

**White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board  
Bristlecone Convention Center – White Pine Room  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
November 22, 2022 – 4 pm**

**1. CALL TO ORDER; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman McIntosh called to order the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board meeting at 4 pm. Member Bullis led in the pledge of allegiance.

**2. ROLL CALL**

<b>Board Members Present</b>	Chairman McIntosh, Marietta Henry (Zoom), Ian Bullis (Zoom)
<b>Board Members Absent:</b>	Kurt Carson and Bryane Goeringer
<b>Staff Present</b>	Kyle Horvath, Errol Porter
<b>Legal Counsel</b>	McKinzie Hilton
<b>Public Present in Person</b>	Michael Couch, Nathan Robertson, Janette Trask, George Chachas, Janet VanCamp, Wayne Cameron
<b>Public Present Via Zoom</b>	None

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

George Chachas commented on Agenda Item 5.C.3. regarding changing the way public comment is allowed. You are creating a hardship for anyone who has public comment and cannot submit at the beginning of the meeting. You are forced to wait until the very end. That is wrong. That is not what the open meeting law was designed to do. It would hinder and impede public comment. Mr. Chachas said he has yet to see anything on the agenda regarding Heritage Park. He has yet to see anything on the agenda regarding Broadbent Park and the retaining of the grandstand. He wants to know how many conventions the Convention Center has hosted in the last three years, what months they took place and what was the attendance for each event. Mr. Chachas said the Board continues to give grants and monies to the Nevada Northern Railway. He again reminds the Board they do not operate under Nevada Open Meeting Law. At the meeting held on February 22, 2022, he asked on the list of bills you considered approving the payment to Ely Rotary Club dues in the amount of \$1,197. He is asking why this Board is paying dues to a private club. Over numerous months we have RVs that are setting up throughout the community in different locations. He wants to know if they are licensed. Time called.

**4. PRESENTATION: Great Basin Pyrotechnics – Michael Couch**

Michael Couch, the founder and director of Great Basin Pyrotechnics, was present. Through our partnership with the White Pine Tourism and Recreation Board on specific firework shows within the County, we have been able to add approximately fifteen minutes of shooting time in addition to putting on one of the most spectacular fireworks displays that the City of Ely has seen on the fourth of July this past year. This would not be possible without your financial support, so Thank You. Our next big event is Fire and Ice. New to this year are the color powder air cannons. It will allow us to launch the color of your choosing around one hundred feet high. In discussions with Kyle, we have decided on six to nine cannons leaning towards red, white and blue for colors. We are planning on setting them off sometime on Friday afternoon or early evening in between the events for that day. Right now, we are awaiting land owner permission from some of the buildings. On Saturday is the train show and there won't be many changes

there due to limited restrictions on distance. It will be about five to ten minutes long. The bon fire will be Saturday night after the train show. We are excited to see what the artist comes up with for the statue. We will try to be as creative as possible. Last year we dialed down the ground salutes; they are what provides the thump at the bon fire. This year we will be increasing the amount of powder in that shot. For the Sunday Broadbent show, we will not be bringing back the DJ. Funds will be better utilized on the fireworks instead. Mr. Couch has been satisfied with the outcome of their work over the past couple of years. We have definitely changed fireworks in White Pine County. He has hopes that White Pine County can and will be known for some of the most intense firework shows in the state. He envisions people getting away from everything, driving to Ely and finding a fourth of July paradise tucked away in the high mountains of Nevada. Thank you all for your support and I look forward to working with you again this next year. Kyle asked how much more we must do to increase our support of what you are doing so we could confidently say this is one of the best fireworks shows in Nevada. Mr. Couch said double last year. He said Elko puts on approximately a fifty-to-sixty-thousand-dollar show. Asked what the Board could do more of, Mr. Couch said just keep spreading the word that we are a 501c3 non-profit and that we can take funds. Kyle gave a brief description of what a colored powder blast involves. Visually stimulating for photography. He said they are trying to find a location for this to occur. He said a pub crawl will take place after the powder blast and then a concert that night at the Convention Center.

At this point, Chairman McIntosh asked for a four-minute recess.  
Chairman McIntosh called the meeting back to order after the brief pause.

