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**White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes**

Date: January 28, 2020
Time: 4 p.m.
Location Bristlecone Convention Center – White Pine Room

Members Present:

Ian Bullis
Kurt Carson
Marietta Henry
Caroline McIntosh
Bryane Goeringer – via phone

Staff Present:

Kyle Horvath
James Beecher
Errol Porter

Members Absent: None

Public Present:

Janet VanCamp, Maureen Otzelberger, George Chachas, Tim Bunch, Wayne Cameron

Vice-Chair Henry called to order the meeting of the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board on January 28, 2020 at 4 pm in the White Pine Room at the Bristlecone Convention Center. Vice-Chair Henry led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

- I. **Public Comment:** George Chachas said the money that was given to the Community Choir for pigeon control needs to come back to this Board. NRS forbids you from supporting a private business owner. I want to remind you again they were not a 501c at the time they applied. They misled you. Failure to properly disclose or file under false pretense is a violation of the law. We all know that. Those fly-by-nights need to clean up their act. They do not even meet minimum ADA standards for the handicapped for that facility. They have a problem. A sign is posted on the front of the building stating No Soliciting, No Loitering, No Skateboarding – Private Property. You can't do that folks. The Convention Center/Tour and Rec Board building needs new signage on the glass front. You can't see the signage. I drove by this morning, once at 7:45 and once at 8:15, and did not see an Open sign. I looked closer at your lettering on the front glass and could barely see what the building represented. You need to change the lettering to a lighter color, perhaps white, something that stands out. Something that informs those passing by what the building is for and what the hours of operation are. I thought it was just glare before and it was just me. But no. As I was walking up today, same thing. You need to change

that. I can understand why tourists have a difficult time in finding you folks. The information signs located along Aultman have yet to be modified to show distances to the different facilities and tourist attractions. Rookies need to be replaced. Those that don't have any skin in the game are causing hardships for those that do. Whoever is planning these signs and not putting on any kind of distance. They don't have anything to gain. We are the losers. Somebody from out of town looking for the golf course sees the sign – they are going to drive 2 ½ miles before they find it. Correct the situation. Period. Correct it. Same with the signage here where this facility is. Across the street, two feet – something. With all the money that this Board has given to the County golf course, what is the increase in play over the last three years. I have asked that numerous times. The County Commission just gave one percent of room tax that was designated to the County pool to the golf course. That was improper. The one percent levy was for the swimming pool only. If they don't need it, that room tax must be reduced by the one percent. It can't be changed. You enacted it for a specific purpose only. It wasn't part of the general tax. It was for the swimming pool only. Agenda Item II. 7, the Chamber is a private club. I want to remind you this Board cannot enhance private business; you can do tourist related events together, but they need to pay their own way in remodeling their building – not the hotel motel industry. Some are members; some are not. Again, it is a private club. The contemplated agreement is one-sided. I don't see any modifications. I have asked in the past and I am asking again, I have yet to receive any information regarding Mr. Spear who was a contractor with the Tour and Rec Board. Does he have a state business license, city business license, commercial location or home occupation. I want to remind you he took over \$300,000 just in bonus money from this facility. He was a contractor; he was not an employee. He needs to step up and prove that he was properly licensed. The Nevada Northern Railroad is continually given additional grant money from this Board in addition to \$240,000 they receive in room tax. They are not operating under the Nevada Open Meeting Law and the tax payer cannot see how the monies are spent. Again, they need to be cut off or held accountable. I remind you that Mr. Bassett manages the railroad and his wife is the bookkeeper. There must not be any nepotism and there is. At a recent City Council meeting held on September 19, 2019 the railroad was seeking to borrow approximately \$450,00 and for what we don't know. They have yet to report what their total debt is. I want to know if any member knows. The sitting members should know, and they have the responsibility to disclose. But first I want to ask you. I want to know what the debt is. I don't know if they are still in debt. They have an obligation to be debt free by the end of the year.

Tim Bunch spoke. As far as HR is concerned, there is one thing I want to bring up. Currently we are in the process with Pool Pact of getting e-learning up and running. They have a transition from one provider to another. The new company is called Absorb. When that is up and running, the ETA is March 1, the Tour and Rec employees will have the opportunity to also receive that basic training as far as blood borne pathogens, anti-harassment, bullying, those kind of modules are going to be a part of that process. I want to make sure that the Tour and Rec Committee is aware of that training so that everybody is on the same level playing field.

