

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

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

February 25, 2016

Present: Justin Armour, Karen Cullen, Rachelle Cully, Gwenn David, Whitney Hedgpeth, Farley McDonough, Annie Schmitt, Lisa Quintana, Jay Rohrer

Absent: Tim Haas, Anthony Mogck

Guests: Natalie Johnson

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, February 25, 2016 at Manitou Springs City Hall in City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by President Gwenn David at 8:33 a.m. Guests and new members were introduced.

A. Discussion: Economic Development

Natalie Johnson reported that things are moving forward with the Creative District with a Strategic Plan that has been completed but needs to be edited and formatted which they are working on. She was looking for direction from the Board in that if the Chamber is putting \$20,000 of their Economic Development budget line into funding her salary, when it can be started and how the Chamber would like to have input into the process. Two ideas that she came up with were that someone from the Chamber board could sit on the Creative District board or she could attend meetings and report to the board on a monthly basis. Natalie will send the Strategic Plan to the board in electronic format. Natalie feels she can start on the Creative District/Economic Development on April 1 if that is the direction from the Board. After discussion, Farley recommended we form a sub-committee that could determine the expectations from Natalie.

Natalie made a presentation to the City on the Creative District. The City is supportive of the Creative District but wanted more direction on what else they could do. Farley suggested they be asked to handle Natalie's payroll. After additional discussion, it was suggested that the Creative District form a sub-committee to create Natalie's direction out of the four major players (the Chamber, the City, the Arts Council and the Manitou Art Center). Farley will represent the Chamber on the sub-committee. Karen Cullen made a motion to front \$5,000 to the Creative District. Rachelle Cully seconded the motion. After discussion the motion was withdrawn. Karen made a motion to dedicate \$20,000 from the Economic Development to the Creative District with details still to be determined. Rachelle seconded the motion and it was approved.

B. Action Item: Approval of January Meeting Minutes

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

Leslie informed the Board that Tim Haas would like to step down from the Board and have April Hall, his office manager, fill his seat. As Tim had been elected to serve as Treasurer for 2016, a new treasurer would need to be elected. Farley made a motion to elect Rachelle Cully as treasurer and be added as an authorized signature to all Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development bank accounts. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved.

C. Action Item: Approval of January Financials

Leslie had researched the amount off between the Balance Sheet and Income Statement net income that Tim Haas brought to the Board's attention in January. That amount (\$4,913.56) is a carry-over from several years ago that was an Economic Development fund. It will be addressed with the auditor.

In September we started receiving dues and advertising revenue that are placed in protected income accounts. Those amounts are moved in January and show as revenue then. We have several expenses that are the same – spent but show as prepaid expenses and moved in January. Karen made a motion to approve the January financial statements. Farley seconded the motion and it was approved.

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

The new members were discussed. Justin Armour made a motion to accept the New, Renewing, and Non-Renewing members. Rachelle seconded the motion and it was approved.

E. City Report

Jay Rohrer reported that Council is discussing the RFP for trash hauling including "Bear Smart" containers and including City Services in the next contract renewal. The City is also looking at having "Bear Smart" containers in downtown and in the parks unless it is cost prohibitive. The City is talking about expanding the RFP to include businesses as well as residential pickup. Jay suggested everyone look at the "Bear Smart" presentation in the Council packet. Recycling was discussed as part of the RFP as well. The disadvantages to businesses having to change companies if they have a long term relationship with their company were discussed.

The Manitou Avenue overlay is scheduled for late summer or fall now (from the devolution line west). The west end project is moving forward. Jay believes the engineering is complete. With staff changes, it has put things behind a little. Shelly Cobau is the interim public works director. CDOT is going to be doing the east side crosswalks and sidewalks with the ADA to the east end. That portion of the project should be started this summer with minimal disruption.

Jay reported the Green Cities Coalition is more about sustainable cities not just "green" things. There is a push for Manitou Springs to be sustainable/resilient. He suggested that everyone read up on it. It is about cities being vibrant economically with involvement from all types of citizens. He reported the environmental aspect is very small.

