

VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS (VCOS)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Minutes

Board Members in Attendance:

Susan Davies, Chair
Gus Krimm
Crystal LaTier
Scott Marble
Brooke Mikulas
Abby Murtagh
Lisa Neener (via phone)
Greg Phillips (via phone)
Michelle Talarico
Marisa Wigglesworth
Wendy McHenry
Ed Okvath
Johnna Reeder Kleymeyer

Board Members Absent:

Kristina Coggins Heck
Dave Harris, Treasurer
Becky Leinweber, Secretary
Dr. Herman Crawford
Megan Leatham
Jenny Sherman

VCOS Staff:

Doug Price
Amy Long
April Perez
Peggy Manter
Brian Werner – BRW Tax & Accounting
Cheryl McCullough
Millie Lewis
Alexea Veneracion

Guest:

Charae McDaniel

Meeting called to order at 8:07 am

CHAIR'S WELCOME – Susan Davies

- Susan congratulated Doug on his award at the Governor's Conference on Tourism.
- Acceptance of Board Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2023. Motion made by Wendy McHenry and seconded by Scott Marble to accept the September minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Susan introduced Charae McDaniel, the CFO of El Paso County who would present information on ballot issue 2A. As a City employee, she was not here to sway anyone's vote but was simply presenting the facts. There were several questions and discussion on the issue. Susan thanked Charae for presenting the information and Charae left the meeting.
- Doug spoke about the issue and said the CSCEDC had already endorsed the measure and asked Johnna to tell us why. She referred to slow response times, inadequate training facilities, public safety is a priority for the city and the quality of policing has direct effects on visitors and residents. Doug would like a resolution showing the organization's support of Issue 2A and read the contents to the board. He asked for a motion and Motion made by Gus Krimm and seconded by Scott Marble to issue the resolution in support of Issue 2A. The motion passed unanimously.

President/CEO Update – Doug Price, President/CEO

- Doug asked Amy to talk about the Tourism Award Celebration. She related that it will be at Flying W Wednesday night, October 18, and about 250 guests will attend. Doug thanked the board for their support of the event.
- He updated the board on GovCon. The Governor attended, spoke and presented several awards. Doug said the data shows that travel is rebounding for about 50% of Colorado's destinations but others are not rebounding as quickly. The international market is still very slow and the long wait time for visas is a large part of the problem. Denver is bringing back many conventions but the large numbers of homeless in our cities is a factor in suppressing visitor numbers. This goes back to public safety and the need for a well-staffed and well-trained police force.
- He presented the top-line results of our annual employee survey with a slideshow that pointed out our best and worst scores on a rich variety of questions. There were questions from the board on safe space and team building, and Doug pointed out that the Environment Team meets to talk about employee concerns and plan team building events and activities. He also pointed out that we actively work on succession planning and to smooth the culture changes as employees move on to other pursuits. HR Branches provides an employee hotline and is just down the street. Michelle Talarico, who uses the same company, said her employees call it all the time.
- Doug told all that after the presentation by Todd Marts on Fox Run Nature Center and Park, VisitCOS donated \$5000.00 via the Enterprise Zone. Crystal thanked him on behalf of El Paso County.

Update – April Perez, Senior Accountant

Update on FinComm meeting – they are evaluating different investment options and are well into budgeting for 2024. She mentioned Doug's upcoming sabbatical and that we are all set up to continue operations in his absence.

Finance Committee/Financial Update – April Perez, Senior Accountant

- **Reports:** Performance, financial, cashflow and aging reports were sent in the board packet in advance of the meeting. April asked if there were any questions. She said XLedger is not fully implemented yet and they are working on it. Regarding the aging report, they are working on how to retain partners outside the city limits. Those entities do not receive LART money and have a different dues structure.

Sales Update – Cheryl McCullough, Senior Director, Sports and Events

- We have a new salesperson, Brittany Hunt, who was with the Colorado Springs Marriott for 10 years. She is a great addition to the team. She and Kathy are at IMEX and have 28 scheduled appointments. They are co-hosting a breakfast with The Broadmoor for 16 planners and hosting a small client dinner on Wednesday.
- In the end of September, the department hosted the Destination Colorado Customer Appreciation event. It included a night at The Broadmoor, dinner at Flying W, assorted activities with partners and lunch at the USOPM.
- Cheryl travelled to the Teams Conference October 2-5 in West Palm Beach. They had a full appointment schedule and booth partners were Justine Square of Robsen Arena and Aubrey McCoy of the Sprots Corp. VCOS sponsored the NGB breakfast with great attendance.

Marketing Update – Amy Long, Chief Financial Officer

- Amy gave an update on Wheel the World. We are up to 20 participating partners and 4 are already on the website.
- The September numbers of website traffic were strong, and she will have more details on the SEO Analysis at the December board meeting.
- The team has done several photoshoots highlighting accessibility at various locations including Downtown, Manitou and Old Colorado City, Bear Creek VIP trail, and Ute Valley featuring a terrain hopper. They are using models with disabilities for the shoots.
- The first draft of the 2024 OVP will be in hand by October 27.
- The next Marketing Committee meeting is December 7.

Wrap Up – Doug Price and Susan Davies

- Board members in attendance gave a brief update on what is going on in their world.
- Doug told the board that USAFA Football is 6-0 on the season and that Curtis Bova from Hotel Polaris will be at IMEX along with Kathy. He also let them know that 2024 meeting dates are in the board packet.
- Susan thanked all for attending and reminded all that there is not a November board meeting, and the next meeting is December 5.
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am.

Submitted:



Peggy Manter
Executive Assistant

Verified:



Becky Leinweber
Board Secretary

