**White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** August 27, 2019

**Time:** 4 pm

**Location** Bristlecone Convention Center – White Pine Room

**Members Present:** Bryane Goeringer **Staff Present:** Kyle Horvath

Ian Bullis James Beecher

Kurt Carson

Marietta Henry

Caroline McIntosh – Via Phone

**Members Absent:** None

**Public Present:** George Chachas Wayne Cameron

Mark Bassett Lori Romero

Maureen Otzelberger

Chairman Goeringer called to order the meeting of the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board on August 27, 2019 in the White Pine Room at the Bristlecone Convention Center. Chairman Goeringer led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**I.** **Public Comment:** Mr. Chachas asked of the Airbnbs identified to date, how many have paid room tax and what would that amount be. Has this Board sent out letters notifying them of the proper licensing method; if so, I would like a copy of that letter. Mr. Chachas said once more I ask former member of this Board and of the City Council, Jolene Gardner needs to address proper licensing with the City; I have not received anything to that effect. Did she provide this Board with any information such as those that may have requested zone change, variance, home occupation, state business license, county license, city business license and/or room tax license? Any of the above?In attending the City Planning Commission meetings, the City Council and the White Pine County Commission meetings, I have not seen any applications. This Board’s concern is that those law breakers are renting by the day or week and not a dime is being collected for room tax. Have you issued a room tax license to any of them? HOV signs have been installed throughout the City. I want to inform you that many of those installed signs are blocking ADA access. They should have been installed just below the stop signs. It would have saved time, money and would not have blocked access which needs to be addressed. If they were funded by you, that is a concern you need to address. If not, I will address it again with the County and the City. Mr. Chachas said someone has installed new informational signs in different areas of the City. Unfortunately, the lettering is too small. It cannot be read when one drives by at 25 mph nor do they give approximate distance to a business or location - two feet, one block, a mile – only an arrow. When someone comes into your restaurant and they ask if there is a casino, you don’t go (Mr. Chachas gestured with his arms), you tell them across the street, two blocks over. Very poor. I want us to spend our money once and I want it spent wisely. Not that it isn’t a good effort, but it was a poor effort at that. Mr. Chachas said he has not received any information regarding Mr. Spear who was a contractor with the Tour and Rec Board at one time. I want to know if he had a State business license, City business license, commercial location or a home occupation. That is month’s old. The money of $4,300 that was given to the Community Choir for pigeon control needs to come back to this Board. NRS forbids you from supporting private business. That building is not a public building. They do not meet minimum ADA requirements for the handicap. They have stated that they have a 501c status. Again, where is the proof and when is the date it was granted. If they are legal, that is fine. But they are dragging their feet. We are going on to a year. I see that this Board recently just gave another $13,000. If they don’t fit the proper qualifications, that money has got to come back. I don’t know if you have seen on the front of their building, but it specifically states private property, no trespassing, no solicitors, no loitering. Can’t have it both ways. No ADA access. In the past I have asked, and I am asking again with all the money that this Board has spent for the golf course, I want to know what the increase for play has been for the last three years, if any. When they put in a new request for funding there was nothing there to show this Board or give you any information as to how successful their efforts were with the money that you gave them. Mr. Chachas wants to remind this Board that NNR is continuing to get additional grant money from this Board in addition to $240,000 that has been given. They do not work under the Nevada Open Meeting Law. They need to consider that. The taxpayer needs to know where that money is being spent. We don’t know. If they don’t want to release that information, cut them off. You can do that. I want to know where that money is going. So do other people in this community. You are just giving out a free check. No. There must be accountability. I want to remind you that Mr. Bassett is the manager and his wife is the bookkeeper. That is nepotism. That needs to stop. And no one is addressing that.

Maureen Otzelberger addressed the Board and said she wanted to make a comment about the railroad. Mr. Bassett about four or five years ago somehow got an old Pontiac and it was sent to California to be restored. We have not seen it since and in June he said it would be back anytime. Well we still haven’t seen this car. So, I wonder where the car is. Is it in California or where? Also do they pay room tax on the caboose they rent. Kyle Horvath said that they do.

