

**White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board  
Bristlecone Convention Center – White Pine Room  
Special Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2023 – 10 am**

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

Vice Chair Henry called to order the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board special meeting at 10:08 am. Director Horvath led in the pledge of allegiance.

**2. ROLL CALL**

<b>Board Members Present</b>	Vice Chair Henry (Zoom), Sandra Wright, Janet VanCamp
<b>Board Members Absent:</b>	Chairman McIntosh, Kurt Carson
<b>Staff Present</b>	Kyle Horvath
<b>Legal Counsel</b>	McKinzie Hilton absent
<b>Public Present in Person</b>	George Chachas, Wayne Cameron, Dallas Graham-Parallel Lines
<b>Public Present Via Zoom</b>	Michael Nelson, Rachael Hamlin-Parallel Lines Lea Wilson and Erik Fong-One Studio D+A

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

George Chachas said he still has a list of items that have never been addressed. He said you need to put people on the Board who show up and answer requests for public information. He is disappointed at the turnout today with the impact that you may have on this facility. He is patiently waiting for information that he is not getting. That needs to change. He has not seen anything on the agenda to address Heritage Park. You have yet to address the question on Broadbent Park taking out the grandstand.

**4. PRESENTATION**

Director Horvath gave a brief background on the procedure we will be following. It is the advice of our legal counsel that we will have, according to the agenda, One Studio present first. The Board has a list of standardized questions that will be asked of both firms after their presentation. The Board will ask those questions, listen to the answers but is not to respond, not to deliberate and not to react. This is strictly presentation. When we go to the agenda item that is for discussion and possible action and after both firms have been able to present, then the Board will go ahead and discuss and at that time can make a motion to act or not. In the name of fairness and equity and in keeping with the NRS, this is the procedure our legal counsel has recommended.

One Studio will go first for their presentation. Please tell us everything we need to know. The Board will then ask the standardized questions. The presentation will then end, and we will have the other firm follow the same procedure.

**A. One Studio D + A**

Erik Fong presented on behalf of One Studio. Mr. Fong confirmed with the Board that the members had a chance to review their proposal. He said that their firm will primarily focus on the budget, which is the big driver at what can be done at this facility, and it will also help set the priorities with all the stakeholders. He said there is a wide range of improvements that we can make from making the space more functional, more versatile, creating some circulation spaces and carving out a little of the main convention area to

allow circulation into some of those other rooms on the north side. Mr. Fong said the budget will also drive a lot of what is being looked at, specifically two main goals. One is the overall impression of space. That will be driven by the look, the finishes and how it can best adapt to new branding. The other one is improving all the functionality, which is really in three different areas. One is technology, improving the lighting, and versatility. That is going to involve a lot of how a wide diverse range of functions can be brought into the space but also in how multiple events can be hosted at the same time. That has a lot to do with how some of the spaces can be partitioned to create those secondary areas. He said the last one would be accessibility, making improvements to the bathrooms.

Mr. Fong then referred to a sketch that was displayed on the screen. The blue line proposal would be one of the more costly elements if the Board were to move forward with this option. It shows the potential hallway that leads from the main entrance lobby which would close off that space to the main convention space. He went on to say that this does a few different things. One, it creates a pathway to those back rooms without having to walk through the main central space. It also creates a sound barrier to those restrooms. It will help with the acoustics as well as privacy. It also allows the White Pine room to have a secondary access that is not right off the main space. That pathway would also lead back into those north men's and women's restrooms and all those multi-functional spaces on the north side.

The red line is an area that is being proposed to block off so to create a better impression with any of the visitors walking through those back corridors but will also allow more to happen with those back house functions.

The last one in yellow could have potential depending on if there is storage room to be eliminated to be able to create a larger welcoming lobby space for those multi-functional spaces in the back.

Mr. Fong said working with the Board and all the various event planners, the process would be to have a full understanding of all the different types of events that the Board wants to have here; understand the budget so they can tailor what they feel is the most effective improvement for this convention space; and then provide some additional options that could be upgrades for the Board to consider that may go beyond the budget. He said those decisions can be made when those improvements/changes seem worth the cost. The goal is to give the Board the maximized budget and to do much of the things that they want and then find compromises where they can.

