

**Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau
& Office of Economic Development (Visit Manitou Springs)**

**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

January 25, 2024

Present: April Hall, Kat Kilner, Farley McDonough, Anthony Mogck, Annie Schmitt, Natalie Johnson

Absent: Ted Johnston, Lisa Quintana

Guests: Juan Alvarez, Audrey Gray

Staff: Jenna Gallas, Leslie Lewis

A regular meeting of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau, & Office of Economic Development (Visit Manitou Springs) was held on Thursday, January 25, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 8:38 a.m. by President Farley McDonough.

A. Special Events Update

Jenna Gallas gave an update, reporting the “Elf Program” (providing 2 hours of parking for visitors to downtown on Black Friday) was very rewarding. People really appreciated the parking paid for by the Chamber. She said it would be easier with several people doing it so each block could be worked instead of one person trying to cover all of downtown. When the City then offered free parking for the holiday weekends, it was not as important for the chamber to be out as well. We still have funds that could be used for random days.

The Fruitcake Toss is this weekend. Gloves were ordered in partnership with Collins Street Bakery. We will be selling them at the event. There is currently \$2,500 in sponsorship revenue.

CarniBall Tickets are on sale. They are being sold through Manitou Made. Jenna is sure they will pick up, though they are off to a slow start.

There are currently 20 Krewes registered to march in the Carnivale Parade. The ManiKrewe has been instrumental in helping with both CarniBall and the Carnivale Parade. Kat Kilner mentioned having a friend that would be willing to carry one of the puppets in the parade.

Additionally, Jenna is onboarding a new artist to Manitou Made. Little London Winds will return for Monday night concerts in Soda Springs Park. The Soda Springs Park construction is scheduled for May to October and will mainly impact the playground. While concerts will be held, ManiPalooza (Silent Disco & Food Truck Rally) will not be scheduled this year.

Jenna has been looking for new software to help with all events. Jenna will check to see if the software is something we could let other non-profit organizations run their events through under our account.

B. Mobility & Parking Update

Juan Alvarez, Mobility and Parking, reported he will be providing City Council with an Employee Comprehensive Parking Plan on February 13. He gathered information through surveys that were sent out as well as placed on the City’s web site. In addition, he held an open meeting at City Hall with approximately 20 attendees and received good feedback there.

The city is also working on the Dillon Motel. They are looking at the Dillon for Incline and satellite parking for employees. The Dillon is still in the planning process with demolition. A portion of the Dillon will be used for restrooms, storage, and office space.

They have the Electric trams, which are still in testing and are exploring options with Via Micro Transit. The electric tram batteries are currently lasting under 4 hours each. It may be that they can run during peak times, running one at a time to give an additional 6 hours of service. They take approximately 8 hours to recharge (overnight).

The Chase Bank will be remodeled into the Mobility & Parking office.

The two top requests in the Community Engagement were for the trams were for evening use and easy access to go to Safeway.

The MAPS Board is reading "Walkable Cities" which will be discussed in the meetings. Trams and transit will be the focus initially. Natalie suggested maybe having Luke Prince report to our Board.

Juan reported rates are changed quarterly. The parking fees were reduced in January to \$3 per hour downtown. They are determining rates based on the same quarter in the previous year. The Chamber will meet with the city in September to determine which free dates might be available for parking promotions and the Chamber can help advertise those dates. Because of the way the toys in exchange for a parking discount was done last year, no one was sure how successful that was.

C. City Update

City Council will have a retreat in February to work on a 3 – 5-year plan in terms of the economy, anticipating a decrease in revenue.

The Metro Board is under contract to purchase the Ute Pass Motel (next to Smischny Lot). No closing date has been announced yet.

The trams capacity was discussed. With the cost, even with the battery limitations, it is an affordable transportation option. Currently, there are no planned changes to the services Mountain Metro provides. This Council has a passion for mobility.

The city broke ground on the library expansion.

Alex Trefry is leaving. Natalie believes a new PIO has been hired. Alex said he would do an intro to staff if the new PIO is on board before he leaves.

D. CRANE Update

Audrey Gray is a professional, working artist and was named "Best Artist" by the Gazette for 2023. She has also worked at Adam's Mountain Café for 12 years. She is going around Manitou Springs introducing herself. CRANE went through a restructuring at the end of 2023. Their goals include installing 4 sculptures in 2024 downtown and one more piece in the URA.

CRANE is beginning the Creek Walk Mural project this year and planning to use the Chamber building as a demonstration project for the first mural. This will also be part of the exterior renovation of the building for the Chamber. Both the Art of the Avenue and the Creek Walk Mural were submitted for MACH grant funds so that won't be confirmed until March or April.

CRANE is also hoping to put together a "Lunch and Learn" program where they will provide lunch and invite galleries, business owners, artists & creatives to determine what gaps CRANE might be able to assist with.

