

4. CHAIRPERSON A. PERRY 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.

R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the agenda.

Second – C. DeGasperis

Approved – Unanimously

5. CHAIRPERSON A. PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- *9 January 2020*

C. DeGasperis made the motion to approve the minutes.

Second – A. Petrini

Approved – Unanimously

6. CHAIRPERSON A. PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: FINANCIAL UPDATE

- A. *Tourism Tax Report*
- B. *Transient Lodging Tax Report*
- C. *2020-2021 Budget Process*

D. Dotson shared the Tourism Tax numbers are still trending up.

D. Dotson stated that the December Tourism Tax numbers saw a bit of a spike in the totals and he believes it was due to the efforts made to market Christmas on the Comstock.

D. Dotson shared that himself and his employees have a meeting with the Comptroller and the County Manager at the end of the month to talk through the tentative budget and that the board will see the full budget at the March 2020 board meeting.

7. CHAIRPERSON A. PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: MARKETING WORKSHOP

- A. *Presentation on General Initiatives for the 2020/2021 Fiscal Year*

D. Dotson thanked everyone for attending the evening board meeting and stated that the atmosphere of the meeting would consist of four or five presenters and public input would be sought after each presentation.

D. Dotson shared that tourism is an investment and the way budgeted funds are spent represents a return on that investment and money received through tourism helps grow the general fund. D. Dotson stated that the Virginia City Tourism Commission's mission is to drive visitation to Storey County creating ambassadors for the Comstock. D. Dotson shared that total revenues have gone from \$457,000 to \$1,567,000 from 2009 to 2019. D. Dotson shared the annual marketing allocation from 2019 to current, which started at \$108,000 and ended at \$350,900. D. Dotson said that the VCTC plans on increasing their online presence, the docent program, movie theater ads, airport advertising, and outdoor advertising.

C. DeGasperis shared that there has been a lot of merchant input and workshopping and he would like everyone to recognize that the VCTC listened to what merchants were looking for and that the VCTC has been implementing a lot of the requests that they have received.

Ronele Dotson and Amy Demuth, RAD Strategies, presented a marketing presentation regarding how marketing went in 2019 and how they will proceed in 2020, highlights of which include marketing with a consistent look/brand, doing some of the future branding in Spanish, planned map distribution to hotel rooms in the area, working on making sure that event branding is remaining consistent, and consistent social media presence in regards to advertising special events. R. Dotson shared that Pandora Radio advertising in 2019 was very successful and stated that Spotify should be explored next as it has a younger, more engaged audience.

A. Perry asked if the maps that will be distributed to hotels will go to the TRI hotels. R. Dotson stated that they would. A. Perry asked if Truckee, CA is being targeted by advertising. R. Dotson shared that she would look into having more of a presence in Truckee. A. Perry asked what the timeline for merchant interviews on Spotify was. R. Dotson stated that

those should start up around June. A. Perry asked if the beacons were still being used. R. Dotson said that the beacons are in place and the first time anyone will see them in action will be at Rural Roundup (April) 2020. Jason Teague, Storey County business owner, asked how a beacon could be deployed at his property. K. Demuth stated that the bugs are still being worked out and once the beacons are working the way they are expected to, the placements can be reevaluated. D. Dotson stated that along with the new marketing opportunities, there will be a chance for the VCTC to partner with merchants. Charlie Pitts, Storey County business owner, asked when the event posters are made and stated that the hotels in the area should have those posters by the beginning of the year. D. Dotson stated that the VCTC is getting a bit better at getting events lined up for the whole year, but that some events do not get added until later in the year due to the fact that some of the events in town are not run by the VCTC. A. Perry asked R. Dotson if she would be posting how merchants can submit event, etc. information on the Facebook merchant group. R. Dotson stated that she would.

K. Demuth shared some information regarding marketing grants and groups that come in to Virginia City, highlights include requests for \$40,000 in grants, regional collaboration that takes place with TravelNevada and RSCVA and the FAMs that result from these collaborations, and that work is being done to expand the docent program which includes having docents at the airport several times per year.

Jess Horning and Neil Horning, Liquid Blue Events, presented information regarding event sponsorships and partnerships in Virginia City, highlights include over \$220,000 in sponsorship funds that have allowed events to grow, partnership successes that include International Camel & Ostrich Races, Father-Daughter Day and Dance, Chili on the Comstock Craft Beer Tour, and Believe Again, some collaboration success stories, and a discussion on the difference between paid sponsorships (which are customized for each sponsor) and non-paid sponsorships.

Sam Toll, Storey County resident, thanked J. Horning and N. Horning for the work that they do in Virginia City and stated that their experience is what helps the events to grow.

W. Brunson shared information regarding Piper's Opera House goals for the upcoming year, highlights include a focus on performing arts, generating overnight visitation, and engaging the local community with game nights. W. Brunson also shared that Piper's is always looking for sponsors to come forward to help with events all year long.

A. Petrini asked if prizes would be handed out at game nights and if there would be a fee for each card on bingo nights. W. Brunson stated that there would be prizes and yes, there would be a per card price for the bingo cards. Ralph Ewing, Silent Rider, asked if there would be movie nights at Piper's and if sponsors were required for them. W. Brunson stated that movie nights can be expensive, but if they were to begin at Piper's, yes, sponsorships would be greatly appreciated.

Melody Hoover, Storey County merchant, stated that she is working with a team who is streaming local news that is viewed locally and across the world. M. Hoover stated that there are interviews with restaurants and a history segment that local Virginia City merchants may be interested in meeting with.

Janice Oberding, Storey County author and merchant, stated that while she is please with the things she's seen done regarding events in Virginia City, she would like to see more attention placed on the paranormal aspects of the town because a lot of people come to town to partake in paranormal activities.

8. CHAIRPERSON A. PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: STAFF REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE & FUTURE MEETINGS

L. Kruse stated that the next VCTC Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 9:00 am. Joe Stehle, Storey County merchant, stated that a good idea for future meetings may be to periodically have evening board meetings. A. Perry stated that another option is to reach out to the board at any time.

9. CHAIRPERSON A. PERRY BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: ADJOURNMENT OF COMMISSION BOARD MEETING

Chairperson A. Perry adjourned the meeting at 6:55 pm.