Ms. Wilson said that one of the important things that they are seeing now is that once the client finishes the design process and goes through the bid process, is that with the construction environment right now, the prices are a lot higher still than they would anticipate. She said what Erik was talking about is being able to provide the Board with a menu of choices that will then help them focus. And even if things are costing a bit more, they can then help the Board prioritize and figure out what is the most important and decide the best course forward.

The Board now asked the six standardized questions.

**1. Vice Chair Henry: Tell us about a past project that is similar in size and scope. What were some of the hurdles during, lessons learned, things to consider?**

**Response:** Mr. Fong said that one of their most recent projects was in Reno. It was an event space primarily set up for weddings. This one had a larger support space where it had a full kitchen as well as a bar and a lot of storage space. Some of the biggest challenges had to do with the budget constraints. Of being able to seat a certain number of guests which also dictated the size of the kitchen required. There was also a lot of storage space required for the tables, chairs, and different types of setups. The challenge was how to fit all those functions within the footprint that was allowed. It also had a pool as an outdoor space. They were tasked with trying to make it as efficient as possible within a tight footprint and working within a budget with an outside pool that created noise. They have also done a couple different convention spaces within casinos. Those were more remodel centered and closer to what is being done here. The big constraints were always working within the budget and also working with the existing property which was kept open, having to create barriers within the construction scope of work and be able to still have other functions around that space.

**2. Member VanCamp: What are the technology and AV trends in convention and event centers? What are some examples of must-have technology to be competitive?**

**Response:** Ms. Wilson said the convention center just talked about, that facility had a lot of the same AV needs. It had a lot to do with it being able to have other screens that were hidden from view and monitored and then having the acoustics throughout. That space was designed to be divided into two different spaces, planning again for those multi-functional spaces, then having it changed into one big room and then back into two smaller rooms. Controlling the acoustics is especially important. One Studio has hired an acoustics engineer on many of their projects. Another consideration is to have the lights being dimmable and able to change for the different events. Also, are they going to have live music, plugged in music, just do speech type of function – all of those audio and sound systems can be tailored to fit some of those events better than others. But the more complex and more things that they are trying to do, the more expensive some of those systems can be. It is really trying to find a compromise and trying to find the best system for each and which system can be tailored to suit the needs.

**3. Member Wright: Have you worked in remote areas and what issues do you see arising during the implementation phase? How would you overcome those issues?**

**Response:** Mr. Fong said they have worked in some remote areas – Minden and Dayton. Sometimes the challenge there is finding the right consultants and contractors to be able to do some of the more specialized work and still get competitive pricing. The fees of separate groups can be more costly if you want people to come and do site visits on a more regular basis. Sometimes it does not have to be the remoteness as much as it is a matter of distance between where you are and where the projects are. He said they have become good at doing some of these remotely by having zoom meetings and being able to work with a general contractor and walk around with a phone to get eyes on particular items. There will always be things that come up that require adjustments in some of the designs because unanticipated or unknown demolition hasn't been done yet. There are some challenges but they have found a way to work through a lot of those things in an efficient way. Mr. Fong said a lot of that has to do with building a good relationship with the people in the field doing the work and with the ownership group. Ms. Wilson said we would hopefully try to lean on any expertise the Board has.

**4. Member Wright: We do multiple types of events with quick turn arounds. What are your suggestions for flexibility of floor plans while still being able to accommodate a number of events?**

**Response:** Mr. Fong said to be able to do multiple events really requires some circulation spaces and access points without having to go through the main space. Some could be done with exterior entrances if they don't want to increase the size of the main convention space. The AV systems would need to be partitioned a little bit as well to run different events. If storage is also limited, which is the case, being able to set up the furniture in different ways or to have more versatile types of furniture so you don't need as much storage space is important. Ms. Wilson said their designers are familiar with furniture that takes up less space since they are stackable. She said the interior design teams are very familiar with the office spaces that can be cordoned off and then the convention spaces. They would have lots of suggestions from different vendors they have worked with.

