

Visit Manitou Springs

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: August 28, 2025

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

Absent: Ted Johnston, Angela Wilks

Guests: None

Staff: Monica Rozelle, Jesse McCoy, Jenna Wells

A regular meeting of the Visit Manitou Springs Board of Directors was held on Thursday, **August 28, 2025, 515 Manitou Ave.** The meeting was called to order at **8:30am** by **President April Hall**.

A. CRANE Update: Farley McDonough said that the Call for Artists to do a sculpture at the Dillon Mobility Hub has already received 22 good options and that call will soon within 2-3 weeks. Art on the Avenue is fully installed, but they're still waiting for D11 to print the Fields Park signs. There's a retreat on September 20th. Cookies with CRANE at the Elementary School was well attended.

B. City Update: Natalie informed the Board that the Creek Walk Phase 4 will begin soon. The roof at the Pool and Fitness Center is currently being replaced and the building is due to be closed until January. Creek Walk completed by using grant money already in place. The quick fix that CDOT completed to help with the erosion off of Highway 24 is already gone. Excise tax ballot measure question was mentioned, there is no plan B other than using reserves if Ballot does not pass. Have not filled open positions, some staff filling more than 1 role, other funding options being looked at and adjustments can be made to lower the proposed 14% excise tax in future if it passes. Jenna mentioned that the League of Women's Voters and the Cliff House are both confirmed for a forum to take place on October 9th. It was decided that even with 5 candidates, we will move forward with the forum because even though some are running unopposed, it's a good opportunity for the public to ask questions.

C. Marketing Update: Jesse McCoy gave the Board a marketing update starting with Viva Digital's August ad is currently running with September's ad submitted and October's ad is currently being worked on. Jesse will receive the analytics for these ads so that we can monitor them and see if it's worth advertising with Viva Digital. The social media videos for Forkin Friday are doing really well with a large uptick of views, likes, and other participation. The Peak Radar Calendar of Events is nearly ready to go live. The writers for Westword will be in town on October 7th and 8th and so far Adam's Mountain Café, the Keg Bar and Grill, E-Bike Tours and Rentals, and Keithley Pines Historic Cabins and others are all on board to comp meals/lodging/and tours. A big thank you to everyone who helped with Westword. Jesse recommends that we updated content for Pikes Peak Region Attractions ads that they have running, as some of them are outdated and have been running for a year or so. Overall, analytics are up across the board except for website visits. Chamber newsletters have increase in clicks and opens for both members and visitors. Jesse is taking a class on SEO management which will help him implement

wording to guide people to our website. The Marketing Task Force meeting in August had 18 people in attendance with lots of great conversations and interactions.

D. Denise City Update: Denise Howell arrived late and added onto the City Update that Natalie had begun. Paving and Creek Walk Phase 4 both begin on September 8th. Manitou Avenue near the Keg and near Crystal Park will be worked on as well, could cause some disruption. Lovers Lane will remain closed for a safety check after the landslide. Rachel Milar asked for better communication from the city regarding construction and how delivery drivers can work around those areas.

E. Event Updates: Jenna let the Board know that we will alternate between Jesse with Marketing updates and Hallie with Event updates every other month. Commonwheel this upcoming weekend, MSFD Open House on Saturday, Skeleton Craze signups will open on September 1st, so get your businesses ready. Day of Friendship takes place on September 10th at Soda Springs Park. On September 14th is the Fiestas Patrias and Jesse will be attending with our booth with information and giveaways as a result of VIVA Digital Partnership. He will be relieved partway through the day by Jenna, Annie, and Doug. September 27th is the Creek Week Cleanup. On October 9th we will have the Candidates Forum at the Cliff House at 5:30, and an RSVP will be sent out so that we can have an estimation on attendance. The Board Retreat will take place on October 30th from 8:30am – 3:30pm with a location still needed. This will act as the Board Meeting for October. The upcoming Marketing Meetings will be held on September 15th and October 20th at 2pm. October 28th is the budget meeting with city council and they will need everything submitted to them the week prior.

Action Items:

F. Approval of July Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve July minutes made by Farley and seconded by Annie. Motion passes.

G. Approval of July Financial Statement: Farley gave an update on finances and will be keeping an eye on special events. Jenna mentioned the Emma Crawford Coffin Races sponsor numbers are currently down compared to previous years with past sponsors not returning. Last year sponsors brought in \$33,000 for the Coffin Races and we're currently at 10% of that. In order to offset this downside, we may need to raise the cost of the shuttles. The merchandise will bring in its own money but we might need to dip into the Wine Festival to pay for the Coffin Races this year. Coffin Building Class ongoing at MAC on weekends in September, VMS will have branded coffin to use for promotion as result of this partnership. Motion to approve July financials made by Chris Dwyer and seconded by Rachel. Motion passed.

New Business

H. Lodging Website Adjustments: We are looking to create a new page on our website for lodging properties located within Manitou Springs only so that it can be linked directly to the City's website. The link will be for the City to send out to people who have created a reservation for the Manitou Incline. This created a discussion about whether we should have a "mini membership" for non-members who will be listed on that page.

I. Staff Retreat: On November 12th the Visit Manitou Springs staff will have a retreat which will be attending by Meera, Jenna's mentor. The plan is to go to an attraction, most likely the Wolf and Wildlife Center in Florissant, and then have lunch at possibly Wines of Colorado. During lunch we will have our

workshop. Jenna is asking for up to \$500 to plan the retreat. Farley suggested looking for a sponsor, and will find where to add a line item of where to pull funds from. No one is opposed if funding can be found. A vote will be held in September to approve the funds.

J. Governor's Conference: This year Gov Con takes place in Colorado Springs at Hotel Polaris the week leading up to the Coffin Races. Jenna and Annie will be attending for the week, and Monica is enrolled in the Visitor Services Summit (free) on Tuesday from 1-5pm. Monica will be receiving a Frontline Tourism Worker award on October 23rd at the Awards Dinner and received a free night stay at Hotel Polaris for winning. Jenna will ask CTO if \$100 discount for Monica to attend Gov Con can be forwarded to Annie's registration fee.

K. Visit Colorado Springs Awards Ceremony: This event takes place on Thursday, September 11th at the Garden of the Gods Resort. The cost is \$110 a person and 3 people will be attending on our behalf.

Old Business

L. Navigation Sign Update: Jesse mocked up 2 more options for signage in downtown Manitou Springs. The solid color background makes more sense for longevity. We will plan on replacing the existing signage and work with the City about adding a sign near Soda Springs Park to alert people to more shops/services. Motion to approve changing 4 signs that are currently already up made by Annie and seconded by Farley. Motion passed.

M. Highway Sign Update: Farley pointed out that we were to mock up 2 different styles of signs – one with our logo and one with the City's in case they don't approve of our logo being on the highway. Edits were recommended for the current mock ups that Jesse made. One of the sides of the sign could be the town clock with reflective gold in the clock face and could just say "Welcome to Manitou Springs" in our font. Clock face should have an arm on "10" and "2".

N. New Members: Modern Woodmen of America with Jayde Edmundson is the new member for this month. Jenna is continuing discussions with the Penny Arcade. Motion to approve new members made by Farley and seconded by Annie. Motion Passed.

O. Volunteer Hours: Jenna wrote down all volunteer hours from the Board of Directors.

Having no additional business before the board, **Farley** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by **Chris** at **10:11am**.

The Board then entered into Executive Session at **10:11 am**

The Executive Session concluded at **10:41 am**. No formal action was taken during Executive Session.