

Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau
& Office of Economic Development

Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes

May 22, 2014

Present: Justin Armour, Karen Cullen, Rachelle Cully, Gwenn David, Amanda Galloway, Tim Haas, Ken Jaray, Marcy Morrison, Julie Vance, Joy Vernon, Sarge Mac Donald

Absent: David Symonds

Guests: Don Goede, Kat Tudor

Staff: Leslie Lewis

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development Board of Directors was held on Thursday, May 22, 2014 at Manitou Springs City Hall in City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by President Marcy Morrison.

A. Presentation: SunWater Spa

Marcy introduced Don Goede and Kat Tudor, the partners building SunWater Spa. Don passed around two recent articles on SunWater and gave a brief introduction that included their backgrounds and how their partnership began. The business will revolve around Yoga and water. Kat explained that SunWater will be a spa and center for healing, with soaking pools. The water will be heated with solar power. They will also offer classes in Yoga, Tai Chi, and Dance. There will be 2 studios so they will be able to offer children's classes at the same time as adult classes. SunWater will also have ceremonial and event spaces. Through Smokebrush they will be presenting cultural events such as concerts and storytelling. Through Kat's national and international connections with Yoga, they hope to be a center where people come for trainings in Yoga, massage, and Tai Chi and become an international destination. The landscaping will include a stream through the property and eventually a waterfall and a fountain. They are working on fountain designs for their property and 7 Minute Springs Park.

They will be digging a new well for 7 Minute Spring. The current well has problems with flow and leakage which they hope to solve with the new well. Don explained that Manitou Springs didn't have the water rights because they had never claimed them. They have been working on an Augmentation Plan which will give the City those water rights and allow the City to let businesses then use the water in large amounts. City Council has approved giving SunWater a credit on the water in exchange for drilling the new well at 7 Minute. The drilling has been approved to begin. Two other businesses that are interested in water use once the Augmentation Plan is complete are Blue Skies and Ni at Twin Springs. The Aquifer Study must be complete before too many businesses can begin using the water in commercial ventures. The City always has the rights to the water first so in case of a severe drought, the commercial ventures would have to stop using the water. SunWater has found another spring on their property that they are calling "Talking Spirit."

Karen Cullen invited them to become members of the Chamber so that we can promote them even prior to their opening. Don stated they had the application filled out. He further stated, as a business owner, that he wanted to focus on the winter visitors. He doesn't worry about summer being busy but does want to focus on winter to help lodging properties. Kat talked about having a tub on the 3rd floor with an indoor/outdoor fireplace and the incredible views of Pikes Peak from the SunWater location. Membership in the Chamber is part of their Marketing Plan but they have not been very aggressive because of variables beyond their control. They are hoping for a better estimate of opening which could come anytime. They will market to Manitou first and then reach out to other areas and spas. Ken mentioned the Vision Plan created by the community that had the vision that Manitou Springs would become the place for Health, Healing, and Wellbeing and all of the things that are happening to become that.

With that Vision, Smokebrush has gotten behind ManiFest. ManiFest is an all day celebration of the water and health, healing, and wellbeing in Manitou Springs. Kat gave out stickers for "aqualuz" and crystals.

SunWater will have treatments (massage, facials, and various water treatments) available as well. There will be pool Yoga, Watsu, soaks and offer various drinks with mineral water. When asked about the projected timing of opening, Don said he believes he and Kat will be able to begin setting up operations in August and if all goes as projected they will be opening to the public in October.

Kat also pointed out that the Smokebrush Foundation has moved to Manitou Springs. Marcy told her she felt that was great for Manitou. They are located in the MAC. Gwenn David asked how the water would be recycled or what happened to the water. Don reported that the Colorado Division of Water Resources has made great strides in reusing "gray" water in the last few years but it is complicated with all of the government agencies. They will have to have a meter of everything going out and it has to go into the sewer at this time. His dream is for someday (working through the state) to be able to use the "gray" water for irrigation.

Marcy thanked Don and Kat for coming and presenting the actual information instead of everyone just hearing the rumors.

Ken mentioned that he has met with other people interested in opening another spa. Marcy told him if he provided their contact information we would invite them to present information as well.

