

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

Call to order: Warren Klug called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

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

Welcome of new Board Directors Andrew Ernemann and Jeff Bay.

Approval of prior meeting minutes: The board unanimously approved the November minutes.

Nominating Committee Update: A motion was made and seconded to approve the at-large seats. Motion carried. A motion was made and seconded to approve the officers. Motion carried.

World Cup – John Rigney Presentation:

John Rigney presented an update of the World Cup Finals which will be hosted in Aspen March 13-19 of 2017. There will be a total of nine races spread out over 5 days with the top 30 ranked racers awarded Globe Awards. Live coverage of the World Cup is watched by an estimated 5-10 million people from around the world. The amount of volunteers needed will double from previous years to about 500 volunteers who will work for 3-7 days. Promotion material and marketing kits will be rolled out by this summer to help business get involved. It is unknown at this time whether or not the Glenwood Springs Grand Avenue bridge project will affect the event, however they are projecting a higher attendance record than when Vail last hosted the Finals.

XGAMES 15th Year in Aspen! New (back!) this year will be Skier Cross, SMB Freestyle and an Enhanced spectator village. SMB Speed & Style, Hill Cross and Long Jump are gone this year. Coverage of the event will be done by ABC and ESPN as well as social media. Music performances will include Run the Jewels, Twenty One Pilots, DJ Snake, Kygo, Nas and Deadmau5. There are 3 years remaining on the contract for XGames in Aspen.

Chair's comments: We're having a great winter. Australian visitor counts are down but they are here and having a great time.

President's comments: Happy 2016! Congratulations on a successful Wintersköl and to Bill Tomcich for his award at the Wintersköl Dinner. ACRA's contract with the Airport has been extended for another year and funding has been increased. ACRA will be reconstituting the committees and finalizing the chairs of those committees in the coming weeks. In a work session with City Council on March 7th, an update will be provided on the City facilities master plan. ACRA needs to find a new location for the next 5 years and as it is proving difficult to find a large enough space for all of the staff, we may have to split up the departments into separate locations. Maria, Charlie and Andrew and I are looking at numbers and options before that work session. Ultimately we hope to land in the Armory building in 5 years.

Old Business – Program of Work 2016: Thank you to everyone for the November 17th retreat. The Executive Committee got back together and decided on the new vision statement, "Create an atmosphere for Aspen to thrive." We will reconvene this fall to redo the mission.

Comments on the Program of Work:

Steve: I love it. It is clearly understood and obtainable.

Riley: I think the "thrive" piece will be a bit of a moving target and who we represent. We represent the business community so I think the vision statement allows us to know.

Steve: Is it ACRA's job to listen to the business community or the members of the Chamber?

Riley: We're trying to increase our members and there is a portion of the business community that isn't involved already so I believe there is room for more involvement with those businesses' to bring them into the conversation.

Cristal: Thrive is to represent sustainability more than growth.

Steve: There needs to be a coordinated and focused letter writing campaign in a positive way that pushes back at the negative voices that are attacking the livelihood of this community. Perhaps this can fall into the Public Affairs Committee work.

Bill: The definition of Thrive is "To prosper, be fortunate or successful."

Steve Skadron: I am asking for the Chamber's help to start pushing back against the dark and negative voices in the community.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Program of Work 2016. Motion carried.

New Business – RTA Property Tax Extension: ACRA was approached by RFTA to sign the RTA Property Tax Extension letter. On February 10th the legislation in Denver is voting on a regional transportation tax. RFTA is seeking an amendment to the RTA Law that would extend the 5 mill property tax authorization to January 1, 2019.

A motion was made and seconded to provide letter of support. Motion carried.

Directors' Comments

Bill Tomcich: Exciting air service news to announce! There are 2 new routes by two airlines for the summer. American is starting non-stop service from Chicago for the summer and will be extending their Dallas flights to October 5th. United is adding a non-stop flight this summer from San Francisco and extending their Chicago flight to run through October 4th and Houston through October 29th. These flights will help bring more visitors from Asia and other countries. I feel fares are becoming more reasonable than in the past. We had 8 consecutive days of 90% occupancy in December.

Comment- Debbie: Thank you to the ACRA guest service team at the airport for the hard work they did in December! We have a complete sellout for XGames this week but we do have rooms to sell after the event.

