



Visit Estes Park  
The Destination  
Marketing Organization  
VisitEstesPark.com

# Board of Directors Regular Meeting May 17, 2016 Minutes

**Board Members Attending:** Karen Ericson Steve Kruger, Lindsay Lamson, Morgan Mulch, Jon Nicholas, Adam Shake, Scott Webermeier,

**Also Attending:** Town Trustee Liaison Cody Walker, Rocky Mountain National Park Public Information Officer Kyle Patterson, Ken Arnold, Carrie Arnold, Anthony Welch, Michelle Oliver

Elizabeth Fogarty, President & CEO  
Suzy Blackhurst, Visit Estes Park (VEP) staff  
Abi Huebner, Visit Estes Park (VEP) staff

The meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Webermeier.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Board Comment:** None.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Webermeier at 2:03 pm.

## A. Action Items

1. Chairman Scott Webemeier asked to add item 10 to the Discussion Items and Reports: Chair's Report.
2. Approval of Agenda: Karen Ericson moved to approve the amended agenda; Lindsay Lamson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Jon Nicholas asked for clarification about the nature of topics to be discussed under item 4 listed as "Advocacy." Chair Webermeier noted that the items would be strictly informational. The motion was approved unanimously.
3. Approval of Minutes from the May 3, 2016, Board Meeting  
Lamson moved the minutes be approved. Steve Kruger seconded the motion.

Morgan Mulch noted that Discussion Item B-2 on Mediation Follow Up that the reference to the EDC be corrected to "Estes Park EDC." Mulch also noted that he did not recall Lamson naming actions by one specific individual as a reason for personally recording meetings. Lamson agreed that removing the named individual from the minutes would be appropriate as he did not intend to single any one person out. He offered to review the recording he made to confirm whether he named the individual during his comments. Nicholas noted that he did not believe it is appropriate to such detailed meeting summaries.

Lamson moved approval of the minutes be tabled until after he reviews the recording and references to the Estes Park EDC be correctly expressed. The motion passed 6-0-1 with Ericson abstaining due to her absence from the meeting.

Ericson asked that board members receive meeting minutes more than 24 hours in advance of the meeting when they will be approved. Chair Webermeier assured board members that efforts to provide the documents earlier.

## B. Discussion of Items and Reports

### 1. Rocky Mountain National Park Report – Kyle Patterson

Patterson reported that through April, year-to-date visitation to the national park is up 11 percent. The Trail Ridge Road Media Day was successful after a few years of not being able to hold the event due to adverse weather. Because of an ongoing major water project at Glacier Basin Campground, no advance reservations for the facility are being accepted until July 1, even though work is anticipated to be complete in June. Plans for the traditional Memorial Day weekend opening of Trail Ridge Road continue moving forward, but Patterson is expecting to receive an update on snow removal operations later in the week. People reserve campground spaces up to six months in advance, and Patterson said they were close to full. Backcountry camping permits also are up significantly. Patterson assured board members that when campgrounds are full, guests are provided a handout prepared by the Visitor Center that directs them to alternate campgrounds in the area. She also noted that a Sprague Lake dam project, scheduled to occur after the campground has closed in the fall, would have no impact on water quality.

Increased visitation to the national park continues to create concerns specifically related to congestion at Wild Basin, Bear Lake and on Fall River Road, Patterson said. She expects to have a more complete report in June. However, she encouraged people to check the park's web cams installed at entrance stations to see traffic conditions before traveling, and noted that those who arrive at the park between 10 am and 2 pm should expect long lines. Lamson suggested future consideration be given to expanding parking near the Gateway Center on Fall River Road and providing additional shuttle services from that point. Patterson said the park continues to review its short term and long term solutions. Webermeier reminded Patterson that when appropriate, the board is prepared to reach out and advocate for more funding for Rocky Mountain National Park. Patterson appreciated the support and will provide talking points.

### 2. Mediation Update

Webermeier said he, Jim Pickering and Melissa Westover continue to meet to discuss moving forward based on Estes Park EDC Board and VEP Board desires.

### 3. Date for VEO Board and VEP Attorney Meeting

Board members concluded that the best day for having a session with Attorney Blair Dickhoner would be Tuesday, May 24 at 2 p.m. CEO Fogarty will make arrangements with Dickhoner.

### 4. Advocacy – Town Moraine Grant, Rocky Mountain Performing Arts Center/FOSH Funds & Lazy B

Trustee Walker reported that the Town Board voted 5-2 to pursue grant funding for Moraine Avenue, voted to release FOSH funds to Rocky Mountain Performing Arts Center 6-1, and the Lazy B proposal was being considered by the planning commission at the same time as the VEP meeting. Webermeier and Fogarty noted that VEP has received a formal request to endorse the Moraine Avenue construction project with a letter of support.

Nicholas moved that VEP officially support the Moraine Avenue FLAP Grant application. Mulch seconded the motion. Walker noted that the improvements would go from the Donut Haus to Scratch Bakery and will include the addition of a center turning lane on Moraine Avenue. Matching funds for the grant will not be needed until the project ends. Nicholas noted that matching funds from the Town would come from the Town's Open Space allocations and collections from the 1% sales tax for street improvements. It was noted that the Colorado Department of Transportation does not plan to contribute to the project. Lamson noted that the board had provided letters of support for other projects in the past and said it makes sense to continue the practice. The motion passed unanimously.

### 5. Finance Report

Fogarty noted that the district's cash position remains steady. When March tax receipts were significantly lower than the same month in 2015, Office Manager Michael Bodman investigated the situation with the state. The state admitted that, due to a mail carrier change, tax payments from at least 30 businesses had

not been logged in a timely manner. Year-to-date, lodging taxes are 9.49 percent over 2015 receipts. Fogarty offered to send Chair Webermeier the latest QuickBooks reports on file.