II. New Business:

1. Approval of Agenda, Including Removal of Agenda Items-Vice Chair:

Motion: Member McIntosh moved to accept agenda as presented.

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

2. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Member Bullis moved to approve minutes of December 19, 2019.

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

3. Election and approval of board positions, including: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary:

Motion: Member Henry made motion to appoint Member McIntosh as Chairman.

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

Motion: Member McIntosh made motion to appoint Member Henry as Vice-Chair.

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

Motion: Member McIntosh made motion to appoint Member Bullis as Treasurer.

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

Motion: Member Carson made motion to appoint Member Goeringer as Secretary.

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

4. Review of the Financial Report: Kyle gave figures of room tax collected for the month of December 2019, for motel/hotel and RV properties with a total of \$87,410.25. He said the Big 4 Ranch will be removed because the City did not give them their lodging license so that is a property that is not required to collect room tax. He gave the breakdown of monies given to the various entities. He then spoke to the actual comparison report. Moving on to the budget, he noted that the total income for the year was \$993,486.75 which is about 57 percent of what we had budgeted for the year. Total expenses are \$990,389.72. Essentially it shows we have an operating surplus of \$3,097.03. That is not the truth because we had to move the \$150,000 from Reck Bros. over. That is what the budget augmentation later on is going to go ahead and change. Even though it shows that we are operating at just above what we projected for, we are operating much higher than what we projected for. The item that we are getting close is Community Marketing. This year we reduced that line item by \$10,000 so we could put money into Main Street, Public Art and Historic Asset Maintenance. Since that is at 80% with four more months to go, we should consider augmenting that as well. We will be sending out reminders to grant people who haven't gotten their reimbursements in.

5. Ratify Bills:

Motion: Member Bullis moved to ratify bills in the amount of \$138,471.66, Check Nos. 24465 through 24512, excluding Check No. 24483 to Bath Lumber in the amount of \$347.90.

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

6. Approval to Pay Bill to Bath Lumber: Member McIntosh advised she will abstain from this item due to her interest in Bath Lumber.

Motion: Member Bullis made motion to pay Bath Lumber in the amount of \$347.90, Check No. 24483.

Motion seconded: Member Carson. **Motion carried with Member McIntosh abstaining from vote.**

7. Update/Review of Progress re: Shared Space Agreement with Chamber of Commerce:

Kyle said we are hoping to get a visitor space on Aultman Street. Instead of getting another building, we thought about getting a shared space agreement with the Chamber, who already has a great location, where we can trade space for essential services. The official visitor's center would take over the front space. We would take care of the design, the staffing, controlling the message and the look of what the visitor experience is. The Chamber would still hold an office there, but our person would act as essentially a secretary to free up Wayne's time to pursue more Chamber duties. There would still be an office for the Main Street Director and the horse races would have a shared office there. It would make it more efficient for Wayne and allow us to control the visitor experience that much more. We are working through with James what that contract would look like. There would be some retrofitting of the space. We asked Great Basin Building to give us a quote which covers the building of the wall, some additional electrical and painting. It would be a two- to three-week process. Floor plans are attached. The quote came in at \$12,748. Wayne Cameron spoke saying he probably spends sixty percent of his time dealing with tourists. Janet VanCamp asked if this change would have the shared space open seven days a week? Kyle said right now this doesn't change our relationship with you as the weekend visitor center. Most of the financial burden will fall on us so right now we will focus on five days a week. To rent a building would be significantly more expensive than operating as a shared space. Member McIntosh asked what we would be offering them since their meeting space is taken away, if they would be able to use our building. Kyle said yes for bigger conferences they would have access to our building at no cost for their board meetings and stuff like that. Kyle said the next step would be going back to the Chamber Board and working with James to draft an agreement. Then bring it back to all the Boards. Member Bullis suggested a special joint meeting so it is not drawn out.

8. Strategic Plan 2020: Kyle said this is the first step in opening the conversation. About this time last year, we went through a Strategic Plan review. This is an opportunity

to go through last year's Plan and make any changes or suggestions. There are several items highlighted in red that he would like considered.

- In Priority 1, Visitation and Destination Awareness, he would like to add "increase social media footprint in target markets."
- In Priority 2, Increase room night growth, he felt "develop and implement an ability to connect visitors, attractions and hotels on-line" could be removed as he felt that has already been done. He would like to add "focus on developing stronger relationships in southern Nevada."
- In Priority 3, Increase Bristlecone Convention Center usage and revenues, remove "update convention center policies and procedures to be as customer friendly as possible" and add "focus on technology upgrades."
- Priority 4, WPCTR budget will focus on increasing visitors, etc., add "focus on creating/attracting events to fill rooms in shoulder season."