Steve Skadron: City Council has two transportation goals to achieve, a short term and a long term. Perhaps make Galena Street to Boogies, limiting parking on that street. We will add electric vehicle rides in the downtown core as well. We need to fundamentally change the way we go about our lives if we want to improve the transportation in our town. Huge thank you to Cristal and the Aspen Institute on their help to re-introduce the Aspen Community Forum. The first topic to be discussed will be transportation.

Visited Whistler and left really impressed. If there is a community that poses a threat against Aspen, it's Whistler. I was very impressed in their leadership team in handling issues such as affordable housing and transportation.

I have a meeting with Uber and the Aspen Taxi group on Thursday. Ziska Childs is heading the Uber so far in Aspen with a Tesla electric vehicle.

Charlie Bantis: Agree that Uber would be a great service to have in Aspen. On the finance side there are a lot of strategic issues coming up with the Chamber to tackle. We need to include some non-finance people on our Finance Committee. It's going to be a busy year for the Finance Committee.

Corey Enloe: There is a lot of stuff going on in the community and the Chamber, so good luck.

Tim Perry: A lot of construction starting up for the year and a lot of excitement. Try to remind people of the construction projects already passed such as the Rubey Park Bus Station and how much better it is.

Michael Owsley: A lot going on! There is a Pitkin County Environmental Assessment community meeting for the Airport on February 17th, will report back.

David Perry: Conditions on the mountains are fantastic. We have rooms to book for February, March and April still, please spread the word! We need to work together as a resort community. Let's make sure we are true to our values if we do the letter writing campaign.

Cristal Logan: We are launching our winter events tonight with a lot of sold out programs. The Ideas Festival 1 is sold out and the Ideas Festival 2 will probably sell out in February. Our summer internship program is open for applicants through the end of January. It is a paid 3 month internship for seniors and college students.

Nina Eisenstat: Wintersköl and Gay Ski Week had great energy within the community. Hopefully we can keep things going in that direction.

Andrew Ernemann: Thank you for your warm welcome. As we wrapped up 2015, real estate numbers were up about 20% at the end of the year. We had almost 30 million in sales for the area including Snowmass. Residential inventory is up 10% compared to last year which is the first time we've seen a rise since the recession. Occupancy for retail is strong for commercial space. We might start to see \$300 a foot commercial rental prices compared to \$3000-\$4000 a foot.

Jennifer Carney: Food and Wine Passes are on sale through SAS at \$1450 for a pass before March 15th, after that it goes up to \$1550. However we do typically sell out before the March increase date.

Jeff Bay: Thank you all for having me back. I just completed my ten years as Chair at the CO Lodging Association. I missed being a part of this organization so I am happy to be back. I applaud ACRA on the goals and objectives for 2016. Had guests from Vail come to Aspen who were blown away by the experience of Aspen, so thank you David and SkiCo. We are currently looking to complete the Molly Gibson construction in 2017.

Lisa LeMay: Retail did great in December, January was a little less. Vail's World Cup event was much larger than what we will host.

Riley Tippet: Thank you for all of the hard work the Membership group did and the Chamber for putting on Wintersköl.

Jeanette Darnauer: Hosted 22 international visitors this month for a birthday party from the UK, Germany and Netherlands.

Kenny Smith: In the higher end retail we do feel the strain of the exchange rates more than lower end retail.

Beth Mobilian: Feel that the restaurants were doing very well at the end of the year. Agree with the comment on the resort vs. community issue. The people running the resort are the community so we need to stay together. Spoke with Brittany from the Chamber regarding Soupsköl and why the participation of the restaurants is down.

Maria Morrow: The PA committee has been talking about engaging the community in issues so I feel that the vision statement is great. If you have ideas please join the PA Committee or contact us to discuss. We will be reaching out to all of the Board members to utilize the assets of this Board. We want to work on our connectivity and messaging for the PA committee.

Rose Abello: Marketing tax was up 14% and lodging tax was up 22%. We did our first moonlight trek tour which was sold out. Snowmass Tourism has hired a new marketing director and will be appointing a new advertising agency as well.

Simon Chen: The exchange rate for the US dollar is really back to what the Australians consider normal now. Be aware of pedestrians in town and the icy conditions. We are seeing new international markets emerge now.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.