

**VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS (VCOS)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, February 20, 2024**

Minutes

Board Members in Attendance:

Scott Marble, Chair
Susan Davies
Dave Harris, Treasurer
Becky Leinweber, Secretary
Gus Krimm
Crystal LaTier
Curtis Bova
Marisa Wigglesworth
Wendy McHenry
Johnna Reeder Kleymeyer (via phone)
Dr. Herman Crawford
Greg Phillips
Jen Furda
Ed Okvath
Michelle Talarico
Jenny Sherman
Scott Flexman

Board Members Absent:

Kristina Coggins Heck
Lisa Neener
Megan Leatham

VCOS Staff:

Doug Price
Amy Long
Peggy Manter
Brian Werner - BRW
Kathy Reak
Alexea Veneracion
Bailey Ashida
Kim Griffis

VCOS Staff Absent:

April Perez

Special Guests:

Tim Wolfe
Nick Ragain
Rodney Gullatte
Katie Ogden

Meeting called to order at 8:02 am

Special Guest – Tim Wolfe, Director of the Colorado Tourism Office and Nick Ragain, CTO Board Member

- Doug welcomed all and introduced Tim Wolfe and Nick Ragain. Tim then presented a slide deck all about Colorado Tourism and how 2024 is shaping up compared to years past. He said that Colorado Springs is a big piece of the state's total tourism revenue and that with Wheel the World and Sheridan Powells's efforts we are on the forefront of travel accessibility. He spoke of the international travel market and how they are working to bring that piece back into the mix as it provides over 8% of the state's total travel revenue. He mentioned the impact of C4C and the new facilities it has brought to Colorado Springs. Tim's slide dec was sent to all members.

Special Guest – Rodney Gulatte, Ethical Hacker

- Doug introduced Rodney and told the board that he had conducted a pen test (penetration test) to find and exploit the vulnerabilities of our IT systems.

- Rodney let the board know that he was unable to hack into our site externally and that our firewall is doing its' job. He said that employing Amnet, our IT provider, is a wise move and he would recommend all businesses do the same.
- He was able to breach our systems internally, mainly via protocols set up on printers, our phones and other connected devices. He found eleven issues, five were critical, five were moderate and 1 was mild. Amnet representatives Katie and Jeff attended the meeting, and they have received a copy of the results and are in the process of creating a remediation plan and hope to have the process completed within 2 weeks. Given that 56% of internet traffic is criminal in nature and costs businesses and consumers trillions of dollars every year, the investment is one we cannot afford to skip.

CHAIR'S WELCOME – Scott Marble

- Scott introduced the two new board members, Curtis Bova and Scott Flexman. He also thanked Curtis for the Hotel Polaris sponsoring the annual business meeting,
- Acceptance of Board Meeting Minutes from January 16, 2024. Motion made by Jenny Sherman and seconded by Marisa Wigglesworth to accept the January minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Then he moved to the revised bylaws and said the revisions are largely clerical in nature and after the month allotted for board review asked if he could get a motion to approve. A motion was made by Dave Harris and seconded by Wendy McHenry to accept the revised bylaws as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Next item was the addition of the whistleblower and record retention policies. Scott let the board know that they would have a month to review them, and we would vote on the additions to the bylaws at the March meeting. Dave Harris pointed out a few references to CFO which Peggy will remove or change to Director of Finance.
- He thanked the board for sending him, Doug and Gus Krimm to the Board Symposium in Phoenix and presented a brief slideshow. His "noses in paws out" graphic demonstrated the biggest point he took away: the board members' jobs are to be aware, to council, and to support VCOS and let the staff be the doers.
- Gus then spoke about his high-level takeaways from the Symposium. VCOS is a hub of economic development through tourism, and we should be future focused. Ensuring that messaging is aligned between VCOS, civic leadership, and elected officials is vital. He says the board should do a self-assessment and ensure that business continuity and succession planning along with their fiscal responsibility is top of mind.
- Doug then spoke about the board orientation process and how he is working with Reanna of HR Branches on changes to the process. He thinks the process should be ongoing for at least 90 days and that an experienced board member could be assigned to be a "board buddy" to assist in onboarding the new members. Amy distributed the VCOS commitment cards to the board and Doug suggested they put the elevator speech in their phone contacts for handy access. The other side of the card has VCOS's mission and vision statements. As Johnna pointed out, we need to guide board members on how to be a better board member.

Marketing and Partnership Update – Amy Long, Chief Innovation Officer

- **The 2024 Official Vacation Planner** is a joint venture between VCOS and Pikes Peak Region Attractions. We printed 400,000, though the page count is now sixty-eight pages (has been eighty-four in the past). The theme is "Legendary," and this is reflected in the imagery and

editorial content. VCOS partner listings are now available online as a PDF, which can be accessed with a QR code on page 63.

- **The 2024 ARPA Meetings & Events Campaign Co-Ops** are now on sale to VCOS partners. Partners can purchase both email and print ad co-ops that will be in market March through December. All co-op revenue will be invested back into the campaign.
- **Website performance** for January is strong. Total Sessions are up 36% over January 2023, Engaged Sessions are up 44% and Organic Sessions are up 26%.
- **The 2024 Annual Business Meeting** will be held March 13 at 11:30 a.m. at the Colorado Springs Marriott. Guest speakers include Jessie Kimber with City of Colorado Springs Economic Development and Tommy Aicher, dean of the UCCS Business School. Hotel Polaris is the presenting sponsor. All board members are encouraged to attend, and tickets may be purchased on VisitCOS.com.
- Doug also commented on media relations in the wake of the KOAA and KRDO stories on COS and its Olympic City designation. KRDO was more of a hit piece and KOAA immediately worked on a story that was based on reality and they interviewed Doug and others which featured a statement from the USOPC debunking the KRDO claims.

Finance Committee Update – Dave Harris, Treasurer

- Dave said we are heading into audit season with Bigg-Kofford, and they now can access X-Ledger. He and April are still working with X-Ledger on the reporting module and trying to get it in a format that is easy to follow. The audit results will be presented at the May meeting.
- We are in a great cash position. The operating reserve has been renamed as the emergency reserve. We continue to use the opportunity fund to purchase and rollover 90-day CDs.

Wrap Up – Scott Marble

- Scott introduced Jen Furda who is attending on behalf of UCCS in Kristina's absence and asked Curtis and Scott Flexman for a brief introduction. Curtis is delighted to be back in Colorado Springs, and they still plan to open Hotel Polaris in early November with 375 rooms and 26,000 square feet of meeting space. Scott F said he is excited to be on board and has no plans to ever leave Colorado Springs.
- Scott then asked if any members had anything pressing the board should be aware of or if they had any questions. Greg Phillips thanked all who assisted in planning the SWA meeting in April, it was a group effort. Becky Leinweber let everyone know the PPORA launch party is Feb 27 at 5:30 at Kinship landing. Herman Crawford spoke of the Chef Trujillo Memorial Scholarship luncheon on March 9 and Scott Flexman reminded everyone about the Winter Polo event this coming weekend at the Broadmoor and Norris Penrose Event Center. Doug thanked Rodney for his work on our behalf.
- Scott asked for a motion to adjourn, *Dave Harris motioned, and Wendy McHenry seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:32am.*

Submitted:



Peggy Manter
Executive Assistant

Verified:



Becky Leinweber
Board Secretary