6. KPI Report

Fogarty provided brief comments about the KPI report, noting significant changes in media and PR values, due to high trending major publication information distributed in 2015 during the same period. She pointed out that media and PR values for 2016 are outpacing those seen in 2014, and expectations are that high levels of coverage will occur throughout the rest of the year to help even out the disparity. She also pointed out that the Barcelona Principle points for coverage only includes coverage which includes Turner PR's involvement. She commented that the combination of web sessions being up while and page views are down is a positive marker, and Jack Rabbit statistics continue to recover. She also said staff had removed the additional 1 percent collections from community barometers. The lodging report continues to show ADRs trending upwards.

7. CEO Report

- a. Due to time constraints, CEO Fogarty will be coming off the Estes Park EDC Board. Lamson asked if formal action to replace Elizabeth was needed, to which Nicholas answered affirmatively. Webermeier noted that VEP needs a representative on the Estes Park EDC Board, and volunteered to be the representative, but said he would step aside if another board member wanted to participate. Lamson said it was indicative of good faith to have Scott participate; Mulch agreed.

Lamson moved the board designate Scott Webermeier as its representative. Mulch seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0-1 with Webermeier abstaining. Webermeier will contact Estes Park EDC Chair Jim Pickering with the information.

- b. Fogarty recently met with Town of Estes Park Community Services Director Rob Hinkle, who is restructuring the department. She noted that VEP already is working more efficiently with the Events department than in the past. Hinkle supports the use of VEP's Event Forms, and events poster.
- c. Bodman and Fogarty attended the Ambassador's Training session and were on the formal agenda. They shared relevant VEP info. and also encouraged the group to share information they would like to see included in the Visitor Guide and website. Fogarty offered the group, or individuals of the group, training on the VEP website.
- d. Travis Machalek, Rob Hinkle and Fogarty continue to work on the Service Level Agreement.
- e. Most of the VEP team went to the recent "Explore Our Store" activity and Estes Valley Library Centennial activity.
- f. Community Involvement: Duck Race had the second largest sales in the history of the event. Those involved with the Rodeo are looking to replace some lodging sponsorship trades. Both Mulch and Kruger offered to review inventory in relationship to Rodeo needs. EALA's final meeting until October has been held. Five new members were added to that organization at the last meeting. VEP continues to share information and offer assistance to the Arts District. Fogarty recently met with the new Estes Park Medical Center Foundation Director David Mullen and provided a presentation to the Estes Park Wedding Association.
- g. Regional Tourism: VEP partnered with the Boulder Theater and National Parks Trips to exhibit at the John Fielder presentation. Fogarty had an exhibit table and distributed 700 Visitor Guides and Rocky Mountain chocolate bars during the evening.
- h. Lia Wik of DTN is in town meeting with businesses about their website presence. She will be presenting during classes on Wednesday morning and late Thursday afternoon. Tyler Brooks also will be presenting Google Analytics training during the session. These two classes will be the last until Fall. Website and Google Analytics were the #1 requested class in the recent VEP annual survey.
- i. Staff continues to work on the vacation homes site.
- j. Bob and Carol Fixter are having a soft opening of their new business Cinnamons from 7 to 10 a.m. Thursday, May 19. The official Grand Opening is scheduled for 7 to 10 a.m. Thursday, May 26.
- k. Abigail Huebner, the new Partner and Group Development Manager, was introduced to the board.

- l. VEP is a sponsor of "For the Love of Cities" presentations by author Peter Kageyama on May 25. Kageyama's presentations are directly tied to product development and community co-creators.
  - m. VEP also was one of the sponsors of an annual conference for nonprofit organizations. VEP attended all sessions of the conference and had an exhibit table.
  - n. VEP has purchased half-price tickets to the Lazy B dinner and performance at 5 p.m. May 26. Fogarty asked board members to let her know if they would be unavailable to attend.
8. Town of Estes Park Events Department Report – Rob Hinkle, Community Services Director  
 After hearing a report about events department developments, Fogarty asked Rob Hinkle to recap the presentation he provided at a recent Town Board work session. Hinkle gave board members an overview of activities the department is working on and things staff is working to improve on. Two new employees recently have joined the Events Department. In the near future they, and Hinkle, will be preparing a vision and mission statement to guide the department's activities in the future, documenting policies and procedures, and developing upcoming events. Hinkle has met with staff at The Ranch in Loveland, and will continue to work cooperatively with that facility.
9. Lazy B Ranch & Wranglers – Michelle Oliver  
 Fogarty introduced Michelle Oliver, who reported that the Estes Valley Planning Commission voted 4-3 Tuesday afternoon to reject the business's development proposal on property currently owned by Elk Meadow Lodge & RV Resort. The proposal will go before the Town Board in June. Oliver said she was asking for VEP Board support of the proposal. She emphasized that the chuckwagon business is totally separate from the RV park, and said the operation would keep people in Estes Park another day. Mulch said he felt experiencing the operation would be helpful before voting to approve a letter. Webermeier asked Oliver to provide the board with a document using a pros and cons business model for how the business might impact the tourism experience. He also said experiencing the chuckwagon might assist the board.
10. Chair Report – Scott Webermeier  
 Webermeier said he has learned that the Town of Estes Park has received an open records request of trustees asking for any information related to Visit Estes Park. He asked if other board members had heard of the request. All board members verbally noted they had not heard that information. It also was noted that no feedback to Visit Estes Park's response to a prior open records request had been received.

**C. Adjourn**

Shake moved the meeting be adjourned. Ericson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

  
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 Suzy Blackhurst, Recording Secretary

  
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 Scott Webermeier, Chair

DATE: 6-7-2016

DATE: 6/2/2016