B. Action Item: Approval of April Meeting Minutes

Karen commented on the information in the Marketing Report she provided regarding the website on the membership pages will have to be work in progress and not critical to the site with completion that they are not critical for launch because they will be work in progress. Member content will be moved over and they are critical to the site (page 4). With that change, Karen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Gwenn seconded the motion and they were approved.

C. Action Item: Approval of April Financial Statements

Tim Haas reported he did not see any significant changes from March and feels we are where we should be at this point in the year. He believes the revenue items that we need to keep an eye on are the Special Events and Manitousprings.org ads. Karen made a motion to approve the financial statements as presented. Julie Vance seconded the motion and it was approved.

D. Action Item: Approval of New & Renewing Members

Staff reported receiving a New Member application from Serenity Springs, the big cat rescue in Calhan. The renewing members were quarterly payments which are listed on their annual renewal. She further reported that Serenity Springs had been a previous member but had not renewed due to financial constraints. Serenity Springs is hosting a tour for staff and volunteers.

Ken asked about organizing a more formal membership drive in the near future so it can be launched this fall when businesses have money. Ken feels the board should set a target and defined plan for increasing membership. Marcy agreed with that approach but said we do know who the businesses are that are not members, have visited with them several times and you can only go back so many times if they choose not to join. She also mentioned it has been interesting with the economy since 2008 but we do always need to attain that target. Ken further stated the board should define their stated written goal, how they will get there and who is responsible for getting there which is different than knowing certain businesses aren't members and keep visiting those businesses. Marcy felt they were saying the same thing, with the same end result but using different verbiage. Joy Vernon asked if there was a plan for how we are reaching those people, who is doing it and what the package looks like. Marcy said we do have those pieces and would be happy to sit down with Joy and go through it. Joy would like to be able to go to some of the businesses she is connected with and present that information. Leslie suggested the Member Benefits be reviewed and updated as needed. Karen suggested the Marketing Plan be added to the information. Karen recommended setting up another meeting to review the membership plan to move forward. Marcy suggested adding that to the June meeting. Rachelle Cully has spoken with Jim (Suzie Q's BBQ) who said he was going to bring the application in.

The new member application for Serenity Springs was approved.

E. Discussion: Business Changes

Suzie Q's BBQ opened Tuesday evening. Lane Mitchell Jewelry Store has opened in their new location (737 Manitou Avenue). Smoking Gift Headquarters is open at 918 Manitou Avenue and staff understands a lease has been signed on the old Adam's Mountain Café location in the Spa building but has been unable to reach that business for confirmation. Marcy reported that there is another new business that is supposed to be opening soon (Serrano's), a Mexican restaurant in the previous Dutch Kitchen location. They have not received their business license yet. Pikes Peak Pub was discussed. Staff has heard their plans are held up in Regional Building. That will be located in the old Dulcimer Shop location. Leslie spoke with the owner of Red Dog Coffee but that opening date is still unknown. Marcy reported Loft Espresso (Spa Building) has reopened. Kinfolks is planning to reopen in June. The new owners of Kinfolks will be approached with membership information. Leslie has left a couple of messages for the owners of Manitou Brewing Company about setting an appointment to discuss the membership information they have been given but has not received a return call. Gwenn reported there is a new sign in the window where Safron had been that just says "Smoothies". The board discussed that other than Canon Avenue there will not be many empty buildings. The board discussed adding "Businesses for Sale" and "Employment Opportunities" pages to the website.

F. Marketing & Website Updates

Karen reported (for those unable to attend) that the Media Roundtable had been very successful. There were seven media representatives (three editors) attending and we have received stories from the presentation. Rebecca, Blakely + Company, spoke with everyone there who were very pleased with the

information that was provided. Karen thanked Amanda for hosting, Tim for providing fudge, and Gwenn for providing cookies.

The website should be available for preview next week. Xcite is waiting on high resolution photos. The spring photography session is scheduled for this weekend. Blakely + Company has provided a shot list for the photographer to work on. Photos have been chosen from the FaceBook contest as well. Ken was thanked for the Rocky's posters that were given to the top three shots chosen.

A banner advertising campaign has been started that is showing success so our website numbers are improving. The April newsletter was sent 3,497 with 142 click-thrus and an open rate of 28.6% which Karen reported as amazing. The May newsletter went to 3,461 with a 23.6% open rate and 30 click-thrus. Blakely + Company will do a spreadsheet at the end of the year which will document everything done.

