

White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board Special Meeting Minutes

Date: March 3, 2017
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Location: Bristlecone Convention Center - White Pine Room

Members Present: Shane Bybee
Caroline McIntosh
Bruce Setterstrom
Drew Skeen
Marietta Henry (via phone)

Staff Present: Ed Spear
Meg Rhoades

Members Absent: None

Public Present: Kaylynn McMurry
Steve Stork
George Chachas

Shane Bybee called to order the meeting of the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board at 8:37 a.m. February 3, 2017 in the White Pine Room at the Bristlecone Convention Center. Bruce Setterstrom led in the pledge of allegiance.

I. Public Comment: George Chachas stated there was a snow removal issue, he'd like a list of conventions and Mr. Spear's salary for the last 6 years and stated that the railroad should not be getting tax money because it isn't following open meeting law.

II. New Business:

- 1. To Create a Strategic Plan for White Pine Tourism and Recreation, Identify Our Mission, Our Objective, Implementation and Measurements of Effectiveness – Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member Caroline McIntosh explained that she looked through several strategic plans. She felt the Reno Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority had the best model to follow even though they were a much larger destination than our community. She presented a two page example plan she had put together. The mission statement proposed is to develop the partnerships and the tools to entice visitors to our community through tourism, recreation, and conventions. Discussion followed. Board Member McIntosh stated that we already have a great logo and tag line in All Aboard Ely. She stated that she felt the core goals are to increase room nights with a focus on a 550 mile radius, effectively manage resources and use metrics to evaluate success. She stated that the 550 mile radius does not mean that we are not interested in other visitors but that there should be a larger percentage of our efforts spent on closer markets than those further away. She said that a seven day a week visitor's center is crucial.

Guiding principles would be items such as

- Collaboration with other entities such as the Chamber in such activities as the development of the White Pine Ticket.
- Upgrades to the convention center

Anchors for our tourism were identified as

- Nevada Northern Railway
 - Cave Lake
 - Lehman Caves
 - Great Basin National Park
 - Dark Skies
 - Golf Course*
 - Fishing and Other Water Sports (including Comins, Cave, Bassett, Sunnyside and Illapah)*
 - Winter Events*
 - Trails*
 - Airport*
 - Campgrounds*
 - Renaissance Village/Art Bank*
 - Camp Success*
- (* indicates added during the meeting)

Discussion included talk about increasing wintertime events such as ice fishing, open water tournaments, developing fishing itineraries and working with other communities such as those in Lincoln and Eureka County.

Chairman Shane Bybee stated that the golf course was planning and working on several improvements including a pavilion and other improvements as well.

Mr. Spear stated that groups are struggling with getting enough volunteers and it is getting harder to put events on. Caroline suggested increased advertising for volunteers. Marietta Henry stated that she attended the Pony Express Territory meeting and wanted to thank both Ed and Lori for their efforts to promote and work with the other communities. She also wanted to thank Meg Rhoades for her help with banners for the White Pine Horse races and commented that she appreciates how hard the staff works and how busy they are. Chairman Bybee stated that the staff at the convention center could not be taxed with putting on all the events and that volunteers were crucial.

Board member McIntosh reiterated the need to concentrate on the 550 mile radius and use low cost options such as social media and shows funded by grants. Mr. Setterstrom stated that the need to travel further would not be needed. Mr. Spear stated that the shows such as the American Bus Association (ABA), National Tour Association (NTA) and Go West Summit were a different kind of show that concentrates on tour operators and offer the opportunity to meet with multiple tour operators in one place. These types of

shows are currently the main focus of The Nevada Division of Tourism & Cultural Affairs (formerly NCOT) and are held in a different location every year. Mr. Bybee stated that group marketing was still important and should still be pursued. Board Member McIntosh stated that under the bullet, point take advantage of low cost opportunities to tell our story to national and international markets, if they are paying for or helping pay for this that is a low cost opportunity. Mr. Bybee stated that there is still a call, especially when it is funded by grants, to pursue trade shows also.

Mr. Bybee said that he would like us to meet quarterly with the partners we have identified. We need to find out from them what they need from us as well as let them know what we need from them. Discussion continued on having a visitor's center open 7 days a week. The suggestion was made to have convention center staff at the chamber on the weekends. Mr. Spear said that we don't really have the staff for that but suggested that the White Pine Public Museum might be a good option as they are going to be running 7 days a week.

Board Member McIntosh added that we need to offer training to not only the employees of our hotels but the other business in town that will have contact with visitors. Hospitality training was added to the strategic plan.

Bruce Setterstrom said that he feels we should concentrate on advertising or presenting somehow to some of the housing communities in the Las Vegas area. Get word on our golf course, fishing and other water activities to more concentrated groups. Kaylynn McMurray brought up kayaks and Mr. Spear stated that we really need to look at a portable dock to use in the cove at Cave Lake. Mr. Bybee said then if it is portable we could use it at Comins Lake or other places when needed.

Bruce Setterstrom asked if we were looking for a motion on this and Caroline McIntosh said that yes with the addition of directional signage, Renaissance Village and Camp Success. Shane Bybee said that he would like to see this as a standing item on the agenda and that we schedule a special meeting soon with all of the partners. Caroline McIntosh added she would also like for consideration in the motion that we start developing the K.P.I.s under here. We don't want it general we want to drill down the specific areas as to how we are going to ascertain our metrics and a lot of those came from our agenda a week ago.

Motion: Bruce Setterstrom. That we accept the White Pine County Tourism & Recreation Board strategic plan overview with the adoption of under strategic purpose to improve directional signage and under White Pine tours anchors we add Renaissance Village/Art Bank, camping and Camp Success. Chairman Bybee added to further identify the K.P.I.s to which Mr. Setterstrom agreed. (adopted plan is attached)

Motion seconded. Marietta Henry **unanimously approved** **motion carried**

IV. Public Comment: None

V. Adjournment:

Motion: Caroline McIntosh. To adjourn the meeting.

Motion seconded: Bruce Setterstrom. **unanimously approved motion carried**

Minutes submitted by: Meg Rhoades

Minutes approved by:

Name

Date