

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
September 29, 2009 – Aspen Square**

**Call to order:** ACRA Chairman Warren Klug called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

**Attendance:** Those present were John Speers, Cristal Logan, Bobbie Burkley, Nina Eisenstat, Carol Hood, Mike Owsley, Dale Paas, David Perry, Helen Klanderud, Bill Tomcich, Brad Jasicki, Stan Clauson, Adam Fortier and Mick Ireland  
**Absent:** Charlie Bantis, Jeanette Darnauer, Casandra Foister, Laura Smith, Susan Hamley, Dave Ressler, Diana Sirko, Jeff Gorsuch, Don Sheeley, Bryan Nelson and Steve Fante

**Approval of the August 25, 2009 minutes:** The board unanimously approved the August 25, 2009 minutes.

**Presentations:**

Cindy Kahn, director, Aspen Education Foundation provided information on the fundraising AEF does to support our public schools.

Auden Schendler, Aspen Skiing Company, discussed the pros for Ballot 1A – a program that will offer low-interest loans to property owners for energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades. The Board reported on comments received from their constituents. A motion to endorse the ballot was unanimously approved.

**Chair's Comments:** Warren Klug reported that booking patterns have changed and it is difficult to compare to past years occupancy as visitors are booking last minute. Business this winter is still unknown. He also provided an update on the LMD campaign. The first mailing has been sent out and the personalized committee letter will be sent out to members in the next few days. Aspen Square will host two open houses for the LMD. Wednesday October 14<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> from 5-7:00 p.m. All are invited to attend. Ads will be created with all board members' names included in support of the ballot question.

**President's comments:** Debbie provided an update on the Lift One COWOP. The project developer is in bankruptcy but the COWOP is still progressing. They expect to receive architectural drawings next week for review. The finance report was sent out via email. The finance committee is meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup>. One issue to be discussed is changing the Chamber's fiscal year to match the calendar year to coincide with the DM, Aspen Groups and Airport budgets. The by-laws will need to change. The heating system at ACRA's office is broken and a capital request will be made to fix it. Jeanette Darnauer has agreed to chair the member services committee. Dorothy Frommer attended a 3 ½ day quality service workshop at Disney Institute and gained valuable information that will be incorporated into the Faces of Aspen program.

**Old Business:** John Speers indicated that Craig Cannon from Spinfest was working to change the dates of his event but that John notified Craig that ACRA Board would not be collectively supporting the event.

**Directors Comments:** Helen Klanderud – The public affairs committee has not met but were polled on ballot question. Helen and Debbie are attending a one day summit on advocacy on October 8th in Golden. Helen remarked on the success of Aspen Filmfest which is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and recommended the performance of To Kill A Mockingbird presented by Aspen Writers Foundation. David Perry reported that this will be a big snow year but we will have to work hard to hit last year's numbers. The first part of the winter will be more difficult but the second half should pick up. Carol Hood – median home prices are down 18% but the market is seeing some improvements recently. Bill Tomcich pulled out his crystal ball and reported that there is more uncertainty in the market than he has seen in 20 years. On a positive note, Labor Day weekend occupancy for Aspen/Snowmass is over 80% and still waiting final occupancy numbers. This was the biggest weekend since X-Games in January. Advance bookings for winter are soft, but think the majority of bookings will happen after the snow falls as people are waiting to book and shopping aggressively. SAS is reporting record visits to their website but are not closing as much business as possible and have created two new initiatives - the low price promise (matching price with competitors) and customer care commitment. Michael Owsley – Starting new budget cycle which will be difficult with sales tax down 17%. County will need to make some difficult sacrifices. Mick Ireland – Busy budget cycle ahead. City is posting an RFP for marketing ideas in Aspen – there is 200k in supplemental funding available. City has had to lay off 24 people to date. One of the biggest budget challenges is healthcare options for employees. Traffic counts are up in town but people are spending less money. Citizens are suffering due to property tax assessments. City has to re-orient itself to a post-boom economy. Dale Pass – Limelight lodge also seeing a short booking window. Brad J – Labor Day sales were very positive. Adam Fortier – Future in uncertain, it is taking time for banks to work through toxic assets but may be seeing the bottom. Cristal Logan – non profits are meeting every month and all have been positive about their summer programs. JAS had successful June and Labor Day festivals. The Aspen Art Museum had a successful ArtCrush event and the Tomeselli exhibit continues. The art museum is seeing more contributions since the museum is always free. Theatre Aspen sales are up 20%. Aspen Filmfest is Wednesday through Sunday. Stan Clauson returned from a trip to Chicago where he reported that the cultural initiatives are successful in attracting visitors.

**Adjournment:** 10:40 a.m.