**II. New Business:**

1. **Approval of Agenda, Including Removal of Agenda Items-Chairman Goeringer:**

**Motion:** Member Bullis made motion to approve agenda as presented.

**Motion seconded:** Member Henry  **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

1. **Approval of Minutes: July 23, 2019**

**Motion:** Member Carson made motion to approve minutes of July 23, 2019.

**Motion seconded:** Member Henry **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**3. Review of the Financial Report:** Director Horvath reviewed the Room Tax Report showing a total tax collected of $189,978.48 with the appropriate distribution of monies. He then discussed the two comparison reports. The final form discussed was the year-to-date budget comparison. He said that shows an operational deficit right now because everyone is putting in for their reimbursements for the grants they received. It usually takes about three months to get back into an operational surplus.

**4. Ratify Bills:**

**Motion:** Member Henry made motion pay Check Nos. 24173 through 24253, minus the Bath Lumber bill, in the amount of $200,831.60.

**Motion seconded:** Member Bullis **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**5. Approval to Pay Bill to Bath Lumber:**

**Motion:** Member Carson made motion to pay Check No. 24204 in the amount of $707.51 to Bath Lumber.

**Motion seconded:** Member Bullis **Unanimously approved with one abstention/ Caroline McIntosh. Motion carried.**

**6. Approval to Co-Sponsor Children’s Community Halloween Event on October 25, 2019 – Lori Romero:**  Lori Romero was present; she is the Director of White County Library. On Friday, October 25, 2019 we plan on holding the 16th annual Children’s Community Halloween event. In past years, this Board has co-sponsored the event allowing us to use the facility for $50. I am asking if you are interested in doing that again this year. She said that the Library goes out and solicits organizations and businesses to participate; there is no charge for anyone to attend.

**Motion:** Member Bullis made motion to approve co-sponsoring the Children’s Community Halloween Event on October 25, 2019.

**Motion seconded:** Member Carson. **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**7. Attendance of Staff and Board at the Nevada Governor’s Global Tourism Summit – November 12-14, 2019 – Las Vegas – Caroline McIntosh:**  Member McIntosh said this is an annual conference. She would like to propose that any Board member or staff that would like to attend that we go ahead and indicate that so we can get the reservations made. She said it is excellent training and networking. Director Horvath said the benefit to this event is that you can sit down with the tour operators, media people, etc. and pitch your destination for seven minutes and then you go onto the next one.

**Motion:**  Member McIntosh made a motion to approve staff and board to attend the Nevada Governor’s Global Tourism Summit on November 12-14, 2019 in Las Vegas.