As part of the Strategic Plan, the Marketing Task Force has a radio campaign through the summer. It includes radio remotes in both May and September as well as radio commercials through the summer.

G. Update: Mineral Springs Experience

Gwenn reported that the work on the Mineral Springs Experience is underway. We have received the cups and she believes the content for the signs has been written and is being sent to the developer of the plaques. The plaques will be National Park quality. She believes the Mineral Springs Foundation is still getting bids on the stands for the plaques. The Kickstart campaign is supposed to launch in June to help with the funding of the project. Gwenn and Ken were unsure of the timing of the wayfinder stamp being painted on sidewalks. The next meeting of the group is set for June 5, at 2:00 pm at the Chamber. Ken is hoping the Kickstarter campaign will bring in an additional \$20,000 that will allow the Experience to move to the next level which is more of an interactive experience. The group wants to engage people to involve them with the culture, history, and geology of the springs which is more than just reading signs. The group is open to moving the meeting time as afternoons may not be the best time for everyone.

H. Update: ManiFest

Joy visited with the Food Council in Colorado Springs who wants ManiFest to become the pinnacle of Food week so they will include them in advertising for more visibility. They will probably have a booth to talk about sustainability and local foods at the event. The ManiFest organizers are getting ready to start a restaurant campaign in Manitou Springs to talk to them about having sack lunches or something easy to get in and out quickly that day. The music is set and will be up and down Manitou Avenue with a KRCC stage in Memorial Park. There will be a stage in Soda Springs Park focusing on old Colorado music such as Blue Grass and Country music with cultural things going on in that park. At the Library they will have literary arts and performing arts. They are also working with Clayfest and helping them to recreate the energy of Clayfest with hands on activities. They would like to work with the Chamber and still need sponsorship. Joy thought sponsorship by the Chamber would be helpful. ManiFest still needs money for some of the artists coming, some of the art projects, and some of the musicians. There will be a fitness portion as well. As a sponsor, the Chamber logo can be included in the advertising. Ken pointed out that Justin will be helping with the fitness portion and there is a great group of people from the Olympic Training Center that have put together all day activities in Schryver Park for the day. The fitness activities will combine all types of activities. Joy is the main event coordinator with five event coordinators working

on other aspects of the day. She believes it will be a great kick-off to the fall and winter season. Ken reported that Peak Living Project has put \$2,500 into the promotion.

Karen recommended that the board support sponsorship for \$500 - \$1,000 of the event through the Economic Development budget. The board discussed the financial commitments from the Economic Development budget and where funds had been committed previously. Leslie brought up an Economic Development Assessment Team being in Manitou Springs for a day in June and there would be some costs with that visit. Ken stated he did not see the funds previously committed to the economic development assessment being spent at this point so it could be freed up. Joy explained the benefits of the \$2,500 sponsorship level. Ken recommended allocating \$2,500 for sponsorship of ManiFest. Karen asked about the shuttle for the ManiFest event. The Mayor has suggested if there are funds still available the City could provide that. Joy will follow up with the Mayor. If that doesn't happen ManiFest will get transportation set up for the day. Karen made a motion to support ManiFest with a \$2,500 sponsorship. Ken seconded the motion. Marcy asked for discussion and stated she is in favor of supporting ManiFest but that the board had started the idea of the assessment which everyone was in favor of putting together so is concerned about moving that \$2,500 to the sponsorship.

Karen asked about the EDAT. Leslie explained it would be members of state and federal agencies that approached Manitou Springs and El Paso County about providing an assessment. They will be in Manitou Springs on June 25 and in El Paso County on June 26 and 27. The sessions were discussed. Green Mountain Falls and Woodland Park representatives will be invited to participate in the Manitou Springs meetings. The costs associated with the visit will be lunch and possibly dinner for the meeting day and business members will be asked to attend. Marcy wasn't concerned about these costs being a large financial burden as much as asking board members to evaluate the levels of ManiFest sponsorship and what those levels provide in terms of exposure and how that sponsorship fits with the mission. Marcy suggested an amendment to the motion of sponsoring at the \$1,000 level. Joy brought up the additional materials the logo would be included in at the \$2,500 level. After additional discussion, the board decided to discuss Special Events prior to a decision.

