

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
July 25th, 2017**

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

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

Approval of prior meeting minutes: The board unanimously approved the June 27th minutes.

Chair's comments: We express our thanks to David Perry for his 15 years of service on the ACRA Board of Directors.

President's Comments: The Shop Aspen campaign is in full swing. There will be one more Art Walk this season and then we will meet with the City to discuss how the event panned out. Hopefully by September we will have some direction about how to move forward with the art shows. During the Aspen Arts Festival, the special events team took into account the neighboring properties and residents during load in and out. The newspapers did a great job of showcasing the event and the team received good comments from some locals. Special thank you to Brittany Zanin and Olivia Davis of the special events team for a successful summer event season.

Executive Committee: We discussed our board retreat this fall. We will be bringing Destination Marketing, the ALA, and the Colorado Tourism Office together on October 18th for a half-day session at The Gant in regards to marketing and tourism.

Employee Sustainability Committee: We want to engage the membership to pinpoint the areas for attracting, hiring and retaining employees. We worked through setting goals and creating questions for an employer survey. The committee will be reaching out to personal networks to get access to people who have left jobs here in the valley and find out why. We hope to work with Aspen Ski Co, and other chambers down valley to gather this information as well. *Debbie*: Kudos to the committee for their presentation to City Council for recommendations for their top 10 goals. We are lacking the data for these issues. Simultaneously, this committee has inspired us to make the membership part of the chamber website more efficient. We are looking for a web writer for this project, please send referrals if you know of any.

Old Business: none.

New Business: none.

Director's Comments

Warren: It's been a good summer season. I want to bring up the GAB closure to be sure that we've turned over every stone to prepare properly.

Debbie: The best thing we can do is to make plans for your employees.

I am concerned about the council member that suggested switching the lodging tax allocations.

Steve Skadron: The lodging tax is currently at 2%, in which 1.5% goes to DM and .5% goes to transportation. A council member suggested switching the allocation. This idea was only floated at this time and I'm not sure if it will gain any traction. The City Council retreat is on Friday to complete the top 10 goals. The biggest issue we are facing is the water rights and storage, in which we are making progress. We are attempting to predict the future needs and ensure that the water utility can serve the community in the future. The City has made housing available during the GAB closure. The City has changed our work schedules for the closure. New projects have been approved that will bring in approximately 60 affordable housing units.

Jeanette Darnauer: I attended the Arts Festival this year. I was so impressed by the quality and the friendliness of the vendors and artists. There were 9 local artists who seemed very happy to be there. My one suggestion is to have signs at the booths. I spent the 4th of July in California, which was interesting to spend the holiday away from Aspen. I heard from some locals that the parade here in Aspen was not very kid and family friendly.

Rose Abello: The Upload for the Download event is free to public from 3-5pm tomorrow, please rsvp to aspensnowmass.com. The Colorado Scottish Festival is August 4th - 6th. Yoga on the Mountain is August 11th – 13th. The Zoppé Italian Family Circus will be here August 18th - 20th. The Ragnar Relay Colorado will be held August 25th and 26th. We are about 50% over last year's bookings for the JAS Labor Day weekend.

Nina Eisenstat: Attended the Arts Festival on Sunday which didn't seem as crowded as before. The festival had a great energy and people seemed happy and positive about the event. Everyone I've talked to is having a very busy summer and it seems like it is spilling out of town into the trails and other towns. A comment from someone in Carbondale about the GAB was that there wasn't much information put out.

Simon Chen: We've had a busy summer as well. The Sky Hotel construction has been going very well. We will be opening up the spring street side of the hotel at a discounted rate. I drove over the pass on Sunday and it was incredible how many people were coming and going over the pass.

Jeff Bay: Was in Glenwood Springs last night at Verizon and heard employees talking about the closure who still haven't had a plan communicated by their employer. As much as I hope I'm wrong, I feel we're going to see a swell of people that don't know what's going on. We have worked with Pitkin County to provide rooms for some of their staff and our own employees as well.

Riley Tippet: N/A

Lisa LeMay: I would love to know how the occupancy is trending in GWS this summer. We are seeing an influx in day trippers coming to shop and visit. I think we need to try to ease the fearfulness of the GAB and calm the visitors and employees as it will only be 3 months.

Heather Kemp: I have some friends coming from Denver during the GAB closure. There is another way to get back on I-70 in GWS. This seems like one of the strongest years in regards to retail since the recession in 2008. I haven't had any issues or complaints coming through but I will keep reaching out more and more to other retailers so I can be a point person.

Laura Smith: Things at the Music Festival are great and busy. I welcome you all to come to the festival. We've been talking to the City about some public celebration of the arts community and arts heritage of the community during the summer. I've talked to the City about the lamppost banners, using them when no events are happening to celebrate art, music, dance, lectures, jazz, etc. in the community. We are looking for a box office director, if you know someone who is customer service oriented and willing to work seasonally please refer them to us.

Patti Clapper: Pitkin County has not looked at changing construction hours, however we are open to it if companies come to us asking for different working hours. I will be attending an arts festival in Laguna Beach California, I'll bring back learnings to the next meeting. We are looking at the possibility to bring in some tiny homes for owners of businesses to own a unit and lease them to their employees.

Tim Perry: We drove over the GAB last week in a camper and we hit mirrors with another truck because of how tight the lanes are. Looking forward, the new bridge is going to be so much safer. At the Employee Sustainability Committee meeting, Steven from Forum Phi brought up a good point about how we might be making our problems worse by how we are talking and thinking about the sustainability of the valley. We will be trying to figure out what the difference in this valley compared to other communities when it comes to retaining the workforce.

Andrew Ernemann: The Aspen Club has had \$20 million in sales for their units already, considering they are not completed yet. There is a lot of enthusiasm around Base Village. Interesting comparisons to last year, residential listings are down almost 25% from a year ago, however sales are up nearly 100% over last year in contrast. \$108 million in properties under contract last July compared to over \$300 million this year. It's been a very busy and positive summer.

Bill Tomcich: The occupancy numbers are good this summer but are not record breaking. We do have a smaller capacity of rooms this year but it makes sense that people are still passing through and staying down valley. I would love to get some information on the metrics down valley. We are not looking at any sell outs at this time. There is a bigger drop during August to after the Labor Day weekend than we've seen in the past. American Airlines will be bridging their summer and winter schedules from DFW with continuous service throughout the fall and into winter. United will be extending their LA nonstop flights through this fall as well. We received the Origination Destination Report for Q1 of 2017. The number one connect point to Salt Lake City was from JFK airport, and their number two was Seattle. We also saw an influx into the Aspen airport from Seattle. Starting this winter, Delta will have 3 daily flights from Salt Lake City to Aspen.

Cristal Logan: The FAA was really responsive to our needs to mitigate as much damage as possible during Ideas Festival. We didn't see any issues from the airport other than wind during the event. Thank you to Laura Smith for her great leadership to get the arts banners put up around town. I reported an issue on Google Maps in regards to Independence Pass as a route to get to Denver. I encourage everyone to do so as well.

John Maloy: We are a few days away from our campus being in full swing. All staff will be reporting on August 15th. School starts on August 21st. When I first started with the school, we had 110-120 students. There are now 130-140 students in the graduating class this year and 154 students in the sophomore class.

Charlie Bantis: N/A

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:53 a.m.