

VIRGINIA CITY TOURISM COMMISSION (VCTC)

July 11, 2019 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

Chairperson C. DeGasperis called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. ROLL CALL

Leah Kruse called roll.

Chairperson: Corrado DeGasperis
Vice Chair: Lance Gilman - Absent
Treasurer: Vanessa Stephens
Board Members: Angelo Petrini
Ron Gallagher
A. Perry - Absent

L. Kruse noted there was a quorum present.

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

2. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS 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 noted that there was a request to move the special event update to after public comment. There was no objection to this change.

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the agenda with the slight change in topic order.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

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

- 13 June 2019

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the minutes.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

4. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS 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.

Jeff Wood, Comstock History Center, shared that there were several extra copies of the Nevada Travel Guide at the History Center and that anyone who needed some were welcome to them.

J. Wood also addressed the trash that accumulates around town during events. J. Wood asked if there was some way to contract with Waste Management (WM) to provide extra trash receptacles during special events. C. DeGasperis asked if this was an issue after every event or just after the bigger events. J. Wood stated that it was after the big events and there is one coming up in September to think about. A. Petrini stated that he thinks more garbage cans can and should be rented. D. Dotson shared that either the VCTC or the event promoters are required to provide garbage receptacles during special events. D. Dotson also stated that there have been issues in the past regarding WM not emptying the barrels on C Street daily. J. Wood asked if another company could be hired. K. Demuth shared that there have been times that United Site Services and Waste Management have been used together. D. Dotson said that the feedback was good and that VCTC will continue to evaluate trash service during events based on the comments from merchants, etc. K. Demuth shared that VCTC was and always is short on funding for 4th of July and that means that it is difficult to rent more trashcans, etc. K. Demuth suggested that, if possible, businesses place their personal totes outside during events. A. Petrini stated that he disagreed with this method as businesses fill their own totes with their own garbage and he suggested that the budget be upped in order to rent more cans. Joe Stel, Storey County merchant, asked if there were sheriff work crews. D. Dotson said that in the past they would occasionally get calls for this, but only about twice a year. Jim Webster, Silverland Inn & Suites, shared that in the past he has hired a group like Virginia City Motorcycle Club to do some work. D. Dotson stated that the VCTC would look into that option. C. DeGasperis wrapped up the conversation by saying that there should be a conversation with WM as to why they are not fulfilling their contractual agreement, there should be no skimping on trash cans, and that all of the suggestions given be looked into.

Nicole Barde, Storey County resident, shared that Judy Cohen, Storey County merchant, asked her to share that during the 4th of July, the Union Brewery's BBQ was creating a lot of smoke and that it was blowing directly down the street and into businesses. D. Dotson said that he would reach out to J. Cohen for more information and to discuss the situation with her.

D. Dotson shared that Bud Searer, the new owner of the Bed and Breakfast on B Street (Sun Mountain House), stopped by prior to the meeting starting, but could not stay. D. Dotson shared that the new B&B has four rooms.

Brandy Lopez and Bonnie from the new restaurant in town, Virginia City Joe's, were introduced to everyone.

5. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: SPECIAL EVENT UPDATES

Neil Horning, Liquid Blue Events, gave a final update on Chili on the Comstock by stating that although the weather worked against the event, but that it still ended in the black. N. Horning thanked the major sponsors, Lance Gilman, Dolan Auto Group, and Bucket of Blood for their donations.

N. Horning shared that they are planning the Rodeo schedule, booking a mariachi band for the event, and that there will be a cattle drive and parade through town. D. Dotson shared that the cattle drive will include a full entourage after the animals and that more information will be shared as the event gets closer.

N. Horning provided information on the upcoming Camel Races budget and requested an approval of the budget for \$139,000. N. Horning said that the budget is worked the same year over year and that the only major change this year is the addition of the Friday night show and an increase in some of the merchandise as this is the 60th anniversary of the event. N. Horning expanded on the Friday night show by saying that it will be a local's event with \$10 tickets.

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the Camel Races budget in the amount of \$139,000.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

D. Dotson shared that 4th of July seemed to have one of the largest crowds in his memory and that the only negative he knows about the entire event was, as it is every year, lack of funding, but he considers the event to be a marketing opportunity that brings people in to town and is worth the money spent. N. Barde asked why the fireworks are not included in the VCTC budget. D. Dotson stated that they are, but the VCTC keeps it separate so that the donations are visible. J. Wood suggested that volunteers be used to walk up and down C Street during the parade collecting money. D. Dotson said that was done in the past and it can be revisited. R. Ewing asked if there was a way to estimate crowd numbers. D. Dotson stated that there is not a way to get a perfect count, but estimates are always attempted.