Jay was asked if the “Sit/Lie Ordinance” had come up and he explained only briefly. According to Jeff Parker (City Attorney), Manitou Springs has similar ordinances but needs more enforcement. The homeless issue was discussed. The Mayor is hoping to increase the City presence downtown with people, possibly volunteers, to try to change behavior. Lisa Quintana asked if anything was being done about the campers on the mountain. She expressed concern over the communities there with fire danger. Jay explained people are concerned however there are issues such as jurisdictional and manpower. They may be on Forest Service land which is legal camping. Shelly has been focused on getting fire mitigation done up that canyon to reduce the fire risk.

F. URA Report

The URA board has met with the landscape architects that are working on the Westside Action Plan and brought Natalie Johnson on for input with the Creative District. The Plan provides for gray sidewalks and cobra lighting and the URA is open to paying for upgrades. They have had an initial meeting Tim Seibert, NES, to determine where public space is and art pedestals could be placed as well as the cost of upgrades. Farley encouraged anyone wanting to give input to come to the meetings. The URA will be meeting with Council the last week of March and will have recommendations to present. Farley reported that in addition to the upgrades, they are looking at continuing the sidewalks and lighting past the devolution line to the Highway 24 overpass. They are talking with the City about partnering on that small section as it will be expensive for the undergrounding of utilities.

Farley thinks the Chamber, maybe in partnership with the Creative District, needs to look at branding the east end of Manitou Springs. She envisions something (sidewalk stamps possibly) that distinguishes it from the downtown area. Natalie said when they were working on the Strategic Plan and expanded the Creative District the boundaries, they realized it was not walkable but talked about creating “interconnecting zones of creativity”. Other ideas to identify the east end as part of Manitou Springs were discussed. Farley mentioned that many of her customers don’t realize that Adam’s is in Manitou Springs still. The URA meets the 3rd Friday of each month at 8:30 am in City Council Chambers for their regular meeting. City Council has appointed Coreen Toll to be a voting member of the URA board instead of a liaison.

G. Creative District Report

Natalie is going to send the google doc of the Strategic Plan. Farley talked about the City wanting to do something but wanted the Creative District to come back with ways the City could be involved. Farley looked into how other Cities are supporting their Creative Districts. The State has just told the Creative District to not invent anything new but to work with the infrastructure in place.

H. Events Discussion – Growth, Committee

Gwenn brought up the need to form an events committee so that it might be able to assist with Carnivale/Mardi Gras who is looking for some help as well as create more small events to have things happening on a regular basis. The group could do things like working with ArtWalk to talk with other businesses and encourage non-gallery businesses to stay open that night for an event feel. Several people mentioned that Sharon from Swirl is interested in potentially taking

over Carnivale. Jay is writing an article for the Bulletin after talking with Renee and learning she is done so Carnivale will not happen next year without someone stepping up to take it over. He has also spoken with Arlene Wood (who started Carnivale) and Jack Elder. Jay will speak with Sharon. He pointed out that Carnivale is the only event that is not run by an organization. It needs more people involved than just the few people who have been doing it.

After additional discussion about ArtWalk, Jay suggested someone speak with Alberto Leopizzi and recruit him to assist. Lisa volunteered to get involved. A note will be sent out to members to recruit people for an Events Committee. Natalie expressed interest.

I. Executive Director Report

On March 10 Jon Hollman, NorthStar Bank, will be putting on a Counterfeit Money seminar for us. It will be held in the upstairs conference room of Comfort Inn. On Tuesday, March 8, we will have a Business Support Network Group meeting in that same location. Dennis Blevins, our new member from New York Life, is heading that up.

The new visitors guide came in. We have gotten them out to people requesting the 2016 guides for the last several weeks.

We are working on the 9 Health Fair for April 9. We will be looking for food donations to feed the volunteers.

Leslie will talk with Anna and get the next Social Media roundtable meeting scheduled, preferably in April. Spring break schedules for visitors were discussed.

The final report for reimbursement has been turned in on the 2015 OEDIT Marketing grant. They will be opening up another grant application but are not sure when.

The board was reminded about and invited to attend the volunteer potluck set for Friday, February 26. There will be a program on the Mineral Springs and the new signage. We are still looking for additional volunteers for the visitor center. Locations for advertising for volunteers were discussed.

Having no additional business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.