**Motion seconded:** Member Bullis. **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**8. Adoption of Recommended short-term vacation rental policy and approval to send recommendation(s) to the City and County for Airbnbs:** Chairman Goeringer indicated at the last meeting this item had been discussed with Counsel Beecher organizing the thoughts in two proposed letters to the City Council and County Commission. Mr. Beecher said the letters contain the main talking points shown in four bullet points. One that he did not include was the White Pine County resident limitation. There was nothing really on point. Communities across the US are dealing with this now for the first time. He did do some research and found some other areas where a residency requirement did not pass constitutional muster. If we limit it to primary resident as the type of building rather than a residential requirement, he felt we could accomplish that with the specific bullet point. The other three are some of the requirements the Board looked at and he found nothing that offended the law. The last item wasn’t listed as a requirement, so he listed it as the last paragraph instead of a bullet point. It states what the Airbnb can expect to get in return. Member McIntosh made a comment in reference to the sentence in the first paragraph that states in part “ensure these properties do not negatively impact the local housing market.” She felt it should also indicate not negatively impacting the local lodging market. She thought it is both of those markets that we should be concerned about because we have ninety-one rooms coming on. Mr. Beecher said he could amend that sentence to include the local lodging market. Member McIntosh referred to the third bullet point. She asked to have the words “must be identified and available” added to the sentence reference the property manager. The third comment is addressed to Kyle re: the last paragraph where it says these property owners will be included in the website. She wanted to clarify that she thought it should be through a link. Kyle said they will be on the website as short-term vacation rentals with the links going back to whether they are with Airbnb or VRBO or whatever company they are with. Member McIntosh was not in agreement with that. She said if you look at the Airbnb list, it changes weekly. She felt it should just be the links that go to them so that we are not in the middle of it. She doesn’t feel we should identify these properties because they come and go so frequently. Mr. Beecher said he could amend the sentence to say, “The White Pine Tourism and Recreation Board will support these property owners by including a link to the website home pages through which the reservations are made on the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation website.” Member Henry said there was one other correction and that is the spelling of Chairman Goeringer’s last name. It is shown as Goringer. It needs to have an “e” added to it. A comment was made by Mr. Chachas in talking with friends in Reno and Las Vegas, the problems they have had with Airbnbs there is it becomes a partying center in a residential area. He is not seeing or has heard anything addressing that. When they are in a residential area, you can have a normal BBQ, but you can’t have a rowdy get-together; that needs to be addressed so they know that upfront. If you want to do the partying, you have plenty of casinos and bars in the community that will accommodate them. Kyle asked if there are city ordinances in place that deal with quiet hours. He was advised there are. Member Bullis felt we need to keep the government out of this. Airbnbs could be great for our economy. He doesn’t want to scare these people off. Kyle said the point is being that we make sure the playing field is level with the hotels, so we are not undercutting our lodging properties. Let’s make sure that we work with them, so the experience is high. Member Bullis is hesitant on the requirement of having a property manager. He felt it was not reasonable. Member McIntosh reiterated her bad experience with an Airbnb not having a property manager on site. She felt these aren’t unreasonable rules. She feels that it is important that there is somebody locally to address problems. Member Bullis said he didn’t see making the government being involved. If you have a bad experience, then you stay with a different property next time. Member Bullis said he doesn’t want to change what is being sent because it has to be representative of the Board, not his opinion, but when it gets to the Commission level, he will oppose as many regulatory things as he can that he feels are unnecessary. Mr. Beecher said addressing the noise situation, he said there are cities that have gone to extreme lengths that he doesn’t know necessarily need to be addressed in the same way here because our situation is different. He said in Henderson you must have a noise detection system outside your area. He said we have a responsive police force here and we have noise ordinances in the City. Mr. Chachas said he wasn’t interested in over regulating this either, no noise detectors. He said that just so they know when they register that there is a requirement of quiet hours, let’s say after 8 o’clock. Just so they are noticed. As long as they know at a given hour, it is quiet hours.

**Motion:** Member Carson moved to approve sending letter to City and County as amended.

**Motion seconded:** Member Henry. **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**9. Approval to add new members Ian Bullis and Kurt Carson to bank signature cards:** Kyle said this is a formality that the bank requires.

**Motion:** Member Henry made motion that we add Board members Ian Bullis and Kurt Carson to the bank signature cards.

**Motion seconded:**  Member Bullis. **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**10. Approval of annual increase of Executive Director’s salary 6%, retroactive to the beginning of the current fiscal year:** Chairman Goeringer said the Board did a review of Kyle’s performance; it came in good. Everyone is happy with what is going on. Originally former Chairman Stork had set up the groundwork for Kyle to get a six percent increase when he was hired in the first year.

**Motion:** Member Bullis moved to approve six percent increase for Executive Director retroactive to the beginning of current fiscal year.