D. Dotson gave a short update on the Comstock Classic Car Show, which is by a local car club. D. Dotson stated that the Comstock Classic is a great teaser for Hot August nights, which occurs the first weekend in August. D. Dotson said that there will be live music and cars on the streets. D. Dotson shared that due to NDOT permits; there will not be a lot of room for food vendors so food shortage issues may occur.

6. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: FINANCIAL UPDATE

- A. *Tourism Tax Report*
- B. *Transient Lodging Tax Report*
- C. *Budget Update*

D. Dotson shared that the Tourism Tax Report ended the fiscal year \$97,000 over the budgeted amount of \$340,000.

D. Dotson stated that the Transient Lodging Tax Report ended over budget as well at \$306,535.

D. Dotson updated on the board as to what the budget may look like at the end of the fiscal year by saying that state grants have not been collected yet, CAP ticket prices are down, Cemetery Gin sales did well, and a couple of special events have not been reconciled yet. D. Dotson also noted that a couple of discrepancies in budget vs. actual are from a) not budgeting for the mining competition and b) Cemetery Gin needing to be made was not budgeted either.

7. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR GENERAL CREATIVE AND WEBSITE MAINTENANCE WITH THE ANTOS AGENCY

D. Dotson shared a master marketing calendar that highlights the amount of money spent to pay The Antos Agency for projects and stated that it appears the better way to pay them is with a monthly retainer. D. Dotson stated that he shared the contract with the District Attorney who approved it.

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve a professional services contract for general creative and website maintenance with The Antos Agency.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

8. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: MARKETING UPDATES

Ronele Dotson, RAD Strategies, shared that they worked with a film crew to coordinate locations and film an episode of a new series called 100 Days, Drinks, Dishes, Destinations that will air on PBS later this year. R. Dotson said someone from Bay Area Buzz, which is a travel site for the Bay Area and beyond, visited and will be doing several posts about Virginia City on the guides section of their website.

R. Dotson said that advertisements were shared on every broadcast station in Nevada in May and June and so far, the value is at over \$81,000. R. Dotson stated that Virginia City regularly spotlighted on TahoeTV.

R. Dotson shared that advertising is starting on Pandora radio and that the company is able to provide very specific

information about anyone listening to the ads. D. Dotson played a new musical commercial that will be played on Pandora.

R. Dotson shared the new designs on new maps and brochures.

R. Dotson shared all of the internet/email marketing that have been sent out in the last month.

9. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: GROUPS, FAMS, TRADE SHOWS, AND VISITOR CENTER UPDATE

K. Demuth stated that group numbers have surpassed last year's numbers. K. Demuth shared that there are four groups who come on a schedule and that the schedule has been shared on the Facebook Merchant page. K. Demuth stated that a docent did a site tour with a new bus company that will begin coming next summer.

K. Demuth shared that the 4th of July parade was nearly an hour and there have been absolutely no complaints about the fireworks show.

K. Demuth said that there are local's only tickets to the Camel Races in the Visitor Center for Friday night admission for \$10.

K. Demuth shared that the VCTC has worked out a deal with the airport to have docents there to meet visitors. K. Demuth said that the training will be at the airport on July 31st for training.

D. Dotson shared a compliment that he received via email about how helpful K. Demuth was when dealing with a group that came to town.

10. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: PIPER'S OPERA HOUSE UPDATE

W. Brunson provided a brief update on Piper's Opera House that included the fact that Country Dancing will be coming back to Piper's on July 20th from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm, the Black Lillies will be performing on August 16th, there are several upcoming weddings, and the Civil War Days Ball will occur on September 1st.

11. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: COMMUNITY COALITION UPDATE

There was no coalition update.

12. CHAIRMAN DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: CRYSTAL BAR (VISITOR CENTER) & BLACK & HOWELL UPDATE

D. Dotson shared that there are two different options in moving forward: Selling the building for no less than \$385,000 or obtaining a construction loan to build with the possibility of a grant for the inside of the building.

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

D. Dotson shared that there will be a "Coffee with the County" meeting (open to anyone) at The Roasting House on August 7th at 9:00 am to discuss any topic.

L. Kruse shared that the next meeting is Thursday, August 8, 2019 at 11:00 am.

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

Chairman DeGasperi adjourned the meeting at 11:01 am.