

Minutes

**Moab Area Travel Council
Advisory Board Meeting
February 9, 2016
3:00pm
Grand County Council Chambers
125 E. Center Street**

Members Present: Howard Trenholme, John Knowles, Sam Wainer, Colin Fryer, Jodie Hugentobler, Lynn Jackson, Sarah Sidwell

Members Absent: Rachel Paxman

Staff: Elaine Gizler, Callie Tranter

1. **Meeting Called to Order** 3:03 pm
2. **Approval of Minutes** Sam made a motion to approve the January Minutes, Jodie 2nd the motion. 4 in favor, Howard abstained
3. **Public Q & A** Cynthia Gibson with USU reported that she now has a class at 5pm on Tuesday so she will probably not be able to continue coming to the meetings. Beth McCue may come instead.
4. **Presentations**
 - a. **Jon Waschbusch, Government Affairs Director and Glen Davis, Montrose County Commissioner, Montrose to Moab Trail System** Jon and Glen gave everyone a handout and showed a map that had the designated route that they are calling the Rimrocker Trail. It is existing roads so no new construction is being built. Campgrounds are already in place along the route. It is 166 miles from Shavano Valley, west of Montrose to Moab. They will maintain the road in Colorado to the minimum standard that will keep them open but don't recommend it for a passenger vehicle. 2 National Parks, Black Canyon National Park and Arches National Park are on each end of the route.
5. **Discussion and Action Items**
 - a. **Rita Maldonado, Salsa Bachata Festival Final Report** Elaine went over the Final Report and Callie assisted so that Rita could receive the 2nd half. The grant was not matched entirely in advertising and Rita was under the impression that it didn't have to be matched with advertising but with production. Because we had a difference in understanding we thought that we needed to bring it to the board for a final decision. Colin commented that we wanted them to spend the money on advertising and have their own money or match to put towards the event. Colin feels she is entitled to her 2nd half. Elaine mentioned that the application started out with an estimated 1000 people in attendance and the presentation it was brought down to 700 and in the end 231 people came. Rita

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commented that the ongoing promotion is happening. The dancers are coming for art walks and other events so they are still coming with different instructors every month. The energy was successful. Word of mouth and you tube videos. Elaine suggested that we hold some workshops to give guidance on advertising. Colin made a motion to reimburse Moab Salsa Bachata Festival in the amount of \$7670.51, Howard 2nd the motion. All in favor.

- b. Scott Ibex, Moab International Film Festival** was awarded \$7000 the first half was issued in the amount of \$3500. The final report stated what was needed. Elaine didn't want to make a decision and brought it to the board. Scott said that he has the documentation to show what the funds were spent on. He was sick in the hospital and tried to get what was put together in the office. Every year the event keeps growing. A few thousand dollars means the world to the event. John commented that he needs to be more organized. Howard added that deadlines are important and if you miss it it's unfortunate. Scott asked for a couple more days to get the information to the board. Sam asked why Nathan couldn't get the report in to the office. Scott thought that it was his responsibility. Colin said this is the 2nd time and you did know the process. This money is very dear to us and we spend it with a great deal of responsibility. He is disappointed that he can't do the paperwork and it's insulting that you came in with excuses. Colin told Scott that he thought he owed the board an apology. John also said that he had 60 days to get this done. Scott apologized to the board and said that he tried his best and that he doesn't have a lot of control in this organization. Howard made a motion based on the quality or lack thereof the final report to not award funding, Jodie 2nd the motion. All in favor.
- c. Rachel Paxman, Board Attendance** Rachel is sick today.
- d. Howard Trenholme, Role of the board as a Tax Advisory Board, possible creation of a sub-committee** Moab and Grand County has created an incredible industry called tourism. As a small business it is getting difficult to find quality employees. One of our roles is the Tourism Tax Advisory Board. We are supposed to recommend to the County Council how all the money is spent not just TRT but all of it. I honestly think that there are ways we can mitigate and develop tourism in ways like housing. We have bonds for the Rec. Center and the Grand Center. Agencies are feeling the pressure cause of the lack of Mineral Lease money. Public lands really help our growth. We could bond to build a convention center a few years from now and that would help tourism in the winter. Before we get to that we need to get to workforce housing. We should bond a small portion of our money along with what the City gets too. A little stimulus money from us to bond a private developer to build some sort of apartment buildings for the workforce. I wish we could do something really meaningful as a board. We have great job growth in our community. We need to give the opportunities to the residents. Colin asked if he was proposing that we use some of the Travel Council budget

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for this. Howard said no he is suggesting that they use the 1.25% and the Cities tax that they collect. Lynn said that the Council has the Attorney looking at the codes to see how to stretch these dollars. If you advertise and get people to come here and they have a bad experience your dead in the water. We have to keep the experience good for people. We are trying to get the apartments out at Synergy but how do you stop the second home owners. Howard said he was not giving the level of hospitality that the guest deserves because I don't have enough staff. The turnover rate is horrendous. You can't pay \$1400 a month rent on Moab salaries. Elaine reported that the meeting she was just at with Representative Jason Chaffetz office and talked about how critical housing is in Moab. Howard commented that we can't wait for the Federal Government to help us. More discussion went on and Howard called for a sub-committee called the Tax Advisory sub-committee. Howard would like for Diana to be a part of the committee. Sam will be on that committee. Colin will be a guest speaker.

