

VIRGINIA CITY TOURISM COMMISSION (VCTC)
August 13, 2020 10:00 am
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
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

Vice Chairperson Jay Carmona called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. ROLL CALL

Leah Kruse called roll.

Chairperson: A. Perry - Absent
Vice Chair: Jay Carmona
Treasurer: Vanessa Stephens
Board Members: Angelo Petrini - Absent
Ron Gallagher
Corrado DeGasperi

L. Kruse noted there was a quorum present.

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

2. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA 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.

D. Dotson introduced Nora Stefu as the new Director of the Fourth Ward School. N. Stefu shared that the Fourth Ward School and Museum will be open with limited capacity starting August 26th through October 2nd on Wednesdays and Fridays and tickets are available online.

Austin Osborne, Storey County Manager, stated that \$200,000 from the CARES Act funds will be used to help small businesses through COVID-19 issues. A. Osborne stated that the eligibility criteria is still being worked through, but updates will be available as soon as possible. A. Osborne stated that there were 6 cases of COVID-19 in the county, but all have recovered. A. Osborne stated that they are asking all bars and restaurants, etc. to use facemasks and to have visitors wear them as well. A. Osborne has sent a letter to the governor asking him not to close all businesses due to one or two businesses not complying.

3. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A. 13 August 2020

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R. Gallagher made the motion to approve the agenda.

Second – C. DeGasperis

Approved – Unanimously

4. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. *9 July 2020*

C. DeGasperis made the motion to approve the minutes.

Second – R. Gallagher

Approved – Unanimously

5. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: FINANCIAL UPDATE

A. *Tourism Tax Report*

B. *Transient Lodging Tax Report*

C. *Budget Review*

D. Dotson shared that the Tourism Tax Report is right in line with where it was estimated to be due to COVID-19.

D. Dotson stated that the Lodging Tax that came in was higher than expected, even with four properties not reporting.

D. Dotson shared a budget update for fiscal year 2019-2020, highlights of which included the fact that Room Tax and Lodging Tax numbers came in higher than expected, most numbers came in right on target, unused postage amounts will be used this current fiscal year, and that expenses were cut as needed. C. DeGasperis commented that one data point does not reflect a trend, so he is confident that things are not trending downward. D. Dotson shared that most people in the tourism industry whom he has spoken to are optimistic about the future of Nevada tourism.

6. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: MARKETING UPDATES

Ronele Dotson, RAD Strategies, presented July marketing updates, highlights include refocused efforts in earned media, regional partners, and social media, and updates on the Everyone Is a Local campaign which includes giving away a night at a local lodging property. R. Dotson's presentation also included a look at new floor mats and signage in the visitor center and around town. D. Dotson shared that some marketing funds that were included in events that have been canceled will be used for marketing other events/campaigns. R. Dotson shared a list of publications over the last month and that all the social media accounts are continuing to grow.

N. Barde commented that she thought the COVID-19 posters were very clever.

7. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: SPECIAL EVENT UPDATES

D. Dotson stated that the Great American Craft Fair was a success and that being able to safely accommodate 3,200 people was wonderful to see and that it set the standard for safe events moving forward.

Sam Toll, Storey County resident, stated that his group is cautiously optimistic about the Ferrari Hill Climb in September still occurring. S. Toll stated that the car show that was scheduled has been canceled, but people are still encouraged to bring their classic cars up to town the weekend of the event. S. Toll stated that a cruise will occur down C Street both days of the event.

D. Dotson shared that he is in contact with the head of Street Vibration daily, but they are assuming the event will be canceled. D. Dotson stated that he believes many on motorcycles will still be in town on the scheduled weekend of Street Vibrations because they will want to enjoy their freedoms.

D. Dotson shared that he is in contact with the organizers of the Grand Prix and that planning is moving forward.

Neil Horning, Liquid Blue Events, stated that Liquid Blue is preparing a crawl on Halloween day with shopping benefits, similar to the Christmas on the Comstock event. N. Horning stated that Christmas on the Comstock planning is happening right now, and he hopes to have finalized information regarding the event shortly.

8. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: GROUPS, FAMS, TRADE SHOWS, AND VISITOR CENTER UPDATE

K. Demuth shared that most groups are still not coming up, but she has been told that a couple of bus groups have stated that they may resume soon. K. Demuth said that the only group she has booked right now is not coming until Christmas Eve day.

K. Demuth stated that Rural Roundup has been rescheduled to April 20th – April 23rd, 2021 and the official announcement will be released by Travel Nevada shortly.

K. Demuth shared that the VCTC is working on a new map of town.

9. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: PIPER'S OPERA HOUSE UPDATE

K. Demuth shared that Piper's is open for tours on the weekends.

K. Demuth stated that the upcoming weekend is the last weekend for the Murder at the Gin Joint play and that tickets are almost sold out.

K. Demuth shared that Bingo will be at Piper's on August 20th, Country Dancing is on August 22nd, and that there is a lecture by Joe Curtis scheduled for August 27th. K. Demuth said that there will be a new cocktail event at Piper's on August 28th which will focus on learning how to make drinks with a local bartender hosting the event.

10. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: STAFF REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE & FUTURE MEETINGS

J. Carmona stated that the next VCTC Board Meeting will occur at 10:00 am Thursday, September 10, 2020.

11. VICE CHAIR J. CARMONA BROUGHT THE NEXT ITEM TO THE COMMISSION'S ATTENTION: ADJOURNMENT OF COMMISSION BOARD MEETING

Vice Chair J. Carmona adjourned the meeting at 11:07 am.