

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
February 23rd, 2016
The Aspen Square Hotel**

Call to order: Donnie Lee called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

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

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

Disclosure of Conflict of interest: None.

Presentation: Chris Lane – ACES Climate Change

We want Aspen to be known as a town that cares about the environment. ACES created a brochure rack card with information on how to contact our state representative and senators about climate change. Please contact Mona if you would like to receive these rack cards for distribution by calling 970-925-9775, ext. 500 or emailing her at mona@aspencore.org.

Chair's comments: We are incredibly blessed to live, work and play in Aspen. Important to remember that we're all here for the same reason and are on the same side.

President's comments: We have been working on reconstituting all of the committees this month. The new chairs of the committees are as follows: Jeff Bay chair of the Marketing Advisory Committee, Maria Morrow chair of the Public Affairs Committee, Riley Tippet chair of the Member Services Committee, Charlie Bantis chair of the Finance Committee and Donnie Lee chair of the Executive Committee. Please put March 7th on your calendar for the work session with City Council to discuss ACRA's space needs and office relocation.

I went to the DMA West conference and attended their Public Affairs meeting and I feel we're very on point with what other destinations are talking about.

I want to say thank you to Nicole for her one year of service!

Dorothy and the rest of the ACRA Airport staff are getting a lot of complaints and verbal abuse with the airport changes, so thank you to Dorothy and her staff for keeping up your great work.

Executive Committee: The city has given ACRA notice that they need to vacate their office space and they have been working with Andrew Ernemann to find options for new space. Please attend the March 7th work session with City Council. Ultimately September looks like the time that ACRA will be relocating. **Steve:** All of the city offices will be consolidated into one space (Galena plaza). City hall will be repurposed into community space. There has been talk of moving ACRA to the Armory building once it is redone as well.

Finance Committee: The Board reviewed the final financial reports for 2015. The City has asked DM to change the way we receive tax revenues from them. DM will receive their share of the lodging taxes as they are received, resulting in a two and a half month lag in revenues for the beginning of this year. The leftover from 2015 has helped DM get through the transition. **Steve:** What is the \$26,000 in payable under the Chamber? **Debbie:** That is from Wintersköf, we prepay some things and reconcile in February. They're simply isn't a perfect space for ACRA in town, so we will need to spend some money to find the best spaces possible.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Directors' Comments

Andrew Ernemann: Real Estate has had a slower start to the year. It does seem like we're getting to the end of an up cycle, but a lot can change!

Beth Mobilian: We are lucky to live and be here.

Bill Tomcich: Absent.

Charlie Bantis: I wonder if we are seeing a preview of how the Grand Avenue Bridge project will affect us with the I-70 Glenwood Canyon closure right now.

Corey Enloe: A majority of the community might not agree with what we assume is good for Aspen. We have to be careful about what we say and support as "good" for Aspen. The Aspen Club is focusing a lot on wellness and nutrition right now.

Cristal Logan: Yes, we are reconvening the community forum to put together a diverse set of community leaders to discuss issues that may have a negative effect on our community.

David Perry: Absent.

Heather Steenge-Hart: The first few weeks of January were actually down in occupancy, but the remaining weeks of Feb and into March are up. March does look down overall year after year however, about 10-12% (Aspen and Snowmass combined). The first week of April is looking stronger than usual as well as August.

Jeanette Darnauer: Absent.

John Maloy: Absent.

Kenny Smith: Our numbers have definitely been fluctuating. Lately it feels like both the high and low peaks are a little bit lower. We don't just do business with walk-ins that's why we've been successful.

Laura Smith: A big challenge the Aspen Music Festival & School is currently facing is affordable housing and summer rentals for the summer teachers and students. This summer is looking wonderful already!

Lisa LeMay: Listening to all of the hot topics being discussed today, negative feeds negative and positive feeds positive. I think it's important as board members to be educated enough to promote the positive side of issues when community members come to us with concerns. We have to feed the negative with positive!

Maria Morrow: In the PA committee we are creating teams this year to deal with all of the issues that are being discussed. What can we do as a community to better align ourselves and better communicate issues? We're reaching out to members outside of the Public Affairs Committee members to join these teams as well. I've been told that we're coming to an end of a growth cycle, and it's making it seem like helping Aspen to thrive is going to start to become a challenge.

Michael Owsley: I'm mostly upset about the Airport ACRA staff being verbally abused, it's unacceptable. I think the community needs to look at itself and stop the verbal abuse. The changes to the airport are necessary to meet the futures needs. The planes will be able to go anywhere in the U.S. and will be quieter. Pitkin County will be discussing the intercept and Buttermilk parking lots. We are looking at what value we can add to the lots to encourage more people to use them.

Nina Eisenstat: We have good friends that come here every year, but they went to Park City instead this year.

I have been hearing a lot of pushback about the proposed parking rate increases. **Debbie:** We at the ACRA really haven't been hearing much feedback on that. **Erik:** I haven't heard any feedback on the parking rate increases. I am working on a survey to put out to the community that will include a parking question. If we do start to see feedback, we might do a follow up survey focused more on parking.

Riley Tippet: We need something similar to the rack brochure from ACES for our own community. A way for community members to just call and tell the city what is an issue to them. Aspen has elevated the level of service that people expect and if we maintain that they will always come back. We need to focus on ACRA's new vision statement "creating ways for Aspen to thrive." End of February has somewhat tapered off. We've had a really great year with the snowfall so I'm excited to have a good end to the season.

Rose Abello: Absent.

Simon Chen: Managed to fly out last Wednesday. There were five flights leaving at once resulting in an extremely packed terminal.

Steve Skadron: There are two big transportation experiments happening this summer, the Castle Creek Bridge and the downtown core parking rates. The downtown core parking rates increase isn't to generate parking revenues, it's aim is to change commuters behavior. That money will be invested back to help increase opportunity for other transportation such as bikes and buses.

Please be aware of the Grand Avenue Bridge project and stay informed. The big part of that project will occur in 2017, but it's something to keep on your radar.

We are reconstituting the Aspen Community Forum, which back in the 90's the Aspen Institute played a key role and I have asked Cristal to rejoin. It costs about 3 million a year to run the Wheeler Opera House. The city subsidizes about 2 million of that which is generated from the real estate transfer tax, which is now illegal as of 2019. It will go away unless the voters vote to extend the Wheeler RET tax. The Wheeler can run for about 12 years without being subsidized with the funds they have saved up. Extending the Wheeler RET tax is critical to this community.

Terry Collins: Absent.

Tim Perry: My son has spent the last few years working in D.C. and has witnessed what it takes to get issues on the table. It can take as few as 10 calls to get the issue to the politicians.

Warren Klug: March is a little softer than what we would like it to be but the phone is still ringing. I believe we will end a little bit ahead for the winter season. The I-70 closure did affect our business. There were people who stayed longer but there were guests who called and said they could not make it. We're seeing good activity for the summer so far. I am curious to see the impact of the election year. Congratulations to Debbie and the ACRA staff for the year-end financial standings.

Adjournment: 10:30 a.m.