## **5. ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Approval of Agenda, Including Removing of Agenda Items – Chairman McIntosh**

Chairman McIntosh said we need to remove under New Business C.2. since we do not have a fourth Board member present.

**Motion:** Member Henry moved to approve the agenda as presented with the removal under New Business C.2. Approval to Ratify Payment of Bill to Bath Lumber since we do not have a quorum for that.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Bullis **Motion carried**

### **B. Approval of Minutes: October 25, 2022, 4pm**

**Motion:** Member Bullis moved to approve the minutes of October 25, 2022, 4pm.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Henry **Motion carried**

### **C. New Business**

#### **1. Approval to Ratify Payment of Bills**

Chairman McIntosh disclosed that she has an interest in Bath Lumber and that is why the bills are separated; we will not be hearing the Bath Lumber bill tonight.

**Motion:** Member Henry moved to pay check nos. 11192 through 11235 less Bath Lumber in the amount of \$160,473.38.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Bullis **Motion carried**

**2. Approval to Ratify Payment of Bill to Bath Lumber**

No action was taken on this item due to lack of a quorum for this item.

**3. Approval to Narrow Public Comment to Agenda Items Only at the Beginning of Meetings, and to Designate the Comment Period at the Close of the Meetings for the Public to Comment on any Matter Relevant to, or within the Public Body’s Jurisdiction, Control, or Advisory Power, all in accordance with NRS 241.020 and Section 7.05 of the Nevada Open Meeting Law Manual**

Chairman McIntosh deferred to the Board’s counsel for an explanation of this item. Counsel Hilton said this is technically legal under the NRS that is mentioned in the agenda item. You just have to have two periods of public comment at the beginning or end of the meeting, or you can do public comment during each discussion item. We have never done that. We have always done beginning and end. One of those periods have to encompass anything that is within your advisory power, jurisdiction, control, etc. Yes, it is technically legal. She said there are a couple considerations that she would urge the Board to keep in mind. She said that if you do this let’s say someone was putting on an event, they wanted to pop into the meeting and just advise the Board of the event coming up. I would be forced to, based on the way this is worded, to make them wait until the end of the meeting and I will be very strict on that. I won’t be able to allow someone to just come in briefly and say we are having an event, please come or if someone wanted to say thank you or anything. It would be very strictly construed to just the agenda item. That is something she cautions the Board to keep in mind. Furthermore, with the proposed language, it indicates that public comment will not be accepted during the discussion items on the Board’s agenda. Sometimes the Board likes to accept comments from the public. If you go with this, again I will not be allowing that. Those are my cautions for the Board. The way we have it now we are free as long as it is within three minutes.

Member Henry suggested that if someone cannot wait until the end of the meeting, another avenue of communication is to submit a letter that would be read at the end of the meeting and placed into the minutes of the meeting. She said that is another thought. Counsel Hilton agreed; however, she said that she didn’t know if a person would have the foresight to write a letter. She said she felt they would expect to be able to come and talk about it.

Chairman McIntosh said this is a big move for us especially now hearing the caveats. She thinks it is important since there are three appointments to the Board with changes to the Board that will occur in January, and she feels a little bit uncertain about the constraints that we are making now when we will have new Board members. She feels the new Board should have a say in this policy change with this item being pushed until the new Board is seated in January.

**Motion:** Member Henry moved that we take no action now but wait until the new Board is seated in January.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Bullis

**Motion carried**

**4. Approval of Request for Proposals for Bristlecone Convention Center Renovation and Rebranding Architecture Services**

Chairman McIntosh said our previous Director kept the outside of the building up to date, but the inside has become dated. If this is approved, it would be a request for proposals to look at rebranding. We are more into events now than conventions. Director Horvath said we are falling short in the technology allowing us to do the blended meetings/events. We want to take it to the next level whereby it would be relevant for the next ten years.

**Motion:** Member Bullis made the motion to approve moving forward with the Request for Proposals.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Henry

**Motion carried**

#### **5. Approval/Acceptance of Letter of Understanding between EideBailley and White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board for Fiscal Year 2022 for Financial Audit Services**

Chairman McIntosh said EideBailley has been here on site, and this would be their second year as our auditor. This letter is an understanding of the general accounting standards, etc., acknowledging what the relationship will be.