**5. Member VanCamp: What are the design elements necessary to maximize small rooms and what are the design elements needed to maximize a large room?**

**Response:** Mr. Fong said that with the smaller rooms, the types of furniture and whether the seating is mobile enough and sturdy enough to accommodate ways to set that up is important. Sometimes having chairs that are stacked will provide a lot of versatility. With small spaces it is important to have acoustics that allow enough sound protection between individual rooms especially when there is flexibility in being able to open up the rooms to one another. Mr. Fong said that the acoustics are probably the one thing that gets the most complaints, that there is not enough sound barrier between the various rooms. In the larger spaces, the acoustics also play a role in being able to hear clearly. He said improvements can be tailored in such a way to make the speech intelligibility better without having it necessarily to be all about volume. He also said the arrangement of the seating and making sure that a lot of the outside noise is blocked will help with those larger rooms. Ms. Wilson said it will be very important to consider working with an AV consultant as well as an acoustics consultant to figure out those issues. On most of our projects now acoustics is a huge component.

**6. Vice Chair Henry: What ideas do you have that would give us the WOW factor in comparison to other event centers around the state?**

**Response:** Mr. Fong said having the upgrades and the finishes will help a little but making sure that it doesn't become overly dramatic. He said the WOW factor will come into play with some of the technology. Monitors and screens have come such a long way and some of the projection technology has improved a lot. There are a lot of ways to create imagery within the spaces and to change that based on the different types of functions. He said that you have to mesh those different kinds of functions by bringing in imagery of outdoor spaces or nature or some geometric pattern. He said that can be done by tailoring that to a specific group coming in to create a different kind of environment than what they are used to coming into at a convention space. Ms. Wilson said she would want to keep a lot of it neutral so that users can tailor it to whatever the event is. It would give you an opportunity to give a little bit of the Nevada feel in the lobby areas. It is always good to be timeless but this would be a good place to add color and texture that relates to the Nevada rural feeling.

Director Horvath said that closes out the question period. Mr. Fong thanked the Board for their time and for considering One Studio to help to help improve your facility. We would be honored to work with your group. Director Horvath said he appreciated their proposal and working with us through this process.

Vice Chair Henry now went to the second presentation on the agenda given by Parallel Lines.

## **B. Parallel Lines**

Dallas Graham was present to represent Parallel Lines. He introduced his two teammates – Rachael Hamlin and Michal Nelson – who were present via zoom. Mr. Graham arrived last night, first time in Ely, and stayed at the Nevada Hotel. He felt it was important that he make the trip to Ely to see and be in the space. This morning he said he was able to walk through the building which is always better than just seeing the space on a screen via a virtual tour. The words that come to his mind are you have a potential here which is mint making material. Right here. When he first learned of this project through the RFP, one of the very first things that hit him across the face is that you have one of the oldest pieces of life in the world right here. He asked himself why he didn't know about this, and it is right here in your convention center. This is one of the main things for him as a branding specialist. He was curious as to why this had not happened but also if this is the potential of what the rebranding of this renovation can do, to bring to life this very special unique thing about your convention center. There is something magnificent here and how do we create more of that message to get more people to come not only to use this space for events but to actually come here to this amazing thing. He said this will be the first time we as team members will have worked together on this scope of a project so there is a lot of innovation that we are excited about. What we see here is an opportunity for this space to be something very special. Our goal on this project is to really capitalize on what is so unique. And that means to also focus on something that is part of this region, which is the Bristlecone pine. This very gorgeous unique tree that is only in certain parts of the country but that also is part of the event making material that you have which is Prometheus – the oldest of old trees. There is a beautiful ability to adapt messaging and space to something that you already have right here – a wink to the legend and myth of Prometheus, fire from the gods. As far as space and the uses of space he understands there is real curiosity in the technology component, incorporating more technology throughout the space to make it more user accessible both here and for virtual meetings. He said Michael Nelson can speak more to that and that Rachael Hamlin's expertise involves taking real care at looking at the interior renovations. The rebranding aspect falls into Mr. Graham's expertise. He felt there is huge, massive potential here; he felt there is wonder, and you could create some curiosity. He said people would really want to come here not only because of the convention center but to also be wowed by the fact that there is something so unique in all the world right here. He felt that is what we should focus our attention on to help gather more and more people to this area.

The Board now asked the six standardized questions.