I. Special Events Update

The Wine Festival is coming up. The permits are in place. Staff is still trying to raise DUI sponsorships but Brittany has done a great job in getting sponsors. Presale tickets are going extremely well. The Living Social promotion was placed in the Dallas market but people in Colorado Springs were also able to access that deal. There were some out of state and Denver sales through the Living Social promotion. There have been over 600 presale tickets.

The Summer Concerts may be more challenging because of the seating. With the benches removed, the Park and Recreation Board has ordered portable seating. Little London Winds and Fountain Creek Brass Band may want staff to take care of setting up and removing that seating. As we hold the park permit, we are responsible for making sure it is put away after each event.

Staff will be looking for sponsors for the Ice Cream Social immediately after the Wine Festival is wrapped up. Staff will be speaking with Colorado City Creamery and Sinton Dairy about providing the ice cream again this year.

Coffin Races are where a lot of expense is incurred in the special events budget without as much revenue coming in.

Karen again brought up the need to put together a special events committee which she believes gets dropped every month. Marcy expressed the need for not only the committee but also someone who could work at least part time as a Special Events and Economic Development Coordinator. Staff handed out a brief job description of a part-time person (25 hours per week). Karen asked about staggering hours so there is more coverage different days. The board discussed starting wage for the position as well as additional volunteers for the front counter. Joy asked if there was money in the budget to cover additional salary. She also brought up the need for several board members to leave and asked if a decision could be made on the ManiFest sponsorship.

The question was called on the motion approving the \$2,500 sponsorship of ManiFest. The motion passed with Tim and Marcy opposing. Joy stated she would bump the sponsorship up to the Community sponsor level.

J. Executive Director Report

The EDAT has already been discussed. Leslie has been speaking with United Way, who came out with \$100,000 Manitou Emergency Grant Fund which is a maximum of \$10,000 per business. They were originally talking to us about potentially using these grant funds for marketing however the United Way came back and stated it needed to go directly to businesses. The information has been sent to businesses via email and delivered to those that we are aware of with damage that don't receive email.

Marcy and Leslie attended the CVB's Annual Meeting. In 2013, their Visitor Center saw 19,900 visitors and our center saw 27,000.

Leslie is open to looking at a higher hourly starting rate for the part-time position and discussed the rate Brittany Tafoya, who has really stepped up, is currently making. Marcy suggested staff be given flexibility in the beginning wage. The part-time position will be posted in the Pikes Peak Bulletin and also on-line. The Work Force Center was suggested.

K. URA Update

Marcy reported they have the first opportunity to see change with Adam's moving to the URA area. Farley is getting customers, likes the new location, and her customers like the parking. There are rumors that the building Wild Ginger is in is selling but staff has been unable to get confirmation. The URA has ideas for accessing the creek. The URA is actively engaged and has put a \$50,000 investment into the Adam's location.

Marcy attended the Parking Authority Board Meeting. They did not have a quorum so could take no action but will recommend, at their next meeting, establishing a budget allocation for pay by phone. This will allow people to pay by phone without ever going to a kiosk. They also discussed a merchant sponsored on-street parking space program and felt they need better data before changing the system.

L. City Update

Sarge reported that City Council has decided on Jason Wells for the City Administrator and has offered him the position which they expect him to accept. Roger is pushing hard on the Flood mitigation efforts in the creek. Citizens are upset with both Red Wing Motel and Western Cabins which were both operating without licenses and been given "Cease and Desist" orders. The board discussed businesses no longer receiving business license renewal reminders and some people miss it because they were used to getting notices.

When Sarge attended the CML meeting in Woodland Park, he met with someone from the USDA that can only give money to small communities, which are rural, for community centers. They are looking to see if Manitou Springs might be eligible.

January sales taxes were good but February saw a drop. March was ok but January and March did not counteract the February drop. The City has to print a brochure on marijuana use in Manitou Springs that will be provided to the businesses.

Sarge has another surgery coming up but is unsure when it will be. He was selected to be a CML board member and the first meeting for that will be July 11 which he wants to attend.

M. **Unscheduled Appearances**

Leslie reported hiring Lisa Poffenburger to work weekends to replace Karissa Ballard who has resigned.

Having no additional business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.