- e. **Event Advertising Grant Committee and Final Reports** we will email the final reports to the board and ask for approval for final payment. The committee will get together before we bring it to the board.
6. **Director's Report, Elaine Gizler**
- a. **2016 Marketing program** Elaine is working with 78 reps and has confirmed radio, Television and the whole 9 yards. Some of the radio can't be moved during certain months because it's an election year.
 - b. **TRT** is up 11% but we are still expecting December. Total collected so far is \$3,843,036 minus fees in the amount of \$35,096 the total received is \$3,807,940.
 - c. **Visitation** Arches is up 8.9% in 2015, Canyonlands is up 16.99% in 2015. For January 2016 Arches is down 1.87%, Canyonlands is down 20.78% and Thompson is down 14%.
 - d. **ATV/UTV ad and signage** Mary McGann, Kalen Jones, Kent Green met with Elaine to talk about coming up with some signage for noise and to work with the City to alert tourists to respect the citizens.
 - e. **NTA** Elaine met with 29 different Tour companies. Some of the companies had never been to Moab and Elaine is trying to convince them why they need to come here.
 - f. **Moab Tourism Expo** is February 18th from 8 am to 5 pm outfitters, speakers and lunch will be offered for \$5 each. Howard suggested that Elaine talk about the role of the Travel Council.
 - g. **Grand Six Sweepstakes** is now completed. We received 6891 leads from the register to win.
 - h. **Advertising**, KUTV is coming to town the week for a Road Trippin. They will go to the Dead Horse Point Yurts, Moab Giants, and Western Spirit. We had discussed briefly hiring an ad agency to buy our radio and tv. Elaine also reminded that board that we are hosting the radio hosts to Moab from stations we currently advertise with.

7. Committee Reports

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- a. Marketing Committee** Colin attended Tourism Day on the Hill and represented the Travel Council Board. Enthusiasm by the legislatures has never been higher. We've been consistent with what we've been doing and were seeing the return on our investment. We have a lot of new legislators that are a bit more progressive and are interested in tourism. We have a tremendous need for schools and highways so the money that we get is kind of in that discretionary. If things go the way they look like they're going to go we're looking at 20 million. The Mighty 5 campaign is surviving but they will add the Mighty 5 road trip. There is another bill that has a chance of passing that is 5 million dollars to be used for rural areas to fund things like trail signage, build an outhouse, trail maintenance, etc. It's a 50/50 co-op. The 100 year celebration in the parks is going on with or without us. At Tourism Day on the Hill he visited with Love communications and they do the buying for Utah Office of Tourism, they don't do creative. Years ago we just had this little budget but it's kept growing and it's apparent that it's become too much for one person to keep up with the buying. We will be money ahead if we spend the funds to hire someone because they know what the ads cost. This is no way a critique as to what Elaine is doing. We are advertising in 5 major markets. The Marketing Committee will hold a meeting on March 2nd at 2pm.
- b. Chamber of Commerce** Jodie reported that the 2016 maps are here and she will get them out. Tuesday's luncheon is going to be held at Peace Tree Café and Derek Miller with the World Trade Center will be the guest speaker talking about finding success in International business.
- c. Airport** John said the airport is still waiting to hear the start date of Boutique Air. They are being very tight lipped about it because they want to make sure they can start when they say they will. They have talked to Salt Lake airport to make sure they have everything worked out since they have never flown in to Salt Lake before. We are trying to get on a fast track to getting TSA back. The runway project is still on schedule.
- 8. Board Member Comments** Sam commented that February is pretty slow so we will see what the weekend brings. We are hosting the bi-annual meeting with all the parks. Colin said every indication it's going to be a good year. Lynn said last year a tank of gas cost \$125 to fill his truck, this year it costs \$55. We are going to have a bumper crop tourist year. Sarah pulled the numbers for winter and the advertising is working. John reported that January is up. Visitor's had been here before but never in the winter and he has received positive responses.
- 9. Future Agenda Items** Guest Speaker for March Beth McCue, ASAP.
- 10. Adjourn** Jodie made a motion to adjourn at 4:58 pm, Howard 2nd the motion.