**Motion seconded:** Member Carson. **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**11. Executive Director’s Report:**

**a. Marketing**

**b. Events**

**c. Facilities**

Kyle gave his report on social media which included Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. He gave updates on the targeted digital, YouTube, Geofence, horse race ad, Las Vegas ad and Facebook retargeting. The website is still around 10,000 sessions per month. A couple of broken links were corrected. Home page is updated. Errol and Kyle are working on OHV page; a Fire and Ice special event page is also being created. We have started a seasonal postcard mailer – Fall, Winter, Spring Summer; it will have all the events that are coming up. We are starting to figure out the layout for the facilities guide. It will not just be the convention center meeting spaces but also the ones at the hotel and third-party meeting spaces. He gave an update on the grants and progress made. He gave a brief update on upcoming events. Member Henry asked if there was any chance at getting the legal conference back here again. Kyle said there is a rumor that they are looking to come back. There is no confirmation currently.

**III. Old Business:**

**1. Parking Lot Subcommittee Report-Goeringer:** Kyle said the deposit has been paid to Reck Bros. We are waiting on them to finish up the Holiday Inn parking lot.

**2. White Pine Golf Course Update-McIntosh:** No report.

**3. White Pine Trails Update-Goeringer:** Kyle said there was a meeting today with BLM and the Forest Service. There is a kiosk that has been donated by the Forest Service that we are looking to designate an area close to the downtown as an official trailhead. We are working on compiling all the trail maps.

**4. Nevada Northern RR Director’s Report:** Mr. Bassett went through his report; he gave highlights on the Star Train and stories being done by CBS Sunday Morning and the Las Vegas NBC affiliate. Work continues on 93 as 40 goes down next year. Kyle asked how the Christmas Rudolph Reindeer Flyer is coming along. Mr. Bassett said it is Santa’s Reindeer Flyer. It is up on the website and we are selling tickets to it. Mr. Bassett said we have a logo; we are copywriting it. We are working on a book. We will be ready for this Christmas season.

**5. White Pine Public Museum Update:**  No one present.

**6. Main Street Update:**  Kyle said the signs are up. They are currently working on a vacant building open house. It would be a social event surrounding one of our empty buildings downtown bringing in real estate agents, investors, etc. The first one will be at 448 Aultman Street on September 25 from 6 to 8 pm. There was a discussion on the beginnings of an Ely film festival. That would happen in March; the theme would be showcasing movies that have been filmed in White Pine County. Kyle said Main Street was granted through GOED the ability to work with a survey company. They have come up with sixteen questions that are getting sent out to the community. It is not so much what would you support but of these choices, what would be your top three things you would support. We will have a good judge from the community of what they are looking for.

**7. Board Member Reports:** Member McIntosh wanted to thank Member Henry for her leadership in making the horse races outstanding. Kyle said he is going in front of the County Commission tomorrow to propose placing one, maybe two, disc golf baskets in Veterans’ Park. This is a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club.

**IV. Public Comment:** Mr. Chachas has an ongoing concern. We have a new property come onboard, first class. We have two junkyards in the area. They don’t meet minimum City standards. One of the property owners recently put up a Stone Hedge monument. They put Jethro Clampett’s vehicle on top of that. And if he had put it back another ten or fifteen feet, in case the wind knocks it down, it is one thing to hit the chain link fence but it is another to go through the fence and out onto the walkway for any pedestrians. We are not addressing any safety hazards. I don’t know if it is a cat and mouse game with the City and the property owners but if we are going to move forward in this community and do the Main Street program and spend all of that money, we have to address that and come to the meeting of the minds. We want to promote our golf course. Just look over to the junkyard. If the Stone Hedge monument doesn’t get in your way or you get a reflection off that old jalopy. A while back I gave you a map of HOV routes. George would like the map back and he would like that made available to those people who come here. It is one thing to go around the roads and look for an HOV sign that may not be blocked by a tree or stop sign, but the map will make it much easier. I think we need to make those available. Kyle said that we will.

**V. Adjournment:**

**Motion:** Member Bullis made motion to adjourn.

**Motion seconded:** Member Henry. **Unanimously approved. Motion carried.**

**Minutes submitted by: Judi Bourbeau**

**Minutes approved by:**

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**Name Date**