

**VIRGINIA CITY TOURISM COMMISSION (VCTC)**  
**January 9, 2020 9:00 a.m.**  
**Virginia City Conference Center**  
**10 South E Street, Virginia City, NV 89440**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

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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.

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

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson C. DeGasperis called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

**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

L. Kruse noted there was a quorum present.

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

**2. CHAIRPERSON C. DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION:  
APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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A. Perry made the motion to approve the agenda.

Second – R. Gallagher

Approved – Unanimously

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

- 12 December 2019

A. Perry asked that a correction be made to the minutes in which the section where A. Perry states that there should be a community competition for the art on the ornaments is changed to say that Saint Mary's Art Center should spearhead the event. A. Perry also clarified that when she stated that she would love to see the shuttle at all events, she meant that she would like to see it at all bigger/more relevant events.

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the minutes.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

**4. CHAIRPERSON C. 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.*

No public comment

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

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

D. Dotson shared that the Tourism Tax Report numbers are still up and that the budget has been met for the entire year. C. DeGasperis stated that we still do not know if it is from the new zip code and that he believes it may be a true-up from a couple of months. N. Barde stated that no one really knows the official date that the zip code went into effect.

D. Dotson shared the that the Transient Lodging Tax Report numbers are still trending up and that most of the rooms for November were rented in TRI.

D. Dotson said that the VCTC is beginning the budgeting process for 2020/2021 and would like a board member to come into the office to sit in on the process. C. DeGasperis stated that he was happy to see clear responses to comments from the community during the last budget process and would like to see that continue. A. Perry asked if a board member should be present more towards the end of the process. D. Dotson stated that yes, it will work out that way this year as the budgeting process has already started. A. Perry asked if there would be another roundtable discussion/workshop to show the public what the VCTC is planning for the next fiscal year. D. Dotson stated that he is interested in seeing that happen in February.

A. Petrini asked if anyone has reached out to the Reno Air Races regarding their hop on/hop off transportation. D. Dotson said that transportation is on the list of projects to be completed. C. DeGasperis said that he agrees that this is something that should be looked at as soon as possible. R. Gallagher stated that the time may be right, but this is something the board has worked on/discussed for at least ten years and that it has been a tough problem to solve, but not from a lack of trying. R. Gallagher went on to say that the next issue to resolve is if the VCTC wants to be the owner of the transportation.

C. DeGasperis stated that he believes that the final number for this year's Tourism Tax report will be over \$700,000.00.

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

Ronele Dotson, RAD Strategies, shared both December 2019 and all of 2019 marketing updates and highlights included: 339 pieces of coverage, 1.14B in online readership, 4.55M estimated coverage views, 50.2K social shares, and 506K YouTube views. R. Dotson also shared that social media growth from January 1 through December 31, 2019 was 10% on Facebook, 8% on Twitter, and 44% on Instagram. R. Dotson shared the December (Christmas on the Comstock) event video and the new 2020 event card. N. Barde commented that the December video does not focus on a step back in time and maybe the video should end in a different way. D. Dotson stated that the branding attempts to lead people back to town, but he does see N. Barde's point. John O'Brien, Silverland Inn and Suites, asked that some rooming opportunities be showed in marketing videos so that people are aware that there are places to spend the night in Virginia City.

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

Jess Horning and Neil Horning, Liquid Blue Events, shared a presentation on how the events that Liquid Blue Events handles in Virginia City have changed and grown over the last four years. Jim Webster, Silverland Inn and Suites, stated that the true value of the events is the economic development that they bring to Virginia City.

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the Devil Made Me Do It Saloon Crawl 2020 in the amount of \$3,400.00.

Second – A. Perry

Approved – Unanimously

A. Perry asked if they were predicting lower ticket sales for the 2020 Father-Daughter Day & Dance. N. Horning stated that he preferred to remain conservative when drafting event budgets.

A. Perry made the motion to approve the Father-Daughter Day & Dance 2020 in the amount of \$10,000.00.

Second – R. Gallagher

Approved – Unanimously

C. DeGasperis asked for clarification on what the payout to cooks entail. N. Horning stated that the cooks receive \$0.50 for every sample they hand out. C. DeGasperis asked what contracted services were. N. Horning said that includes videographer, photographer, etc.

A. Perry made the motion to approve the Rocky Mountain Oyster Fry 2020 in the amount of \$46,000.00.

Second – R. Gallagher

Approved – Unanimously

D. Dotson stated that he is very proud of Virginia City regarding how Christmas on the Comstock turned out. D. Dotson shared that the tentative revenue amount for the event was \$8,500.00 and the tentative expenses were about \$20,000.00 and that the event translated into brand awareness for Virginia City. A. Perry said that the investment into the event is important for the town to benefit from and that it was a great goodwill gesture to visitors in town. A. Perry stated that she really liked the nostalgia aspect of the event video.

D. Dotson shared some highlights on the 2020 Event Schedule and said that the card may be updated at least once. A. Perry asked that the Easter Egg-stravaganza not impede on the Easter egg hunt at Saint Mary's. Joe Stehle, Storey County business owner, stated that he would talk to A. Perry prior to the event so there was no confusion.

**8. CHAIRPERSON C. DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: GROUPS, FAMS, TRADE SHOWS, AND VISITOR CENTER UPDATE**

K. Demuth shared that groups in town for 2019 totaled 4089. K. Demuth said that FAMS will start picking up and that the first two of the year would be here in late January and in February.

K. Demuth stated that the Visitor Center did not quite meet their winter sales goals, but they did better than 2018 and that the slight budget miss is partially due to the Visitor Center being under construction. K. Demuth shared that the floors will be refinished soon and that should wrap up the construction projects at the Visitor Center.

K. Demuth said that Rural Roundup is still moving forward and that she and D. Dotson have meetings scheduled to finalize food, location, and opening day activity contracts.

A. Petrini asked how much money has been spent to fix the wall damage in the Visitor Center. D. Dotson stated that the event was reported to insurance and that the county was responsible for the \$1000.00 deductible. Jeff Wood, Comstock History Center, asked what the cause of the water leak was. D. Dotson said that it was the exterior wall on Taylor along with the water runoff on the street as well as the windows on that same wall.

**9. CHAIRPERSON C. DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: PIPER'S OPERA HOUSE UPDATE**

K. Demuth shared the Piper's Opera House updates, of which, highlights include: The Comstock Christmas Carol will become an annual event, a sold-out New Year's Eve Roaring 20s party, some upcoming events that will take place at Piper's, and Piper's potentially hosting monthly game/movie nights.

**10. CHAIRPERSON C. DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: STAFF REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE & FUTURE MEETINGS**

D. Dotson introduced Michelle Laquindanum, RAD Strategies newest employee.

L. Kruse shared correspondence in the form of some pictures of Virginia City that were sent to the Visitor Center which are dated November of 1956.

L. Kruse stated that the next VCTC Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 9:00 am.

**11. CHAIRPERSON C. DEGASPERIS BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: ADJOURNMENT OF COMMISSION BOARD MEETING**

Chairperson C. DeGasperis adjourned the meeting at 10:37 am.