

Visit Manitou Springs

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: April 24, 2025

Present: Christopher Dwyer, April Hall, Farley McDonough, Rachel Milar, Annie Schmitt, Denise Howell, Natalie Johnson

Absent: Ted Johnson and Angela Wilks

Guests: Commander Sevene

Staff: Jenna Gallas, Leslie Lewis, Monica Rozelle

A regular meeting of the Visit Manitou Springs Board of Directors was held on Thursday, April 24, 2025, in the upstairs conference room of 515 Manitou Ave. The meeting was called to order at 8:33 am by President April Hall.

A. City Update.

Denise Howell reported that a sidewalk cleanup will take place sometime soon, but the date is currently unknown. The city is working with CRANE to get the old Chase Bank building painted before Memorial Weekend. The Dillon Parking Lot is coming along, and parking should be allowed by June 1st. However, the #33 Shuttle will not be picking up from the Dillon until Fall. People may need to take the #36 and then transfer to the #33 for the Cog Railway and Manitou Incline but those details have not yet been worked out. The Hiawatha Gardens Parking Lot project is expected to begin in October. The Creek Walk project will begin the day after Labor Day and be completed by Coffin Races. The Day of Friendship event will not be taking place due to city budget cuts.

B. Police Update

Commander Sevene reported that the Police Department is continuing research on speed cameras and getting quotes from different companies. Officers are conducting Sunday walking patrols from 1-5pm. An arrest was made on the graffiti vandalism. A kiosk at Barr Trail was damaged over the weekend, causing \$10,000 in damage. Two sexual assault predators were recently arrested in town. One of the officers has been promoted to detective. Officer Johnson is now the School Resource Officer and will be going to the schools. Officers are currently focusing on click-it-or-ticket laws during the daytime and DUIs at night. Officer Perkins has completed his training and Officer Hutchinson's training will end on May 8th. There are still 2 openings to fill within the police department.

C. Events Update

Jenna Gallas updated the Board on Wine Walk, which took place on April 10th. We sold 45 tickets. Proceeds are then shared with the businesses that are involved. This was lower attendance than previous years. Farley mentioned that wine sales are down 23% across the country. It may be worth looking into a cocktail/mocktail trail event instead, or in addition next year. ManiPalooza/Silent Disco will not be taking place this year.

The Annual Meeting takes place on April 30th from 5-7pm at Garden of the Gods Trading Post. Beth from Destination Blueprint has created an agenda and a presentation for the meeting.

Wine Festival tickets are still going steady but are lower than last year. So far Jenna has received \$16,000 in sponsorship commitments for the Wine Festival.

The Coffin Races applications for the racers, sponsors, and volunteers are all live and the T-shirt design contest will begin in May. Jenna is speaking with a tequila company about coming in at a higher sponsor level.

We're looking at purchasing a branded canopy for events, whether they're our events or not. It is \$1,200 but high quality and should last for years. The money would be pulled out of the Events budget. Motion to purchase the blue canopy was made by Farley McDonough and seconded by Annie Schmitt. The motion was approved.

Jenna connected with Moni who has Viva Digital which markets directly to the Hispanic market through Telemundo and organizes the Fiestas Patrias event which draws 40,000 – 50,000 people. They would like to be involved in Manitou Springs. Moni will be invited to attend next month's Board meeting with a presentation.

Leslie Lewis discussed the upcoming Annual Meeting. All Manitou Springs businesses, Chamber partners outside of Manitou Springs, City Council, City Employees, and residents are being invited to attend.

D. CRANE Update

Farley McDonough updated everyone on Audrey Gray's medical leave. She is recovering well and will begin working from home soon. She will have restrictions for 6 weeks. There are currently 4 different calls for artists out. If anyone knows artists, have them apply through the website. CRANE is looking to expand the art at Fields Park by adding art to the other sides of the signs installed. However, Fields Park was heavily vandalized two weeks ago, with those signs being damaged and thrown into the creek. They're prints, so it won't be extremely expensive to replace them, but it's still costly. There's also a call out for storytellers as a partnership with Loft Espresso for their phone booth, so they're looking for Manitou related stories. The painter working on the old Chase Bank building has been hired, so that work will begin shortly. Audrey will begin painting the remainder of the wooden ducks while she is on medical restrictions.

Farley also updated the board on the Manitou Made Launchpad. They have received 9 applications from businesses with 4 or 5 looking good. The MAC is figuring out configuration in the building to see what size businesses and how many are able to fit. The MAC needs to make \$1,500 off of the space a month and the businesses must staff their space during all open hours. The MAC also received a \$40,000 grant to update all doors to be ADA compliant.

Action Items:

E. Approval of March Meeting Minutes

The motion for approval of the meeting minutes as presented was made by Farley and seconded by Chris Dwyer. The motion was approved.

F. Approval of March Financial Statement

Leslie reported the financial update for March. Sponsors and tickets for the wine fest are coming in. Under expenses, the \$290,000 for marketing includes brochure distribution through PPRA and Certified Folder Distribution and the purchase of the Visitors Guides. Motion to approve the March financials was

made by Chris Dwyer and seconded by Annie Schmitt. The motion was approved.

G. Approval of New and Renewing Member Applications

The Rockey Art Museum is joining as a new member as part of a trade for using a Rockey painting as the cover of the Visitors Guide. Carnivale nonprofit also filed a new member application. Renewals were received from Adams Mountain Café, Flowers and the Moon, Goldfield Campground, Mariposa Cabins and the Red Wing Motel. Motion to approve new and renewing members made by Farley and seconded by Rache Milar and was approved.

New Business

H. Handbook Policy Changes

Leslie and Jenna reached out to Visit CoS and PPRA for their handbooks to compare with ours. Our sick day policy does match up with the FAMLI leave. Visit CoS has more vacation and sick leave than we offer, but they also have more employees who can cover shifts. It was recommended that we allow new employees to use their 10 days of vacation time within the first year, after a trial period, rather than make them wait until their second year. There was discussion of adding a jury duty policy, military leave and increasing bereavement leave from 3 to 5 days. Farley proposed staff work on the handbook and bring it back to the Board for approval.

Old Business

I. Gateway Sign Design

Farley and Leslie met with CDOT and Roy to go over the Gateway Sign regulations. CDOT will allow us to install the new sign with no issues. Next Monday, Farley, Leslie, and Jenna will meet with the Sign Shop about getting a new design made. Once the top designs are chosen, we will go to the residents for public vote and then to City Council with the chosen design. The Chamber will need approval and a resolution from City Council to go to CDOT once a design is chosen. The Chamber currently has \$57,000 to go towards the sign. Staff will apply for a marketing grant from the state and depending on cost, do fundraising and reach out to the URA for financial support. April recommended doing a petition and gathering signatures from residents to show local support to City Council.

J. Board Openings

There are still 2 Board openings. Annie will email Jen Barrow and Katie Snyder. Mike Casey should be contacted because he's a service business and he's on the HPC. April will create a Google spreadsheet and send it to Board members for everyone to add in their suggestions.

Having no additional business before the board, Farley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by April at 10:37 am.