

VIRGINIA CITY TOURISM COMMISSION (VCTC)

August 8, 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 9:00 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 – Absent
A. Perry

L. Kruse noted there was a quorum present.

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

2. CHAIRPERSON 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.

A. Perry made the motion to approve the agenda.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

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

- 11 July 2019

A. Petrini made the motion to approve the minutes.

Second – A. Perry

Approved – Unanimously

4. CHAIRPERSON 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.

Jim Webster, Silverland Inn & Suites commented that the wedding industry in the area is very large. J. Webster asked if VCTC does anything with the wedding fairs that take place in Reno. K. Demuth stated that the VCTC has never been involved in them, but there are other merchants/groups that have participated in the past. K. Demuth suggested that maybe several businesses from Virginia City could go together to represent the area. A. Perry asked if other entities such as Piper's, Saint Mary's Art Center, etc. could also be involved. K. Demuth and J. Webster both agreed that anyone who hosts weddings should be a part of the experience. W. Brunson shared that another thought is to have a wedding fair in Virginia City.

A. Petrini shared that the Silverland Inn & Suites commercial is great and told J. Webster that they did a great job.

N. Barde, Storey County resident, asked if there was any news on the county taking over C Street. D. Dotson shared that there was an initial meeting of major shareholders and that it is moving forward. D. Dotson reiterated that it would benefit Virginia City in that road closures, etc. would not be subjected to the strict rules and paperwork that NDOT stands by. D. Dotson also shared that taking over C Street, it would give the county an opportunity to do some major curb and gutter updates. D. Dotson shared that, if C Street does become county owned, Public Works and NDOT would still work together for snow removal.

5. CHAIRPERSON DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: FINANCIAL UPDATE

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

D. Dotson stated that the number on the Tourism Tax Report is up and that one reason for this may be that the zip code down in the TRI area is now reporting to Storey County instead of Washoe County. N. Barde asked if there is a way to track the numbers on this report. D. Dotson said that he will look at the trends and try to average the numbers.

D. Dotson shared that the Tourism Tax Report is showing that room rentals are up, but the revenue is down a bit. D. Dotson stated that two properties did not report their June numbers.

6. CHAIRPERSON DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: MARKETING UPDATES

Amy Demuth, RAD Strategies, shared that Bay Area Buzz shared stories and a long blog post on Instagram about Virginia City with their 90k+ followers.

A. Demuth stated that there were many TV interviews about 4th of July festivities with several news outlets.

A. Demuth shared that there are now over 11k followers on the Virginia City Instagram account and that The Killers (a band from Las Vegas) shared a post while in Virginia City that received many likes.

A. Demuth also shared that Cemetery Gin and Piper's social media accounts are both still gaining followers.

7. CHAIRPERSON DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: SPECIAL EVENT UPDATES

K. Demuth shared that this year's 4th of July celebration had the biggest parade yet, a large crowd, and the longest fireworks show to date. K. Demuth shared that the revenue was \$15,529, which is \$1000 more than last year. K. Demuth said that most of the revenue came from major sponsorships and donations from the community. K. Demuth shared that expenses were cut by \$1000 and the budget is now down to the essentials.

D. Dotson updated the board on the Hot August Nights event by sharing that the event is still growing and the partnership with Virginia City is evolving. D. Dotson suggested that merchants might want to reevaluate their business hours when the Hot August Nights groups are up in Virginia City in the early hours of the day.

K. Demuth shared that Civil War Days will be on Labor Day weekend and that set up will occur on Thursday. K. Demuth said that Friday is educational day at the park, the rock-drilling contest at the Jerky Company is on Saturday, and that the

ball at Piper's is on Sunday. K. Demuth also shared that there is a Labor Day Parade and a Civil War battle after the parade.

D. Dotson said that Fiesta Del Charro appears to be shaping up nicely and that the Facebook sponsored posts are reaching over 90k people.

D. Dotson shared that Camel Race tickets are selling well with the exception of the Friday night show. D. Dotson stated that there has not been any online advertising for the local tickets on Friday night and that he is not worried about the sales for that day.

D. Dotson discussed Christmas on the Comstock with the main points being that a subcommittee has been meeting regularly, the format will be Art Town-like during the entire month of December, and that the theme of a portion of the event will be called Believe Again. D. Dotson shared a draft document with the theme, rules, etc. regarding the Believe Again event. D. Dotson stated that merchants would need to sign up for the event, put lights up, and dress in either period clothing or holiday clothing. A. Perry asked that the word non-profit be used instead of charities. A. Perry stated that when Saint Mary's Art Center is mentioned, all four words need to be used so there is no confusion with the church.

C. DeGasperis left the meeting.

8. BOARD MEMBER PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: GROUPS, FAMS, TRADE SHOWS, AND VISITOR CENTER UPDATE

K. Demuth stated that groups have been trending up this year and there have been a few more buses than normal and that she continues to get calls and emails for groups coming to the area. K. Demuth also shared that she will be attending some bus association conferences on behalf of RTT this winter.

K. Demuth shared the Visitor Center is beginning a new sales incentive for employees to participate in.

K. Demuth stated that there was some water damage on a wall in the Visitor Center and that work is being done to update/fix the issue.

9. BOARD MEMBER PERRY 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 continues to do well with an average of 50 people attending, The Black Lillies and Kingwhistler will be performing, and Squeak will be showing a documentary about her on September 15th. W. Brunson also shared that weddings are booked out into the next fiscal year and that tour schedules are posted on the Facebook merchant page and on Piper's website.

10. BOARD MEMBER PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: COMMUNITY COALITION UPDATE

There was no coalition update.

11. BOARD MEMBER PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: STAFF REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE & FUTURE MEETINGS

D. Dotson shared that the Crystal Bar sale is still being evaluated, but the consensus right now is to keep it for the moment and look towards building in the future.

D. Dotson stated that there have been meetings with Sky Fiber and the IT Department to update and make the internet/Wi-Fi options in town work better for everyone in town.

D. Dotson shared that Coffee with the County was well attended.

D. Dotson stated that on August 23rd the Living Legends would be at the Reno-Tahoe Airport greeting visitors arriving in Reno.

L. Kruse shared an email of praise sent to the VCTC regarding Liza McIlwee.

L. Kruse shared that the next meeting is Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 9:00 am.

A. Perry shared that Saint Mary's Art Center was selected to participate in the Basin to Range Exchange with Nevada Arts Council. A. Perry stated that Saint Mary's was paired with Core Contemporary Gallery and they are working on a project with them.

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

Board Member Perry adjourned the meeting at 10:23 am.

DRAFT