### **1. Vice Chair Henry: Tell us about a past project that is similar in size and scope. What were some of the hurdles during, lessons learned, things to consider?**

**Response:** Ms. Hamlin, their interior specialist, is a commercial interior designer. She said she recently completed a project for the state of Utah in Salt Lake City which is the largest state office building. Part of that is a convention and multi-purpose center for state use, employees, and the public. She looked at how to delineate large spaces into smaller spaces and how you could use them for different types of events, virtual meetings, in-person meetings, classroom style events, galas, banquets and maybe a Taekwondo class, just a large variety of needs that they had to accommodate. It was quite challenging from a look, feel, and durability stand point in terms of materials and furniture that was selected. Not to mention the amount of space that was required to keep furniture to the side when a banquet was happening versus a yoga class. Those were all items that they had to take into consideration. Part of the challenge was specific

lighting control, things that are intuitive to the users to use in terms of lighting. Paramount is always the acoustics. How do they create large spaces where people can be heard all the way in the back and when you have two of them happening at the same time, how do they use partitions or different construction elements to allow that to happen? Mr. Nelson spoke saying for thirty years they have traveled the United States and worked extensively in convention services. All types of live events, all types of meetings, venues for numerous corporate clients. He has been in many facilities across the U.S. doing live events and things from acoustics to digital signage to meeting content. For ten years in Sun Valley, Idaho they were the extensive in-house AV company and the resort owners let them sell all meeting services to all their clientele. All the variables you as a Board are looking at are vital. Mr. Nelson said they have a lot of resources.

**2. Member VanCamp: What are the technology and AV trends in convention and event centers? What are some examples of must-have technology to be competitive?**

**Response:** Mr. Nelson said clients have diverse needs and sometimes it is like running an ER – it is last minute, content changes, have to add a zoom meeting. He would go back to basics and have a structure within a facility that can do everything as one or divide up into modules so that you can stream from each of those sections, both audio and video, and then receive and display content; he said you can do that with all different types of technology from projectors and video walls. They are making a lot of video walls, recently one that is three stories tall. Depending on the budget, what are the basics that they should have in this building to make the big space? Questions such as how many small spaces can they break out at the same time, how do they control that and how do they accomplish it without an engineer there so it is very simple. They have done a lot of restaurants. There is an incredible product out there that allows you to run it with one little knob; you can split rooms into zones. The manufacturer has been around for eighty-three years. That would be a good fit for this establishment. It is very cost effective. There is a science on how you deliver sound. He said when your customers come in you have one shot at reputation. Once you look at the metrics of all these elements, putting that together into a good package is essential. As an owner, once you get whatever you get you need to know that that is the best, that it is reliable, and who is going to support it. He said he sees this from the point of view as an owner, from the sales side as a customer, and then from a vendor's view.

**3. Member Wright: Have you worked in remote areas and what issues do you see arising during the implementation phase? How would you overcome those issues?**

**Response:** Mr. Graham said the two architects here today have worked remotely and they have always been willing to make the commute. They can make whatever travel plans are necessary.

**4. Member Wright: We do multiple types of events with quick turn arounds. What are your suggestions for flexibility of floor plans while still being able to accommodate a number of events?**

**Response:** Ms. Hamlin said it is important to plan well from the beginning. If they know they have a quick turnaround to deal with, how is this organized to allow them to do that? What are the furnishings that they purchase that the end user can operate? There may be an educational component with the staff so they have a strong sense of ownership over the space of how they can create those quick turnarounds. The layout is important. She said they need to know the different types of events so they can help transition between them. Mr. Nelson said they are in and out of a lot of facilities and there is software that can be used that lays out everything in the building which will assist the crews that do the turnover.

It will show them the classroom tables, six foot, eight foot, rounds, how many chairs per table, where the outlets are. They put this up for each meeting room. That information is vital. Some of the equipment that is used in the rooms could be mounted and then it could be broken up. This is meeting room A, this is B, this is C and then it all comes into one.