Kyle is asking that the Board review the draft 2020 Strategic Plan and then plan on a longer discussion at our next Board meeting. Member McIntosh asked if they could contact Kyle with the Board's changes/suggestions. He said certainly. He will add suggestions in red so that all can see what is different. He said we will be using this to drive our budget planning which is coming up soon.

9. White Pine County Tour and Recreation Grant Dates: Kyle said our Aid to Organization grants open next month. The dates for Aid to Organization are: open February 7, 2020 and close March 6, 2020 at 5pm. For Capital Improvement and Outdoor Recreation Facilities: they open May 15, 2020 and close June 12, 2020 5pm. Member McIntosh asked if we would approve marketing in the March meeting. Kyle said that is why we need to do our budget, so we know how much we are going to be putting into Aid to Organization. They will be applying while we are doing our budget; we will essentially approve that in the April meeting. We will award Aid to Organization in the April meeting. We need to schedule our budget meeting with enough time to approve a budget prior to awarding the Aid to Organization grants so we know how much we have.

10. Parking Lot Quote Review: Kyle said the quote in front of the Board is for the street lights. There will be eight lights in the median. The additional light is for the one on the corner directly across from our front entrance. Member Bullis asked if the handicap situation is going to be fixed. Kyle said we are waiting for an opening for Reck Bros. The question was asked by Member McIntosh if this must be opened for bids since we have already approved all of this in the original project. James asked for the bid, \$71,465.00, and then said yes, it should be advertised.

Motion: Member McIntosh made motion to advertise for bids.

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

Kyle then asked if this would be considered the first bid or would I have to have Terry go ahead and put another one in. James said we would need to advertise, and Terry should respond to the ad. Member Carson asked if they should be sealed. Then it was mentioned that Reck Bros. has already put their number out and they didn't know how fair that would

be. Kyle said the original project we approved included lighting, trees and art. That was the original number that we did approve. What this is essentially Phase 1 was for the first check we cut for \$150,000 and now this is Phase 2 of that project that we approved, and that phase is \$71,465.00. James said what we need to do is go back and look at the original project and see what the scope of that was. We did approve to go out to bid if we feel we need to do that. Motion was amended.

Amended Motion: Member McIntosh amended her motion to include that in the event after review by our attorney if we need to put it out to bid to go forward.

Motion seconded: Member Bullis. **Amended Motion carried.**

11. Set Dates for Budget Hearing FY 20/21: After discussion, it was decided the preliminary public budget hearing could be held during a regular meeting if it is properly noticed.

Motion: Member Bullis made motion to hold preliminary public budget hearing on February 25, 2020 at 4pm during the regular Board meeting.

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

12. Budget Augmentation for FY 19/20: Kyle said this is at the recommendation of our auditor to move the expense from FY 18/19 over to FY 19/20 totaling \$150,000. The surplus that we have is much larger than what is presented in the current financial report. Kyle said he would also like to see an additional \$20,000 into Community Marketing bringing that up to \$90,000. That will give us the money to carry through the last four months with all our marketing campaigns.

Motion: Member Bullis moved to approve augmentation suggested by our auditor, as well as \$20,000 into Community Marketing.

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

13. Executive Director's Report:

a. Marketing

b. Events

c. Facilities

Errol spoke re: Marketing. He had supplied the Board with a written report which included an update on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Youtube. Member Bullis asked if we can monetize on these things so we can make some income. Kyle said no, not yet, since we don't have the followers necessary for that. For targeted digital, we have three campaigns through Reach Local which are targeting Youtube, Facebook and direct targeting towards Las Vegas. On our website, page views are up 60%. The top five pages visited are the homepage, fire and ice winter festival (calendar entry), rotary ice fishing, lodging and fire and ice winter festival (event). He spoke of the most refers and new articles. He continues to update the calendar as events become known. He gave a listing of upcoming events and updates re: the Spring events promotion and the

digital sign. Member McIntosh commented how helpful it was to have a written report from Errol in place of just a verbal one.