Manitou Made will be going through a revamp this year as well. Audrey is hoping to put together a meeting of people involved in Manitou Made to discuss the program. Kat expressed interest in being involved in the meeting. Natalie mentioned Ken Cowdry to bring in – he was on Manitou Made, went to another ecommerce site, and then returned. The initial meeting could be those involved in the back end of the program and a second meeting for people who have used the service (merchants).

Murals were discussed as Natalie how existing murals would be included in the mural discussion. Murals could be added to Otocast. Kat also has a MACH grant application for a mural.

E. URA UPDATE

The URA is working on a communications plan. They have again hired Madwoman Marketing to assist. They are asking for monthly updates and will assign a liaison from their board to work closer with Madwoman.

The grocery store is off the table for the URA area. The height in the code doesn't work with all the hvac needed for a grocery store or at least the businesses they were speaking with. That board moved their meetings to Wednesday afternoons.

F. Action Item: Approval of November and December 2023 Meeting Minutes

April Hall made a motion to approve the minutes of the November and December Board of Directors meetings. Annie Schmitt seconded the motion, and it was approved.

G. Action Item: Approval of December Financial Statements

The expense for the building is over the budget as the deposit for the sign was not anticipated in the budget. Most of the expense for the marquee sign is being covered by what we received from the insurance company. Annie made a motion to approve the December Financial Statement as presented. Kat Kilner seconded the motion, and it was approved.

H. Action Item: Approval of the Slate of Officers for 2024

The slate of officers presented is Farley McDonough, President; Annie Schmitt, Vice President; April Hall, Treasurer; Kat Kilner, Member at Large. April made a motion to approve the slate of officers as presented. Annie seconded the motion, and it was approved.

I. Action Item: Authorization of signers on all Bank Accounts

The primary checking and savings accounts are at Pikes Peak National Bank, we also have a checking and savings account at Vectra Bank, and we have a CD at Independent Bank. When one of the small CDs matured at Chase Bank in November, Leslie cashed out that CD because of the low interest rate. The other small CD at Chase Bank was cashed in in January. The board needs to determine what to do with the funds from those two CDs and if the amount should be increased to \$10,000 and a new CD opened at either Ent or Riverstone Bank. Farley suggested Leslie and April meet and determine where those funds should go for the best rate. Both Jordan Ayers from Ent, and Mark Crespino, from Riverstone Bank have expressed interest in being more involved with Manitou Springs businesses. Annie made a motion to approve the current authorized signers to continue as the authorized signers (Farley McDonough, Annie Schmitt, April Hall and Leslie Lewis) on all of the Manitou Springs Chamber accounts. April seconded the motion, and it was approved.

J. Grant Application Update

Visit Manitou Springs was planning to apply for a grant through the CTO to assist with the costs of the Destination Management and Marketing Plan planned for design in 2024 and implementation in 2025. Farley and Leslie spoke with Natalie about assisting in writing the application. There was a meeting with the administrator of the grant who recommended we apply for the Destination Blueprint first. She suggested the grant process would be much more competitive for the Tourism Management Grant and there would probably be stronger applications and we probably would not be successful. She

thought the Destination Blueprint would be a better option with a much higher chance of success. It is anticipated the Destination Blueprint application process will open in April. There are communities currently going through the Destination Blueprint plan that we can reach out to for their insight. Woodland Park went through the program when it was done through ARPA funds under a different name. Leslie will reach out to both.

K. Sign Update

The Sign design has been approved by Manitou Springs Planning Department. It has now been submitted to Regional Building Department for their approval. Once that approval is received, Augie will meet with fabrication, and we will have a better timeline for completion.

L. Unscheduled Appearances

Amy Mogck, our social media manager, has turned in her resignation. In addition to social media, Amy has been creating our member and visitor newsletters. Calee Parker thinks she can take all of what Amy has been doing. Leslie is hesitant to put that much more on her plate. Natalie offered to assist in finding someone to take on the social media role to not have everything on one person. Leslie is planning to separate the member and visitor newsletters from the social media person. Calee has some good ideas for the member newsletter and Leslie thinks Monica would do a nice job with the visitor newsletter.

Leslie met with Neale Minch and expressed concern over how significantly lodging is down this year. The board discussed the changes that have happened within the lodging industry in Manitou Springs over the last several years. We have lost bed and breakfasts as well as cabin properties and motels in the last few years.

Leslie spoke with Councilor Shada regarding the changes in the plastic bag ban. He is sending all of the recent information to Jeff Parker and asking him to get clarification with the changes in the new year.

Jenna messaged and asked the Board for their thoughts on moving the summer concerts scheduled on Thursday nights to Friday nights. Some board members did not believe the drum circle and concerts attracted the same crowd, but others thought it was possible.

Chat with the Chamber will be Wednesday, February 21, 8:30 a.m. at Adams.

Natalie asked Annie to mention that they are using the Manitou Cares at the MAC for the refills. They are adding more refillables such as shampoo, conditioner, and things like that. Galvanized Recycling will be adding recycling stations. The first will be for plastic decking like Trex. He will also be adding plastic wraps and bags.

Having no additional business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.