

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
May 31st, 2016**

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

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

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

**Presentation: Youth Zone - Lori Mueller and Robin Tolin**

Youth Zone works to create safe communities from Aspen to Parachute for the juvenile justice system. The programs are dedicated to helping youth become contributing members of their community. One third of all youth that come to Youth Zone have a substance abuse problem, 1 in 5 has been a victim of abuse, 40% have a substance related charge, 22% have a danger to others charge, and 16% have a petty theft charge. We spend \$1,400 per youth over a 3-6 month time frame, with a 90% success rate. A student who is arrested in high school is twice as likely to drop out; one who appears in front of a judge is 4 times as likely. When youth are screened and given appropriate services, they most likely will not reoffend, in which 90% of Youth Zone participants do not reoffend.

Two thirds of our clients come from the court system and one third are referred through the schools. Youth Zone provides a case manager/youth advocate to attend court with the child. Programs for teens include court services, counseling, advocacy, substance use intervention and teen groups. Programs such as counseling, family mediation, and parenting classes are provided to the parents.

Last year's budget was 1.3 million in which 52% was from government funding from Pitkin and Garfield Counties. The Annual "Kiss & Squeal" event has helped raise money however they will be shifting to a new fundraiser, "Youth Zone Assent" where every child that participates will get a scholarship to either a vocational school or college of their choice. There has been a spike in marijuana cases because kids don't see it as a big deal any more. Everyone is doing it in public, so why not. There is a lack of money flow to support marijuana education or support groups. THC has a different effect on the developing brain than it does on the developed brain.

**Chair's comments:** Welcome to summer 2016! It's going to be busy and active. Not much to say otherwise.

**President's comments:** Julia is just finishing a trip to London with Colorado Tourism, Jennifer and Brittany are on FOOD & WINE duty, and Nicole is out, so it's a quiet week for us. Welcome to Susan Bantis who has taken Dorothy's position as the Airport Guest Services Director. Susan has been with us for 10 years working closely with Dorothy, so it was a smooth transition. Laura Smith couldn't be with us today, because the Music Festival offices have just reopened. Cristal Logan had some family business to attend, and Maria Morrow is still away. We are working on some leases for our new office home. Hopefully I'll have some news on that for the next meeting.

**Finance Committee:** We don't know where ACRA's home will be starting in October, hopefully we will know soon. The cost of moving and IT improvements are still unclear. Membership dues are up, we are not sure if it's due to timing. Our equity is down, but we know that will grow. The anticipation of the fall is interesting. The airport is right on budget. At the City's request as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, Destination Marketing stopped sending them a monthly bill for tax revenue. We now get what the City collects in taxes about 2 months after it is collected. This has created a one-time gap in income. We made it through the first quarter, but we may see another gap in January of 2017. If things go as we expect, the budget will be tight at the end of the year. We need to increase our reserves because of the new system, it needs to settle around a quarter of a million dollars. That's what we are working on and are hoping to solve it by the end of the year.  
*Donnie Lee – "It's a sound practice to be responsible for the future."*

In January we will receive November tax receipts, which is the lightest revenue month, in our heaviest expense month.

*Debbie Braun—“We are about 5% under and there might not be that cash surplus check so we are keeping a close eye to reallocate and plan accordingly. When we go to council, they only pay out for actual revenues, not the budgeted amount. That can be a cash flow issue, so we need to reallocate appropriately.”*

*Bill Tomcich- “I’ve analyzed with Julia. Projections are down 5% from budget, but they are actually up 3% from last year. The reason it is not up is because the APR growth is not there. We are seeing the same in SAS. If you look forward, there’s only about a 1% growth, so it’s not as aggressive and it makes me optimistic.”*

**Marketing Advisory Committee:** We had a great meeting. We did discuss the budget and we’re aware and thinking about how it effects the potential launching of new programs. Sarah talked about the group sales accomplishments. A FAM trip came in from all the Colorado Welcome Centers and was a great success and source of business. There was discussion about marketing updates – traditionally we bring outside visitors to Aspen, now we are using some money to educate our population about what we have to offer, both through mobility and local tourism. We made a great educational tourism piece and a mobility piece that will go to businesses through our junior ambassadors. We also cleaned up the database for DM emails, focusing on those who are interested in and have regularly opened the emails, and have removed those who have not opened the emails in quite some time. On the website we have created some pages to bring in the younger visitors; a “35 for the under 35” itinerary, and we’ve brought in some independent photographers to take shots and write about Aspen to drive their followers to the website. Great updates from the varying areas, Snowmass particularly.

The Grand Avenue Bridge Project is not totally underway yet, they would like to decrease traffic by 20%, or there will be grid lock. We have made a page on the visitor site with more information regarding the project.

*Reilly- “What are we doing about Independence Pass to try to control the amount of cars up there for safety reasons?”*

The pass was brought up, there was not a representative from CDOT at the meeting, but we did talk about reaching out to them to increase awareness about what the rules are and who is allowed to use the pass. We’re also thinking of reaching out to Google maps and other map providers to provide correct detour and closure information. Potentially extending how long the pass is open to cover the Grand Avenue Bridge closures.

*Bill- “We have to look at the Glenwood Canyon closure procedure and do something about it before it happens.”*

*Warren- “We want our guests to know what happens, we don’t want them to just get off the highway and keep going.”*

**Old Business:** none.

**New Business:** none.

### **Directors’ Comments**

**Andrew Ernemann:** Sales are still down. Unfortunately we don’t have the same data that tourism has, but we are hopeful the summer will bring an increase.