**Motion:** Member Henry made the motion that we accept the letter of understanding between EideBailley and White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board for fiscal year 2022 for the financial audit.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Bullis

**Motion carried**

#### **6. Approval of the Engagement of RGC Economics LLC to Conduct a Study regarding the Feasibility of the Proposed Hotel/Casino/Ski Resort Project with a \$13,000 Contribution (1/3 of the cost). White Pine County has committed to pay \$26,000 (2/3 of the cost) assuming partnership with Tourism and Recreation**

Chairman McIntosh deferred to Member Bullis and Director Horvath. Member Bullis gave a brief history. He said about two years ago he asked Director Horvath if anyone had thought of putting a ski resort here. The whole thrust of this was as a commissioner when I ran, I wanted to diversify our economy. We are in a dangerous spot when we rely so heavily on the Mine. We had some great consultants involved and every step of the way was nothing but green lights. The next piece is to bring in professionals who do these kinds of reports for a living; that if we were to approach investors to come here and build this project, we can give them credible information that says whether it is a good idea from an economic standpoint.

Director Horvath said there was a short executive summary of all the things such as the amount of power, water, etc. Essentially all the requests were do you have this economic study. Member Bullis said that this will be the world's first and probably only ever hotel/casino/ski resort. That is the wild card that they really need to dig in and find out if it makes economic sense. Our land managers have come up with solutions and ideas as to how we can make this happen with a willingness to collaborate.

Chairman McIntosh asked if RGC is from Las Vegas and has Kyle met with them. Yes, to both. He said he did a site visit with one of the consultants. It was said this would be both Forest Service and BLM land. The Forest Service would be from the base of the mountain up with a ninety-nine-year lease. BLM would be around the base. Since you can't have a casino on Federal land there is talk of purchase of land because there is enough private property around it that that is where the casino aspect would go so it would avoid Federal land completely.

Chairman McIntosh appreciates Member Bullis' original goal on the diversification. She recently asked for statistics from Travel Nevada. In 2021 visitor spending in White Pine County was almost fifty-one million dollars. She thanked White Pine County for taking two-thirds. She feels it is a good investment for us. It is reconfiguring our economy.

Member Henry felt it was an excellent project and we need the study done.

**Motion:** Member Henry moved that we approve the engagement letter of RGC Economics LLC to conduct this study and that Tourism and Recreation's contribution would be \$13,000.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Bullis

**Motion carried**

### **7. Executive Director's Annual Evaluation**

Chairman McIntosh said we have been contracting with White Pine County for HR services and we will be done this month. Director Horvath has asked Pool Pact for a level one evaluation, an audit, and we now have a path forward. Records have been transferred from White Pine County to us. The evaluation is a compilation of eight categories. Chairman McIntosh read the comments given under the Summary Rating. She gave the goals and objectives to be achieved in the next evaluation period. She thanked Director Horvath on behalf of the Board for his leadership. Director Horvath in turn thanked the Board for trusting him with such an important position in the community and the opportunity for personal and professional development.

Member Henry thanked Director Horvath for his outstanding job. You have become an industry leader.

**Motion:** Member Bullis moved to accept the Executive Director's Annual Evaluation.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Henry

**Motion carried**

### **8. Approval of Meeting Dates for the First Half of 2023**

Chairman McIntosh recommends approval and depending on who is on the Board next year, there could be a change with work schedules. We want to be accommodating with everyone.

**Motion:** Member Henry moved that we accept the proposed meeting dates for the first half of 2023 as listed shown as the fourth Tuesday of each month at 4pm.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Bullis

**Motion carried**

## **6. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. Executive Director's Report                      Marketing/Events/Facilities**

Director Horvath said from a meeting standpoint, he had the normal bimonthly meetings with our two PR agencies. He briefly touched on the visit with the USA Parks Co-op for eclipse promotion, his work with Brian Armon/Corby Cobb about producing a gravel bike race and his work with Francine Burge, Public Relations Manager, with the State of Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.

He briefly went through accomplishments for the month; he covered the current, open and Travel Nevada marketing grants; the arts, i.e., the Sunset Lanes new mural design; the Prometheus display getting final updates; outdoor recreation updates; upcoming events, ongoing project goals for 22/23 and Bristlecone Convention Center events.



