

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
July 26th, 2016**

Call to order: Donnie Lee called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

Attendance: Present: Donnie Lee, Debbie Braun, Cristal Logan, Charlie Bantis, Corey Enloe, Riley Tippet, Warren Klug, Nina Eisenstat, Lisa LeMay, Andrew Ernemann, Steve Skadron, Kenny Smith, Bill Tomcich, Jeff Bay, John Maloy, Simon Chen, and Jeanette Darnauer. Absent: Beth Mobilian, Michael Owsley, Maria Morrow, Laura Smith, David Perry, Rose Abello, Terry Collins, Heather Steenge-Hart and Tim Perry. Staff present: Nicole Heronemus, Erik Klanderud, Julia Theisen, Jennifer Carney, Sarah Reynolds and Susan Bantis.

Approval of prior meeting minutes: The board unanimously approved the June 28th minutes.

Presentation: DASH – Mary Barbour

DASH, Drivers Assisting Seniors for Health, is a collaborative effort between Pitkin County Senior Services and Eagle County Healthy Aging. It was developed to allow people to live safely and independently as long as possible. Public transportation and family members are not always available leaving our elders in the valley unable to get to doctor appointments, grocery stores and social outings. In 1990 there were fewer people over the age of 60 in Pitkin County, and in 2040 there will be over 6,000, an increase from 7% – 20%. DASH is continuing its outreach for more volunteers. The requirements for volunteers include an age requirement of 18 or older, passing a background check and providing proof of insurance on the vehicle being used.

Jeff Bay: A lot of the lodges in town have shuttles that could be used for short in-town trips.

Presentation: John Peacock and Kara Silbernagel– Pitkin County Broadband Initiative

Pitkin County is working on expanding broadband services in both rural and urban areas. Broadband is defined as high speed internet with 25MB per second download speed and a 3MB per second upload speed. These speeds cannot be achieved through satellite or dial-up services. Broadband is an essential part of 21st century infrastructure and critical to long term reliability in Pitkin County. A phased approach is key, using hybrid fiber optic and wireless technology. We will be rebuilding all of the mountain top sites for radio and TV towers to try to combine them all together with broadband. There are two missing pieces coming up for the project. The first is the need for “meet me points” which are defined as connect points of fiber optic cables, that will require a public vote in Aspen and Basalt to authorize the government to create. There will be support needed in those upcoming elections. The second need will be further outreach to other communities to put small towers in their areas. Pitkin County is not going to bill residents for these broadband services but will charge a fee to business averaging around \$65 a month. The success of this initiative will require political support and understanding from the community.

Andrew Ernemann: Who will the providers be for the internet?

Kara Silbernagel: It could include smaller companies such as Rise Broadband and Cedar Networks.

Charlie Bantis: Are Eagle and Garfield counties involved?

John Peacock: Not at this point although Garfield County has initiated a study. We will be approaching both counties to potentially partner with them.

Jeff Bay: Anywhere I have cell service I can achieve the upload and download speeds. Why can't we increase cell service to achieve this?

John Peacock: This initiative will do just that as those cell towers do connect into broadband. This initiative will provide framework for a cell carrier to come in and be able to build more towers.

Kenny Smith: What's the time frame for completion?

John Peacock: We're aiming for 3 years which may be in tandem with the partnerships with the private sectors.

Lisa LeMay: What is your presentation going to be to get voters to overlook putting towers on top of mountains?

John Peacock: That will be another round of negotiations. Existing sites will be used, for example, we are building an 80 foot tower where a 40 foot tower already exists.

Bill Tomcich: Are you going to work on the Frying Pan area?

John Peacock: Yes, we will be working with Eagle County.

Warren Klug: Can we ask you for a quick airport update?

John Peacock: There is a lot going on at the airport as we currently in the environmental assessment phase. In September we will be bringing our community input committee to look at the preliminary mass studies and design concepts for the terminal. We will have the draft out in February or March. Ground breaking on the new terminal is estimated to be 3-5 years out.

Debbie Braun: Our guest services staff at the airport are receiving a lot of complaints about not being able to get refreshments and food now that the restaurant is beyond the security point. Are you looking at a new restaurant vendor or providing an alternative in the terminal?

John Peacock: Yes, we're trying to address that concern.

Steve Skadron: Thank you and Pitkin County for addressing the airport issues. Are you looking at the volume and intensity of the digital advertising at the airport?

John Peacock: There were a lot of infrastructure problems with the advertising at the airport. The digital advertising is addressing some of those problems we had such as maintenance, volume opportunities and keeping the advertising fresh. We are in a long term contract however when it is up we will look at it again. We are hoping to display local artists' work again. I have received comments both ways, people either love it or hate it.

Chair's comments: We are at the halfway point for the summer season. The rest of the season continues to look strong. My observation is that when there is plenty of food in the high country we have no wildlife issues, although we've had a lot of bear activity around The Gant this season.

President's Comments: Thank you to the ACRA special events team. We had our final summer event last weekend, the Aspen Arts Festival. There was a lot of traffic and a lot of that traffic drives into the restaurants and galleries. Membership is picking up the event torch, please find in front of you the invite for the Afternoon Blend on August 18th which will be held at Bumps this year. I appreciate your attendance at this event as Board members. On August 10th at Mi Chola we are putting on an event as a kick off to the Olympics. We ordered USA team merchandise to give away at that event. We are starting a local marketing effort talking about Aspen Tourism with the punchline of "This is no place for a ghost town." We are scheduling a Finance Committee Meeting in August to look at the 2nd quarter. The Basalt Chamber reached out to me and asked if I could consult with them on strategic planning and bylaws. This falls in line with one of our goals in the 2016 Program of Work to reach out to other chambers in the valley. The City is making no movement on the City Hall project so at this time we are staying in our location until the lease expires in October 2017.