**Beth Mobilian:** Excited for summer like everyone else, optimistic for sales.

**Bill Tomcich:** The last occupancy report is from April, so we can’t see Memorial Day numbers, but we’re hopeful. Our numbers are up a lot. The summer flight schedule starts June 2nd. April ended up 2.2% higher from last year. ADR was up about 4%, not as strong, but still up from last year. The winter was one of the strongest since we started tracking occupancy. Last report showed double digit increases predicted for this summer. In the winter, the total seats scheduled on planes was only up 3%, but the actual flown seats were up 6% because of increased reliability. Employment rates are up 6% at the airport. It was by far the highest winter of flown passengers. Delta has added non-stop flights from LA next winter, so people will be able to connect to Australia easier. It will be 1 flight daily from mid-December to the end of March.

**Charlie Bantis:** The conversation about summer makes me think of the idea of limiting the number of people who can enter national parks, and how that will affect us in Aspen.

**Corey Enloe:** There are a few legislative bills coming up. Get educated and figure out how it will affect your business. It will dramatically change some things about health care and minimum wage.

**Cristal Logan:** absent.

**David Perry:** N/A

**Heather Steenge-Hart:** We are very happy; August is looking great for us. Looking forward to FOOD & WINE.

**Jeanette Darnauer:** Memorial Day was great. I travelled recently to San Francisco for a conference on public relations from which I'd like to share some tips. Regarding video, silence is golden. 80% of videos are viewed on social media without sound, so text overlay is important. Many businesses are hiring individuals for culture and not credentials, and are having great success. There is a website employers can use called "Predictive Index," to help ensure a candidate's strengths and weaknesses will fit within their business. Blog posts kick into high gear once you've reached 51 views. There is a 600% greater sales conversion rate on people who land on site through organic search than through social media. We took a tour of the Menlo Park Facebook campus headquarters and looked at trends for the future. Facebook Live is a fabulous opportunity for our community, I encourage you to take a look at it and use it.

**Jeff Bay:** We have our sales team in Australia right now, and have some tentative bookings from Australians in the works for next year. The Eagle County Planning Committee expanded to include mobile homes for affordable housing. We are going to have to start looking down valley for housing opportunities. I was talking to someone who works in Crested Butte and there's no one hiking there now because there's still snow. I think we are going to see a compression of the season for back country trail usage. We need to do some PR for when and how to use the back country trails. I am going to a BOD meeting for the Colorado Lodging Association where we will be discussing our stand on the minimum wage and overtime management legislative bills. Please let me know if you have thoughts that you'd like me to relay.

**John Maloy:** absent.

**Kenny Smith:** absent.

**Laura Smith:** absent.

**Lisa LeMay:** Our business had an exceptional off season and by far the best Memorial Day Weekend. Moving forward, our one concern is finding employees and employee housing. Summer time is the hardest time to find employees because we lose housing in Marolt and Burlingame. Marolt is already taking reservations for next fall, and we've had to make reservations for our J1's already.

**Maria Morrow:** absent.

**Michael Owsley:** absent.

**Nina Eisenstat:** The new collateral is beautiful. I'm hearing a very positive outlook for summer.

**Riley Tippett:** Not much else to add, but people are excited for summer and the off season seems shorter. I liked reading about bringing the millennials to Aspen. Changing it from being about the idea of the billionaire to being about the activities, the mountain biking, the skiing. We're showing the experiences vs. talking about the money. They just need to be worried about how much fun they can have here.

**Rose Abello:** Lodging tax up. We kick off events this weekend with the Ragnar relay. We have a bunch of events the same weekend of FOOD & WINE. Should be a busy summer.

**Simon Chen:** I've been travelling in Australia. A lot of Australians are coming up this summer, which is new. There is a lot of optimism down there. Whatever hotel you go to, they pass on the credit card commission to the guest. There has

been a push down there to come around here in the summer for short trips. I think as long as we have early booking opportunities we will have Australian tourism.

**Steve Skadron:** There's a lot of moving parts with the big City Hall project. I believe the project is getting reworked. It is possible that the old power house may come back in to play and which will have a major effect. The large building is the number one option. Doing nothing is a 72 million dollar option; half and half is mid a 60 million dollar option; moving is a 48 million dollar option. Just want to keep you up to date because it will affect the Chamber.

I'd like to have a cap on the amount of pot shops in Aspen as we currently have 9 right now. There has been positive feedback for this idea. I spoke with the Denver Mayor, who has just put a cap on the amount in Denver as they currently have 421.

Tonight's work session will be with the school district about their financial forecast. The City of Aspen is filling the gap from the state. I'm interested in the City continuing to help, even though it is the state's responsibility.

The roundabout closure went well with very few cars coming through during the construction. *Debbie – "There was a lot of awareness all the way down valley."* Mill Street is a great improvement with the addition of the bike lanes. If you look at the side walk, it was picked up and moved, and grass was added to create pedestrian safety. The living lab had virtually no effect on traffic. It is actually facilitating traffic flow and the drivers feel a safety barrier and are less distracted.

We are faced with a new issue of public access to public places vs. people renting it out. We feel we need to create criteria about who can rent spaces and why, and for how long. The spaces are budgeted and we have to balance. We receive a lot of requests, and we have to account for the money loss. We have enough requests to close Wagner Park for the whole summer. *Debbie – "Please include everyone, because a lot of voices are important."*

I got an email from Taiwan about my presentation in Paris. They were really impressed with our City's accomplishments and have asked me to travel there next week to give a speech at a conference. It's very reassuring to our community and everyone who sits at this table who builds this community.

**Terry Collins:** absent.

**Tim Perry:** absent.

**Warren Klug:** We went to the Grottos and there's snow everywhere! This last weekend was really busy for us, and I think it's a prediction of what's to come. It reminded me that we still have unfinished projects, which is a frustrating part of the spring. This is graduation week, and it's an exciting but also challenging time. We are looking forward to a great summer.

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.