**5. Member VanCamp: What are the design elements necessary to maximize smaller rooms as well as design elements to maximize larger rooms?**

**Response:** Ms. Hamlin said human scale is very important and that you can feel uncomfortable very quickly in a large space. Finding ways that the interior design helps the individual feel comfortable in the space is something they will definitely look at. That will be a big component. Keeping spaces timeless, fresh, modern, and clean are important design components. How can they do that and still have the human scale? When they are talking about interesting branding, they are talking about the things that create the incredible artifacts of the Bristlecone pine. These are things they are excited about integrating into the design of the large and small spaces.

**6. Vice Chair Henry: What ideas do you have that would give us the WOW factor in comparison to other event centers around the state?**

**Response:** Mr. Dallas said it comes from fresh views, from fresh eyes and then coming in here and seeing the wood. He said you have something remarkably special and unique. There is this beautiful opportunity, and they would love to help capitalize on that. He said there is this amazing piece of wood out of this one part of the country that is right here; you have this mythology associated with it. They want to help this convention center really echo the attunement that someone has already been trying to cultivate here. He felt that is the wow factor. He does not think you have to look outside. Now they just need to reskin it; to come at it with fresh eyes. What is here is remarkable. How much fun it will be to bring more people to this area of Nevada and be in this space and be wowed. He felt his team would love the opportunity to help with that.

Director Horvath said that closes out the question period.

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Approval of Agenda, Including Removal of Agenda Items – Vice Chair Henry**

**Motion:** Member VanCamp moved to approve the agenda as presented.

**Motion Seconded:** Member Wright

**Motion carried**

**B. New Business**

**1. Review of submitted proposals for the Renovation and Rebranding of the Bristlecone Convention Center into a Modern Event Center RFP and Selection of Proposal and/or Award of Contract**

Vice Chair Henry said at this time we will do deliberations. She said one of the things she noticed about Parallel Lines is that they have an in-house audio-visual person, which is especially important in this project. The other vendor could identify an individual and outsource it where Parallel Lines already has someone. Clearly thirty percent of this project or more involves audio-visual technology. Member Wright said she had the same thought. She liked that they did not have to outsource an AV person. Member

VanCamp said that she also liked that idea. Vice Chair Henry said especially coupled with the experience that they expressed that they have. She thought it was impressive. Both other members agreed.

Director Horvath said you have two very qualified firms that have clearly put a lot of time and effort into this. Some of the things he appreciates from One Studio is having a floor plan, something that we can visualize. Clearly not set in stone but it was nice to see that there was some deliberation on what was possible with our floor plan. He also appreciated from Parallel Lines the AV being in-house. Both firms are within reach from an accessibility standpoint. There is a history with projects in White Pine County that have been brought to completion with Parallel Lines. But if you look at the projects completed by One Studio, very high-end projects, they could certainly accomplish what we are looking for. He sees merit in both firms. He said both firms had exceptional answers to the questions and had a clear understanding of what they are talking about.

Member VanCamp said she did go and look on-line at both companies and past projects. She liked One Studio's diverse designs. Every building was different and that told me that they listened to the wants and needs of the Board or whoever wanted the construction. She did like the branding portion from Parallel Lines with Prometheus. She liked One Design where they mentioned incorporating local historical things. She was thinking about the Charcoal Ovens. There was an item in One Design in their proposal where they talked about additional things that were not mentioned. Additional facility assessments of plumbing and electrical systems which she felt down the road would have to be considered.

Vice Chair Henry felt they were both impressive. She said again her concern is about the technology and the audio-visual requirements and the fact that she feels like when you have someone in-house, you have more control. When you must outsource it, it is a little different. Again, she felt this was a very key element in what we are trying to accomplish.

Member Wright said she was on the same page as Vice Chair Henry and Member VanCamp. She loved all their enthusiasm.

**Motion: Vice Chair Henry made a motion that we accept the proposal from Parallel Lines.**

**Motion seconded: Member Wright**

**Motion carried**

Director Horvath thanked both teams for taking the time to come in today and present. He said he will follow up with both firms after the meeting.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

George Chachas wanted to remind the Board that he is still waiting for responses to his requests for public information that he has given you in the past. It has been months and years. Thank you.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 am.

**Minutes submitted by: Judi Bourbeau**

**Minutes approved by:**



*Caroline M. Smith*  
Name

2/28/23  
Date