thought on the Westside Avenue Action Plan was that it would go all the way through to the Manitou Aquatic Center and would encompass the Highway 24 exchange. That is no longer the plan. Greg reported that CDOT has just patched from the devolution line to downtown for a number of years so they are combining that area into the plans for the west end ramp area. The west end bridge needs significant repair and will need to be closed for awhile so a lot of details still need to be worked out. CDOT does plan to carry the same streetscape (3 lanes, a turn lane, and bike lanes). They have been working to determine how much has to be milled out to remove the high spots and a 2" overlay will be done throughout. New ADA ramps (31-40) will be installed on Manitou Avenue. They will be putting out an RFP soon and begin the ADA ramps. The asphalt will be done after Labor Day. There is no budget to underground the utilities between City Hall and the devolution line at this point.

The City is looking at ways to replace some of the asphalt in the downtown area where it is breaking up. They will be looking at PPRTA money to assist with that. The city is also working the West End Pedestrian Project which is Tubby's to the west end roundabout. The survey work is done and a contract is out. This project is included in the 2017 funding cycle. Greg suggested that CDOT be invited to speak with the Board in a couple of months when more of the details for the bridge are known.

Greg was asked when restriping would be done. Public Works does have money in the budget for striping this year. They need to wait for warmer weather for that.

Tim asked if Ridge Road was being closed in the Westside Avenue Project. The section between Colorado Avenue and Pikes Peak Avenue will be closed and made into a turnout area for buses. Jay Rohrer asked about any planned modifications to the crosswalk bump-out for the Middle School as it creates an issue for bicycles having to go into traffic to go around it. There are no planned changes for that.

Police Department Update

Chief Ribeiro was asked for an update. He reported that for the walking beats this summer is that SAS was well received last summer but was not exactly the image he wanted portrayed. He has developed a relationship with UCCS and Manitou Springs will host 4 Criminal Justice interns. They will be working with Manitou Springs from June 1 to the end of October and will be in from 10 am to 8 pm. They will be talking with guests and visitors more as ambassadors. The Chief will also expect them to explain Manitou Springs rules/laws when needed and will be able to radio for PD when needed. They will get training and use of their Criminal Justice education as well sociology training, how to interact with people and can ride along and write reports on their interactions with the public. Manitou Springs officers will still be walking downtown as well. Chief Ribeiro asked for suggestions of what their uniform should look like to identify them. Staff asked if the chamber could provide the hospitality training for them. Chief Ribeiro stated they would have some training in the Visitor Center and potentially spend some time there when they can't be on the street (bad weather) and officers were tied up in the office. Ideas for labeling were discussed. Thoughts and suggestions should be sent to Chief Ribeiro. Manitou Springs will be paying a stipend for their time which should bring interest from the higher level students. Background checks will be run. When asked if the students could begin earlier than June, the response was that the school prefers to keep the students working within the semester parameters. Chief Ribeiro believes the officers will be able to be on the street more now while it is still quiet.

The police department is still 3 officers short and is getting close to hiring one. They are also down the Code Enforcement officer.

The Chief brought up the concerns of needing officers at Special Events. Jason Wells is working on getting the Special Events coordinator hired and having the events process better defined. The Chief looks at the factors involved in an event such as expected attendance, are streets involved and is alcohol being served. There are also the terrorist threats toward large gatherings that can be a factor. The Chief typically looks at one officer per 1,000 people as a guide.

B. Action Item: Interview of Board Member Candidates

Rick Good, Whitney Hedgpeth, Tony Mogck, Lisa Quintana

Whitney Hedgpeth is the traffic manager at the Pikes Peak Cog Railway. Whitney would like to get the Cog more involved in the community and with the Chamber than they have been recently. Whitney represents the Cog on Pikes Peak Country's Board, attends ABA and NTA, and fills in for Spencer Wren at the Summit House meetings as needed.

Tony Mogck and his wife own Theo's Toys in the Spa building. They have had the shop for about 18 months. He is from San Francisco and lived in California most of his life. He has a strong background in video and marketing as his background was a broadcast engineer before opening the store. He is a Manitou resident with a young child in the school.

Rick Good and Lisa Quintana were not available for the meeting due to other obligations.

