

VIRGINIA CITY TOURISM COMMISSION (VCTC)

October 11, 2018 9:00 a.m.

Virginia City Conference Center
10 South E Street, Virginia City, NV 89440

MEETING MINUTES

Notice: Items on the agenda may be taken out of order; two or more agenda items may be combined for consideration; and items may be removed from the agenda or discussion relating thereto delayed at any time. This is the tentative schedule for the meeting. The Commission reserves the right to take items in a different order to accomplish business in the most efficient manner.

The following minutes are a summarized explanation of the topics discussed. A taped recording of these proceedings will be kept for review.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ron Gallagher called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. ROLL CALL

Katie Demuth called roll.

Chairperson: Ron Gallagher
Vice Chair: Corrado DeGasperis
Treasurer: Vanessa Stephens
Board Members: Angelo Petrini
Lance Gilman
Arika Perry

Katie noted there was a quorum present.

Others: Deny Dotson, Director
Katie Demuth, Tourism & Marketing Manager
Leah Kruse, Administrative Assistant III

2. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

This is the tentative schedule for the meeting. The Commission reserves the right to take items in a different order to accomplish business in the most efficient manner. The Commission may combine two or more items for consideration and may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda at any time.

C. DeGasperis made the motion to approve the agenda.

Second – L. Gilman

Approved – Unanimously

3. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. *September 13, 2018*

L. Gilman made the motion to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2018 meeting.

Second – C. DeGasperis

Approved – Unanimously

4. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

Discussion may be limited to three minutes per person at the discretion of the Chairman. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this portion of the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an item upon which action may be taken.

Zach Spencer, Comstock Mining, announced that they received a National BLM Award for reclamation on September 27, 2018 in Washington DC and that the award would not have been possible without the cooperation of many different local agencies. Z. Spencer shared that the Silver Hill mineshaft was filled in and SR 342 was realigned. Z. Spencer said that Comstock Mining has been in operation since 2003 and during the realignment of the road, they were able to uncover approximately 1000 pounds of elemental mercury, imported to the area between 1860 and 1905. Z. Spencer said that the mercury was removed and the mineshaft was filled with concrete. Z. Spencer stated that the award is available to view at Comstock Mining's office.

Steven Saylor, Comstock Foundation for History and Culture, announced that they were awarded the NNDA Pioneer Award for non-profit of the year. S. Saylor also stated that October 22, 2018, the foundation will be working with Nevada Structure Movers to lift and restore the Lessor Ore Bins at the Dayton Consolidated Mine. S. Saylor stated that the Silver City Firehouse may be shored up soon as a corner of it is twisting and sinking. S. Saylor said that he has reached out to the county and is waiting to hear back on who the owner of the structure is. S. Saylor stated that he will be putting an article in the paper stating that anyone who notices or owns a building that needs shoring up to get in touch with the foundation. S. Saylor also shared that if you would like to see the work that the foundation has done on the Donovan Mill, contact steven@comstockfoundation.org for a tour.

Nicole Barde, Storey County resident, stated that she had some comments on the surveys that VCTC sent out. N. Barde was not sure what county meant or what resident meant when listed in the survey. N. Barde said that if you are asking questions about events, the events should be broken down on the survey as you do not feel the same way about all of the events you attend. N. Barde said that the questions on the survey were confusing and one-dimensional and that items needed to be listed as important vs. efficient. N. Barde suggested that a ground team be assembled to go door-to-door to get the survey to people in the community as not everyone uses social media or email. N. Barde stated that the coalition is trying to work with VCTC and getting the appropriate information from the community is important.

Judy Allen, Storey County resident and business owner, stated that she has not received any of the surveys sent out by VCTC.

Judy Cohen, business owner, requested that anyone attending the board meetings stay off their phones, tablets, etc. while people are speaking.

Breck Greninger, business owner, stated that she did not finish the survey sent to her by VCTC because she found it confusing.

Alexia Sober, Storey County resident and business owner, asked what the purpose of the survey was. D. Dotson responded to the public comment by stating that there has been a great response to the surveys from everyone except the merchants. D. Dotson said that the purpose of the surveys was to get a better view of the bigger picture in terms of what VCTC is working on or has worked on in the past.

5. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: FINANCIAL UPDATE

- A. *Tourism Tax Report*
- B. *Transient Lodging Tax Report*

D. Dotson presented the Tourism Tax report and Transient Lodging Tax Report.

6. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: VCTC ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

D. Dotson presented an overview of what VCTC roles and responsibilities include. D. Dotson discussed the differences between Fair & Recreation Boards vs. Merchant Associations vs. Chamber of Commerce groups. D. Dotson shared information about Resolution 12-343, which passed in June 2012 in order to establish provisions of the membership and budget approval of a Storey County fair and recreation board (VCTC). D. Dotson explained that the board must consist

of a) one member must be a current county commissioner to serve the remainder of his or her term; b) One member to represent the motel operators in the county; c) One member to represent the hotel operators in the county; d) One member to represent other commercial interests in the county (including tourism and excluding lodging; and e) One member at large.

D. Dotson invited each of the other VCTC employees to explain what their job duties are.

K. Demuth – Marketing Manager

L. Kruse – Administrative Specialist

Liza McIlwee – Tourism Assistant

Iris Farris – Tourism Assistant

Whitney Brunson – Special Event Coordinator

Tom Hequet – Tourism Assistant

Jennifer Hunt – Tourism Assistant

D. Dotson shared a list of significant tourism events that occurred in Virginia City from 2012 through 2018, a fiscal year-to-date balance sheet, and lists that presented projected revenue, operational expenses, personnel, operational expenses, and ending fund balances in detail.

