

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

Board of Directors

**Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2024**

Present: April Hall, Kat Kilner, Farley McDonough, Lisa Quintana, Annie Schmitt, Denise Howell

Absent: Ted Johnston, Anthony Mogck

Guests: Angela Wilks

Staff: Jenna Gallas, Leslie Lewis, Monica Rozelle

A regular meeting of Visit Manitou Springs Board of Directors was held on Thursday, May 23, 2024, in the upstairs conference room at Venue 515. President Farley McDonough called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

The meeting began with the Introduction of Angela Wilks, co-owner of the Manitou Winery, which she and her husband, Eric, purchased from D’Vine Wines. She is interested in joining the board and filling one of the two vacancies the board currently has. In addition to working in the wine industry for 18 years, Angela also has a background in painting and fund raising for a non-profit.

A. Special Events Update

Jenna Gallas sent an updated Event Coordinator job description to the Board for their information and review.

Jenna is working on obtaining non-profit status for Carnivale to fully hand that event over to the volunteer group.

The Armadillo Ranch is hosting TIPS training on May 30th and has about 20 spots available for any business that has staff needing the training.

The Summer Concert series has been finalized and updated on the website. Concerts will be on Mondays and Fridays through August.

Wine Fest tickets are selling more quickly now with over 2,076 having been sold out of the 2500. There are 69 vendors signed up for the Wine Festival, including 4 new wineries and 8 new food and or gift vendors. There is \$16,500 committed in sponsorship.

ManiPalooza tickets are on sale. Jenna is continuing to onboard Sponsors and Vendors for the event.

The Brew Fest tickets are not selling very quickly, with only 150 sold so far.

30 years of Coffin Races! Groups can sign up via Eventeny and the shirt logo design contest is live until July 26th. A new sponsorship level was created for Pepsi – Diamond at \$7500. We are currently at \$7,800 in sponsorship so far. The Board agreed to allow a Brew Cup competition for different breweries/pubs/etc. to compete against each other in the races. The hope is to gain more local

involvement, as team numbers have been dropping each year.

The Day of Friendship is on July 27th and April Hall is working on the Pickleball Tournament. The Vintage Baseball game will be at 11 a.m. Kiwanis will again grill burgers and hotdogs and Visit Manitou Springs will serve ice cream.

B. City Update

Denise Howell shared that the city trams were discussed in the latest Council meeting with the route being decided upon. The two trams will switch off due to the limited battery capacity and will focus on downtown stops with the hope that the #33 bus can be used primarily by Cog Railway visitors and Manitou Incline hikers, as it fills up quickly. The hope is that they will begin running on June 1st, but there have been delays because the city is unable to use the contract drivers as anticipated and will need to hire bus drivers. The city is beginning to investigate a hybrid tram as a possible replacement for the electric trams due to the short battery life of the electric trams. Annie requested that more research be done before making that decision, as the electric trams haven't even begun running yet and they're discussing replacing them because of their limitations.

The Police department open house was successful.

The Citizen's Academy has started and is going well.

Moving forward, Denise is planning February meetings to go over shuttle maps with any changes needed prior to the summer season.

The Hiawatha Gardens Parking lot has been fully paved and re-stripped. A full, very comprehensive project update will take place at the City Council in the June 4 meeting. Denise is hoping to have a large article in the Bulletin the first week of June explaining the purpose, importance and public outreach of Plan Manitou. They are hoping to boost broader participation in the process.

Denise brought up concern about the congestion caused by different groups "cruising" through town at 10 mph or pulling over in the center lane and revving their engines, and the noise complaints received. She's looking for feedback from different businesses. The noise ordinances are nearly impossible to enforce.

The Dillon Motel demolition is still waiting on a storm water permit. The council's hope is to have that area finished by next summer.

C. CRANE Update

Jurors chose the artist for the Chamber building's mural and the 441 project. More information will be sent out to the Board once the artist submits designs, but the projects are on target to begin early summer. The next Cookies with CRANE will coincide with the 441 Mural reveal.

The MOU was signed by the City Council and they're working on one with the Chamber.

Farley updated everyone about the creative conference that she, Ralph, Audrey, Julia Wright, and Calee Parker attended in Pueblo in May. Audrey presented to 500 people about the MACH Tax and has spoken with neighboring towns that are interested in working toward a MACH Tax and others that are beginning their process to become a Creative District. Farley is hopeful that we might expand to have a whole circular Creative Circuit.

Farley brought a mock-up of the mini “Portable Deity” statue which will be used for the scavenger hunt, which will hopefully launch in June.

Angela asked about possibly being involved with CRANE as her background is in painting.

Denise received a message letting her know they will have two people working on weekends to help with beautification, including cleaning the restrooms. Annie mentioned that better bathrooms are needed in town. This may become a 2025 project in collaboration between the Chamber and the City.

Farley voiced the need for the Chamber and the City to set improving the public restrooms as a goal for 2025.

D. URA update

The MOU presented by the URA was denied by Council but will be coming back for discussion in July.