The number of openings on the board was discussed.

C. Action Item: Approval of December Meeting Minutes

Tim Haas made a motion to approve the December meeting minutes as presented. Karen Cullen seconded the motion and it was approved.

D. Action Item: Authorization of Bank Signatures

Leslie read the By-laws section regarding the Bank Signature. The stipulation that required checks over \$500 to have two signatures is no longer in the by-laws.

Karen made a motion to place Gwenn David, President, Farley McDonough, Vice President, Tim Haas, Treasurer, and Leslie Lewis, Executive Director as authorized signers on all Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development bank accounts and to stipulate that transactions under \$500 require only one signature and transactions over \$500 requiring any two of the signatures. Tim seconded the motion and it was approved.

E. Action Item: Approval of December Financials

Tim, in reviewing the Income Statement, pointed out the revenue was a little higher than budgeted because of special events income and on the expense side, the marketing line item was under budget along with the visitors guide being lower because the work was brought in-house and the Contract Labor was way under than anticipated. That ended up in a surplus of approximately \$44,000 for 2015. For the 2016 budget, some funds will be taken from reserves to advertise Manitou Springs.

Tim pointed out that the net income figure on the Income Statement should flow to the balance sheet and it is off by approximately \$5,000. Leslie and Tim will research the discrepancy and get it resolved.

Farley made a motion to approve the December Financials as presented. Rachelle Cully seconded the motion and it was approved.

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

Non-renewing members of Nova Financial Services, Jaray Webster Law and Suzi Q's BBQ (closed) were discussed. New member applications were received from Manitou Copper Picture Framing and Dennis Blevins (New York Life). The Business Support Group meeting that Dennis Blevins would like to help start was discussed. PJ's Bistro will be moving into the building where Suzi Q's BBQ was. Staff expects them to come in for membership. They plan to be open March 1. Tim made a motion to approve the New, Renewing and Non-Renewing members as presented. Farley seconded the motion and it was approved.

G. City Report

Jay Rohrer was welcomed and congratulated on his City Council position. Jay reported there had been significant amount of discussion regarding Commonwheel's application. The fees for the police were waived for 2016 for her. Jay stated almost every week in Council there is discussion about events so he thinks the City will have a much more comprehensive events procedure this year. Staff has spoken with both Donna Kast and Alicia Stokes regarding the Chamber being involved as the City starts to create that plan/procedure.

Jay had not heard the Chief's plan for patrols downtown in the summer but was pleased to hear that plan. He suggested that the Chamber come up with a really good map to show all of the businesses as a tool for these ambassador/patrols to use to assist visitors. The Business Improvement District Map shows all of the businesses in the district and could be used for that purpose.

City Council has a work session scheduled Tuesday with the Mineral Springs Foundation to sign their Memorandum of Understanding. There was a discussion about having a Mineral Springs Advisor Board as well but that has been taken out of the MOU. Jay pointed out that the Mineral Springs Foundation develops the spring and then gives it to the City. Unlike other groups, they don't always go to the City then for permission to do additional things to those areas.

The spring water that is being used by SunWater Spa has been moved into the City Water Enterprise fund so it is all treated as City Water. There are some revenue sharing agreements on Seven Minute and possibly SunWater Spa. The Mineral Springs also works with private owners of springs, like Twin, which the City can't do. They also have an Endowment to assist with things. The MOU also talks about working with the chamber on marketing the springs.

H. URA Update

Farley attended the presentation by Andre Bracken to Council on the Westside Avenue Action Plan design and saw the area of Ridge Road that will provide the bus pullout. They are almost at 90% design. In the design presented, they will close the short area of Ridge Road between Colorado Avenue and Pikes Peak Avenue. Farley spoke on some of the other planned designs including a light at Ridge Road and Colorado Avenue. Colorado Springs Utilities will begin some work this spring but then after Labor Day they will begin the undergrounding of utilities. They are supposed to work in sections instead of tearing up the whole street. With the closing of the Ridge Road area, Farley talked about the opportunity for Becker's Lane to become the gateway to the Garden of the Gods. In February the URA hopes to determine what amenities they can add and upgrade in the Westside Avenue area in Manitou Springs.