D. Dotson briefly explained how VCTC works RAD Strategies, Inc and Liquid Blue Events and stated that each company would be giving presentations to the board shortly.

D. Dotson handed out copies of Special Even Ordinance No. 09-224.

J. Cohen, made a public comment regarding the timeline that D. Dotson presented and J. Cohen stated that the 4th of July should never be considered a loss, but rather, an investment. D. Dotson stated that VCTC is interested in investing in Virginia City.

D. Dotson stated that several Costco stores in Northern Nevada will begin selling Cemetery Gin. J. Allen asked if the Comstock Cemetery Foundation would still see money from the sale of the gin and D. Dotson stated that they would still receive checks.

A. Sober asked D. Dotson if he received input from residents and business owners in town when considering branding. D. Dotson answered that he had a knowledgeable staff and board and that he worked hard to make sure that branding stayed consistent.

7. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: MARKETING UPDATES

Ronele Dotson, RAD Strategies, Inc. presented information on what they do for Virginia City. R. Dotson began her presentation by stating that RAD Strategies is a 16-year company. Highlights from the presentation include details on what RAD Strategies' responsibilities are, a general overview on RAD Strategies advertising, public relations, social media, video/website/mobile app, and Cemetery Gin. During this presentation, R. Dotson stated that Virginia City advertising is in many magazines, at the Reno-Tahoe airport, on billboards, in magazines, on television and radio, via Google, and on the Virginia City mobile app.

Upon completion of the presentation, C. DeGasperi commented that he felt as though VCTC got a lot of value for not a lot of money from the business relationship with RAD Strategies. Candace Wheeler, Comstock Cemetery Foundation, stated that she was very thankful to RAD for the cemetery tour promotion that brought regional attendees to the cemetery.

8. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: SPECIAL EVENT UPDATES

Jess Horning, Liquid Blue Events, presented information on what they do for Virginia City. J. Horning began his presentation by detailing Liquid Blue's accomplishments, which organizations they work with, how they handle event planning, and which type of events they produce. J. Horning then spoke about what Liquid Blue's specific rolls for Virginia City. These rolls include soliciting sponsors, vendors, and event partners, developing sponsorship and vendor programs for events, soliciting all ticket locations, saloon crawl participants, and local partnerships, responsibility for

management of all aspects of budgeting, expenses, revenue and reporting for events. Other rolls include working with VCTC on all permits and application that pertain to each event, managing all event layout and décor, and responsibility for invoicing and collecting fees in association with sponsorship, ticket sales, etc. with all revenues directed to and/or given to VCTC for deposit. J. Horning also stated that Liquid Blue schedules all entertainment and hired event staff, manages all event volunteers, works with RAD Strategies on any recommended paid media for events, and promotes visitvirginiacitynv.com as the driving force for ticket sales, etc.

J. Horning shared a slide that noted event growth, which showed a positive increase in revenue over expenses from 2012 through 2018 regarding the Father Daughter Day & Dance, Chili on the Comstock, Rocky Mountain Oyster Fry, and the International Camel & Ostrich Races.

A. Sober asked if Liquid Blue made money directly from space rental and beer tents at events. J. Horning stated that funds from both space rental and beer tents are combined with the proceeds from the event as a whole and that they did not receive those funds directly. A. Sober also stated that the coalition does not see Liquid Blue as the enemy and that answering questions that the coalition has is very helpful in their understanding of what Liquid Blue does.

C. DeGasperis commented that the workshop scheduled for October 18, 2018 will be a great way for everyone to get their comments heard and hopes that everyone who attends will be responsive.

C. Wheeler, on behalf of Comstock Historic District, asked J. Horning to give the History Center advanced warning of any street closures that may happen during events.

C. Wheeler asked J. Horning how Red Run and zombies relate to the Virginia City brand. J. Horning responded that interest in Halloween and the paranormal in Virginia City is the driving force behind the Red Run event.

9. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: COMMUNITY COALITION UPDATE

A. Sober presented information on the Storey County Community Coalition. A. Sober stated that the coalition meets the second Monday of each month at 6:00 pm and that they are working to define exactly what their full purpose is. A. Sober said that they are still looking for more hands on involvement from the community in terms of decision-making. A. Sober also stated that everyone in the community is welcome to join the coalition and that there are no dues.

10. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: FOR CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO ACCEPT FAIRGROUNDS APPRAISAL REPORT AND ALLOW STOREY COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO FINALIZE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL BY THE STOREY COUNTY COMMISSION

D. Dotson presented the appraisal report from Samuel K. Ward to the board. Chairman Gallagher explained that the approval would be for the appraisal only. D. Dotson clarified that the approval was for the appraisal and authorizing district attorney to negotiate the agreements to be brought before the county commission. A. Sober asked if the purchasing the fairgrounds meant that the community could have year-round access. D. Dotson answered that the property would be available to the community for future events.

C. DeGasperis made the motion to approve the appraisal.

Second – A. Perry

Approved – Unanimously

11. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: STAFF REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE & FUTURE MEETINGS

D. Dotson reported that the workshop surveys will be posted to visitvirginiacitynv.com (in the "About" section) Monday, October 15, 2018. D. Dotson reminded the board that the Merchant-Resident Workshop is Thursday, October 18, 2018 at 6:00 pm at Piper's Opera House – 12 B Street, Virginia City, NV 89440

D. Dotson stated that the next monthly VCTC meeting will be Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 9:00 am at the Virginia City Conference Center – 10 South E Street, Virginia City, NV 89440

12. CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: ADJOURNMENT OF COMMISSION BOARD MEETING

Chairman Gallagher adjourned the meeting at 11:29 am.

DRAFT