Public Affairs Committee: Please refer to the attached minutes. Maria and Donnie with the help of Michael Miracle wrote a letter to the EOTC in support of the traffic cell data study to find out where the ridership is coming from. We will be able to start capturing cell data of who is riding and where they are going. We are hoping to find out where people are going once they are in town. Is the traffic really from tourists or workers and homeowners?

Member Services Committee: The committee discussed two main topics, the increased parking rates and the Business of the Year awards. We asked committee members to get some anecdotal evidence on parking with the increased rates and open spaces. The feedback from visitors was that it didn't really matter because they didn't know any different. Employees mentioned that it is forcing them to use RFTA, We-Cycle and other forms of transportation. We also heard that there is still congestion around 6 p.m. to find parking for dinner. Visitors are saying they are really excited about all of the options for transportation available in Aspen.

In the past we've had so many applicants that we want to win for the Business of the Year Award. We looked into Platinum Service Awards which is a program where you are not put up against other businesses but rather yourself. You have secret shoppers that rate your business and if you exceed you get an award at the end of the year. There are multiple categories for this award. We are forming a wish list for what we what this award to look like. How do we create something that recognizes people for bringing a level of service to Aspen that defies ordinary and creates an environment for Aspen to thrive?

Debbie Braun: Maria suggested a possible mobility award for businesses that are working hard to address that challenge.

Old Business: none.

New Business: none.

Director's Comments

Andrew Ernemann: N/A

Beth Mobilian: absent.

Bill Tomcich: June set an all-time record of 65% occupancy which is 13% higher than last year. July last year was 82% which is the highest ever achieved in any season and year. I don't know how much further we can grow beyond that. We are seeing the paid occupancy for August ahead 17% from last year and September is 28% ahead. I believe additional airline capacities have assisted those efforts. A recent study showed that one other resort is higher in occupancy than Aspen, out of 12 that were included. The first quarter data came out and an interesting trend was the decrease in the average fare cost out of the Aspen airport. Los Angeles is still our number one market with New York being our second with a 31% increase. White Plains saw a 49% increase of passengers into Aspen. Philadelphia and Charlotte also had big increases this year. Pleased to announce that we have more service coming for this winter season. Delta, in conjunction with a significant expansion of the Los Angeles hub, will be extending their service to Aspen. We are the first resort to have all three airlines connected with Los Angeles. Delta is also resuming their nonstop service from Salt Lake City for the winter season.

Charlie Bantis: Debbie, can we try to have data at the next meeting on how we stack up against competitive resorts? I see a lot of traffic but more parking available from our office location above Peaches. One month from today we are moving to our new permanent office at the Jerome Professional Building.

Corey Enloe: Medical tourism, the travel of people to another area for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment, is an industry valued around \$429 billion dollars. The hospital is doing great things that this community can benefit from.

Cristal Logan: We have tons of events coming up. Aspen Security Forum starts tomorrow which is sold out. There are still some tickets available for evening public events. We had a great launch forum on transportation and mobility. Walter Isaccson was interviewed about the Russian hacking scandal on TV.

David Perry: absent.

Heather Steenge-Hart: absent.

Jeanette Darnauer: The Aspen Music Festival has been phenomenal. I continue to hear talk about the parking and traffic. I try not to drive much anymore as it seems like there is always traffic on the way out of town no matter the time of day.

Jeff Bay: We're as busy as everyone else with record numbers compared to last year. Our winter numbers are flat as of right now. The biggest feedback we are receiving is how expensive Aspen is to visit. People love Aspen but they are commenting that they may not be able to afford to come back. We are picking up a 4th hotel in Ketchum, Idaho.

John Maloy: If you have school aged children and you've run out of activities for them, school is only 4 weeks away!

Jeanette Darnauer: Is your Vice Principal issue stemming from housing?

John Maloy: Housing is an increasing challenge for us.

Kenny Smith: Very busy summer for us. The parking rate increases seems to be working as I have noticed a few more open parking spots on our street.

Laura Smith: absent.

Lisa LeMay: We've seen an amazing amount of people coming from Eastern Europe. I encourage everyone to keep plugging away, we still have a lot of summer and fall left. Our numbers have been constant with no decrease during the weekdays.

Maria Morrow: absent.

Michael Owsley: absent.

Nina Eisenstat: It's great that we continue our focus on transportation and parking. Let's make sure that there is a level of coordination among our committees so that there isn't a duplication of efforts on these important issues. I'm also a little concerned about the visitor experience on some of our trails. I've seen some potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

Jeanette Darnauer: I would suggest reaching out to the Parks & Open Space regarding your concerns with the trails.

Riley Tippet: N/A

Rose Abello: absent.

Simon Chen: It's amazing how busy town is and this year is blowing away last year's record. We're seeing numbers that we usually see in the spring and winter months during this summer season. Looking forward to winter as it's pacing ahead compared to last winter already. On August 25th we are having a BBQ cook-off at the Ajax Tavern from 6-9 p.m. and all profits are going to the Aspen Homeless Shelter. Cost of a ticket is \$95 including food and beverage.

Steve Skadron: N/A

Terry Collins: absent.

Tim Perry: absent.

Warren Klug: It's been a busy summer with a great June and July. I think it's great how busy Aspen is right now. The Aspen Music Festival is having an amazing season so far. We always ask the Aspen Music Festival to extend the season and this year they did! The Downtowner has been delightful for our guests as we do not have a shuttle for the Aspen Square.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.