In discussing the properties being purchased, Farley reported Sunflower Lodge, the psychedelic building and possibly the Reserve 1 building were planned. Leslie reported that the property that includes Jerry's Auto and what had been the Reserve 1 building has recently sold. The auto building will be a metal artist and a hemp products store will be going in the Reserve 1 building.

Farley was asked about possible expansion of the URA. Farley said the board had been approached but does not want to consider expansion at this time.

Creative District

The Creative District has expanded its boundaries to be arch to arch. Natalie, as director, is being included in the URA board as a liaison with this expansion as this is an opportunity for her to assist in the amenities and enhancements to create consistency with the downtown.

Jay was asked about Tajine Alami. The property name has been changed back to the original name of Hiawatha Gardens. The closing has taken place and Mohammed has moved out. There is restaurant equipment still there that the City will be trying to sell. There is a study on the property on the City's web site. The next step for the City is to form a Citizen Advisory Board and have that board run public meetings for input on what to do with the building. As the sale just closed, the board has not been formed yet.

Mountain Metro wants to do a change in service and have been holding public meetings throughout the region. They want to change Route 3 from the large bus to a connector. They run into issues with the traffic in Manitou Springs in the summer creating problems with getting behind schedule. The large bus would turn at Old Man's Trail or El Paso (at City Hall) and a smaller connector would run into downtown as well as up to the Incline/Cog Railway. The connector would be free to the public but would cost the City money. During the summer there will also be the summer shuttle from May 1 through mid-September. The Ruxton roundabout to Serpentine roundabout section will go away.

I. Marketing Update

Marketing has gotten their budget together for the year. They are working with Xcite Media on the contract for the grant. For that, they are revamping the video that was created last year. There will be two drawings as a method of tracking results of the digital efforts. The first drawing will be the middle of May and the second the middle of September. The task force will also be working on the contracts for radio and television for the year. Marketing ran a banner ad in the Colorado e-newsletter and is also participating in the Rocky Mountain National Park roadtrip.

J. Executive Director Report

The quarterly and year-end tax reports, W-2s and 1099s are complete. Gwenn signed the contract with Woodley, Hilderbrand & Sanders for the audit and 990 so that will begin.

Staff is still working on the Visitors Guide, hoping to go to the printer soon. We have the letter of support request for the Ring the Peak Trail. That was sent to the Board but only Marcy responded. Leslie was directed to write a letter on behalf of the Chamber.

In researching other organizations, Debbie Miller (Woodland Park) sent information on what should be documented but there were no indications as to where the information should be stored. A lot of documents have been created but need to be pulled together in one location.

Leslie and Gwenn, among others, had lunch with Cathy Ritter, the new director of the Colorado Tourism Office. We believe she was impressed with all the region has to offer.

The Gumbo Cook-off is February 6. There are 20 contestants signed up with 4 additional on the wait list. Leslie is going to Council on Tuesday for event approval. The Health Fair will be April 9 at Community Congregational Church. Jeremy, Manitou Springs Fire Dept. will be acting as the medical coordinator. Jay asked if we partner with Lori Wood, Partners for Healthy Choices. After discussion, we will reach out to Lori as well.

The Wine Festival is full on winery participants. We will be assigning booth space this year. We are talking with two companies on ticketing. While we are looking at additional ticket options (VIP area), we have not yet figured out what to do. Staff has concerns with putting the VIP area on the raised portion of the park.

Farley made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and go into Executive Session. Tim seconded the motion and the regular meeting adjourned at 10:39.

The January 28, 2016 regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development resumed at 10:52 a.m.

After discussion on the make-up of the board Justin Armour made a motion to add Whitney Hedgpeth, Tony Mogck, and Lisa Quintana to the vacant board seats. Richard Good will be thanked for his application with the explanation that in order to maintain a balance of representation on the board, the vacancies were offered to applicants not representing additional restaurants. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

After the annual evaluation, Karen made a motion to increase Leslie's salary by 3.5% for 2016. Justin seconded the motion and it was approved. Tim made a motion for staff adjustments for existing staff up to a 3.5% increase with discretion going to the Executive Director to make those adjustments. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

Having no additional business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.