The URA Board is working on a Strategic Communication Plan and their website is being updated. It needs to be ADA compliant but it’s part of the city website, so they need to meet with the city to discuss ADA compliance.

Paragon has requested a meeting with City Planning regarding the La Fon property.

Mitchell, the City’s Public Information Officer, attended the URA meeting to discuss the possibility of planting more trees in the area, but the URA would like to see more of a plan before continuing the discussion.

There have been complaints that the lights along the URA corridor are too bright at night, but the city owns and maintains those lights so it’s up to them to switch out the bulbs or turn every other one off. Denise reported that they will be meeting with CSU on the lighting.

Annie Schmitt has been one of the volunteers involved with the pollination stations in the URA. Annie reported that 12 plants and 6 volunteers have been gathered to plant those stations. She’s working with Rick’s Nursery on the plants. June 1st was the original planting date, but it might be too soon, so Farley offered Adam’s as a short storage and staging area for the group. Denise suggested Annie reach out to Gillian Rossi, Parks & Recreation Director, to see they have extra soil.

Angela Wilks brought up concern about the gardens between the Spa Building and the bathrooms at Soda Springs Park. She stated that there’s a lot of dog crap in them, and Manitou Winery has been maintaining their side, but it’s getting to be too much. There’s also a tree that’s beginning to interfere with the retaining wall. Denise believes those gardens are part of the city and not the Spa Building, so she will investigate it.

E. Action Item: Approval of April Meeting Minutes

April Hall made a motion to approve the April Meeting Minutes as presented. Annie seconded the motion, and it was approved.

F. Action Item: Approval of Aril Financial Statements

April reported revenue is coming in from the City and the special events revenue and our expenses are low though some marketing expenses came in in April but are in a strong financial position. One of the additional expenses that was paid was the fence around the patio at the Chamber building. Leslie picked up CD rates from Ent but still needs to set up a meeting at Riverstone because they

currently have the best rates showing on their street banner. A motion was made by Annie to approve the financials as presented. Lisa Quintana seconded the motion, and it was approved.

G. Action Item: Approval of New & Renewing Member Applications

Discovery Maps of Colorado Springs is the new member with a trade membership. In exchange for their membership and distributing their map in the office, we received an ad space on the map. The map does have a few issues that should be corrected prior to the next printing such as the Cliff House building missing from it. Annie read the list of Renewing members for those that didn't have it. April made a motion to approve the new and renewing members. Annie seconded the motion, and it was approved.

New Business

H. 2024 Visitors Guide Cover

Last year we struggled to get artists to submit their artwork for the Visitors Guide Cover. They must work or live in Manitou to be considered a local artist for the guide. Farley would like CRANE to handle the "Call for Artist" We will need to write very detailed guidelines and requirements such as the artist must live or work in Manitou Springs to be considered for the cover. Artists should be reminded that photography as well as original paintings could be the cover piece. The Board will have the final vote to approve the artwork chosen.

Old Business

I. Discussion: Council Work Session Input

The memo for the June 11th work session must be sent to Denise by June 5th at noon. We will be presenting a portion of the Strategic Plan. Board members were asked to go back through the Strategic Plan that Natalie had presented to the Board and send feedback. They were also asked to attend the work session if possible and plan for up to an hour.

J. Destination Blueprint Update

We have the application for the grant. Leslie, Farley, Annie, Jenna and Natalie are working on the narrative. The plan is to submit it by the first of June. Annie, Farley, Natalie, Jenna, PK, and Leslie will be part of the working team if our application is accepted, which we will find out in July. There will be one community work session that the entire board would be expected to attend.

K. Lodging Meeting Update

On May 30th half a dozen of the lodging properties were represented at the meeting at the Cliff House to discuss issues, concerns, changes to be made, etc. for how to improve the lodging statistics. The shuttle system came up a few times, with the concern mainly being about the #36 shuttle map being partially incorrect (it's already been updated, and Leslie will laminate copies for properties) and wanting the #36 shuttle to be year-round as well as having an extended route because guests frequently complain about parking in downtown. They would like to give the option to remain parked at the property and use the shuttle. There was also concern about how Google brings up Colorado Springs lodging options when you search for Manitou Springs, but not vice versa. Another meeting will take place at the end of the summer (date and location TBD) to discuss how the peak season went.

L. Unscheduled Appearances

Pride Fest – Kat Kilner thanked the Chamber for the support she has received, including getting all paperwork submitted on time. The event is Saturday, June 29th with a parade at 10am down Manitou Ave, followed by the Pride Festival in Soda Springs Park from 11am – 6pm. The Chamber will reach out to businesses with information regarding a window decorating contest with the winning business receiving ACE gift cards.

Chamber Building Update – The new fence is up around the patio. Brandon suggested letting the wood age for a month prior to staining. Leslie still needs to order an ADA compliant picnic table. Brandon will build a wooden screen to hide the dumpsters, both from the street and the creek walk trail. The new cork board will be put onto the East side of the building.

The additional street pole banners needed to cover gateway-to-gateway will be paid by the URA and CRANE. The new banners are being printed and will arrive any day. Next week the city will take down the Senior banners and these banners will go up.

Meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.