Kyle continued; he had Nicole tally up all the events we had in the past year. In 2019 there were 119 individual events for a total of 159 days booked. That was ten more days booked than the previous year. For 2020, we already have 55 events booked for 84 days. Kyle gave an update on some projects. We have to get together and make a proposal of why they should come to Ely. There is a group of people in the community working on getting the proposal and this eight-minute video done; it is due February 7. We just received a grant from the International Mountain Bike Association. They bring in their professional trail design crew, they look at the focus area you presented, and they essentially design you a world class modern standard destination trail system. There are two other grants we received from Travel Nevada. We are working on the second and third video for the train to trails. We are working with the golf course to implement the golf course grant that we received to reach out to college age golfers.

III. Old Business:

1. **Parking Lot Subcommittee Report-Goeringer:** Kyle has already covered.
2. **White Pine Golf Course Update-McIntosh:** No report.
3. **White Pine Trails Update-Goeringer:** Member Goeringer said our SNIPLMA grant is being postponed for another year. We are meeting with the forest service to see where we go next with this and possibly scrap up some more funding to keep building trails while we are waiting for the SNIPLMA grant to come in. Suzy and I will be building trails starting May through July. We will finish up our latest project which is another mile and a half to two miles of trails.
4. **Nevada Northern RR Director's Report:** No report. Member Bullis asked if we could have this list of updates put on a rotation schedule. This is a lot of preparation for a non-action item. Maybe break them up in like kind. James said this does not need an action. Any one of the Board members could have a conversation with Kyle to work this out.
5. **White Pine Public Museum Update:** Janet VanCamp was present. She gave an update for the past month and a list of their plans for the first half of the year. The museum is planning their first ever student art contest. June will be the annual Beer and Bacon event. World War II theme. Costumes encouraged. Member Bullis asked of the twenty visitors that were overnight, do we know how many visitors total regardless of whether they stayed that came through during the month? Response from Janet was no. Kyle said he went to the annual meeting. He said it was great. It was the history of Burlesque in the West. So interesting.
6. **Main Street Update:** No report.

7. Board Member Reports: Member McIntosh announced that the Ely Film Festival is moving along very well. It is March 13-15. We are looking for the first 100. If you want to join the First 100 Club, it is \$100, and you get an unlimited plus a special tour of the Central Theatre. It is a great soft season addition that is not weather dependent. No other reports.

IV. Public Comment: George Chachas commented that all Airbnbs that operate now continue to operate in violation of City and County codes. They are operating commercial ventures in residential zones. They have not made any attempt whatsoever to apply for a home occupation, a variance or a zone change. They need to be cited. You need to collect the proper business license fees, zoning and/or variance fees and penalties. I am requesting a list of all those properties and their addresses that are known to be conducting business. In attending the Ely City Council meetings, White Pine County Commission meetings, planning commission, now it is going to be regional, 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 collected for room tax. They have not applied for a room tax license, unless I am wrong; they have not applied for a state business license; they have not applied for a City business license. I want to remind you that I lost a \$7,000 rental contract with a tenant because the City claimed I was not properly zoned. Others within a block or two or three of me are living in their RVs, fifth wheels or motor homes with no ramifications. I am not going to be discriminated and you guys need to set your rules down. Especially the City and the County. You need to address that. The parking lot island between the Jail House Motel and Four Sevens was recently redone and does not meet minimum ADA standards. The center isle walkway has been removed and it needs to be put back. People are now forced to walk into the street. Those that may be handicapped are put in a hazardous situation. Those in the wheelchair are even worse off. This is new construction and the law mandates they meet ADA code. Federal code. Not City. Not County. Not George's. Federal. I want to know where the building inspector is in all of this. Is he still in Eureka? For your information, there is a Rotary Club that comes out of Reno that does their own fishing derby at Illipah Reservoir. They have been doing it for years. I am concerned that I am not getting all the information. It would have been nice to follow you guys. The law says three days prior to a meeting, not one. And I know there are some glitches once in a while, but I couldn't follow you and I didn't know enough or thought soon enough to come up and pick up that information without interrupting any of the speakers. I want that information three days prior, please. The last item I am concerned about – you talk about beautification; you talk about Main Street. I need to know if you guys are going to start considering what is happening on the north end of town. We have a fourteen-million-dollar property and we have signs on a fence that are not conducive to what we are trying to do. New one goes up; grow bigger steel containers. Blow Me. Bite Me. No folks. I don't blame the guy for getting excited. I'm not sure why he is upset but

we want to put an image through this community and if we are going to spend the money we're going to spend, then everybody complies.

V. Adjournment:

Motion: Member McIntosh made motion to adjourn.

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

Minutes submitted by: Judi Bourbeau

Minutes approved by:

Name

Date