

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
July 28, 2020**

Call to order: Cristal Logan called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Attendance: **Present:** Cristal Logan, Debbie Braun, Donnie Lee, Charlie Bantis, Jeff Bay, Rose Abello, Andrew Ernemann, Rob Ittner, Alinio Azevedo, Jeanette Darnauer, Alan Fletcher, Sam Barney, Heather Kemp, Lisa LeMay, Maria Morrow Dave Ressler, Riley Tippet, Nina Eisenstat, Cari Kuhlman, John Rigney, Torre, and Bill Tomcich **Special Guests:** Rachel Brenneman, Sara Ott and Maureen Poschman **Absent:**, David Baugh, John Kinney, Heather Steenge-Hart, Patti Clapper **Staff Present:** Kristen Anderson, Susan Bantis, Sarah Reynolds Lasser, Liz Cluley, Kathryn Dziedzic and Jennifer Albright Carney

Approval of prior meeting minutes: Approved May 26th and June 30th minutes.

2020 Census – Rachel Brenneman: Census basics and discuss its importance. In addition, showcased how COVID-19 has impacted the Census Bureau process as well as the local outreach efforts.

Presentation Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13KxSOeCcXYLJVOHlx6dpB5Ar5nCUgFXx/view?usp=sharing>

Chair’s Comments: Cristal started with a thank you to our entire community of leaders. Our leaders have really helped and guided the valley and community through COVID. The arts and culture sector are conducting a lot of great events virtually. Theatre and Ballet are looking to happen in person. Aspen Institute is seeing huge success on our virtual events.

President’s Comments: Debbie also took a minute to say thank you to our community of leaders. July has definitely been a busy month. The Restaurant committee met to discuss the mask zone. It was a great meeting with a lot of the top people in the restaurant industry. Debbie is meeting next week with the city on winter dining, what happens when we can’t seat outside. The City and ACRA are already working on resolution and new ideas. Debbie gave Valley Health Alliance update. We are moving forward with small business health plan through Rocky Mountain HMO. Plan will hopefully start January 2021. July 1st, ACRA Guest Services staffing at the Pavilion. We started with virtual but then pivoted to in person guest services. The Ambassador / Street team has been very successful. Daily from 12pm to 8pm, to date we have given out 700 visitor kits. We are seeing more compliance on the streets, visitor centers and airport. On an HR note, Jack Orsi, Sales Coordinator, has resigned. We will not be filing the position right away. Eliza Voss is on a much-needed, well deserved two-week vacation. With that being said, I have invited Maureen Poschman to give a PR update.

Maureen Poschman – Business is much busier than expected. We have received great PR recently. The writer with Town and Country came for the month of June and now staying until September. How escaping to Aspen during the pandemic is a great idea. <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/travel-guide/g33371172/things-to-do-aspen-summer/> with more articles to come; how to get engaged and married in Aspen. Hosting media, targeted drive range from Denver. The New Travel Conference, Debbie and Eliza both spoke about Aspen. We were the only Mountain town destination to present. We will continue to push stories.

Torre did read the article and has a few concerns in regard to where our marketing budget is going to and if town is at max capacity and how we are handling it.

Overall, all the board members had nothing but good things to say about the article and that the article did talk about how Aspen is safe and what we are doing to promote awareness and how to travel in the new COVID normal.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Director's Comments:

Rob Ittner: Rob has taken a position, Director of F&B for a new luxury hotel in central California. He has been working with the same company now for over a year now. Taking a leave of absence from Aspen and stepping down from the Board of Directors. Thank you to Debbie and Cristal for all your support over the years. I have been involved with ACRA for 20 years. After the sale of his restaurants last year, this was a great opportunity to advance my career. Thank you to everyone on the board and supporting the local businesses. Rob hopes to move back to Aspen in the coming years, after gaining knowledge and experience with a large corporation.

Torre: Rob, your news is a surprise to me. Congratulations. The City had a work session last night. Topics were; Council goals, construction going on at the Wheeler Opera House, fall to December. Shutting down the Restaurant and perhaps the art Gallery. City office project, update with a few challenges. On target and under budget to a degree. Mask Zone, first reading last night. There are a few different zones to consider and decide. In the downtown core, there is no chance for 6ft of separation. First original concept was downtown core; however, it may grow to a city-wide mandate. We will find out what direction we head tonight. One thing that they will do at the town hall meeting is eliminate the 10-minute verbiage. Mask mandate until, likely November 1st. Winter is around the corner and businesses need our support. We need to have a robust winter conversation. We must start planning and make sure Aspen stays open and safe this winter.

Dave Ressler: Dave started with an update on the Valley Health Alliance, two different plans that have been filed with the division of insurance. Individual plan and small group plan. Individual plan will be the first option we have created to the single plan that is offered through Anthem in the Western Slope. Benefits will be stronger, and we will finally have competition. Small business, 50 or fewer employees. Long term goal is to maintain the premiums over the years. Offered across the Western Slope. Thank you to Debbie, you have been a strong voice. July 31st, division of insurance will announce the premiums.

Snowmass Clinic is open and doing well. Testing at AVH continues. Working closely with Garfield, Eagle and Pitkin to have a consistent approach to testing. Rapid testing available to symptomatic patients. Send out testing, for people who are traveling or have other reasons to be tested. Must have physician referral. Hospital and medical team to work closely with Pitkin county. All in support for the mask zone. We are currently not seeing hospital spikes, which is encouraging.

Allan Fletcher: Farwell and best of luck to Rob. The Castle creek trail is complete and a great hiking trail for social distancing. He is receiving some very wild and different comments and ideas from his board members on what we should be offering. Huge success on virtual concerts.

John Rigney: Aspen Ski Co has been busy. The team is assisting with food banks in the valley. Drive up Movies have been successful and currently working with Rose and her team on events. Biking and trail running events this week. Business on the mountains have been solid, biking on Snowmass is up. Figuring out the operating plans on winter. Chamber pass has been pushed back. We don't know what our constraints are yet. It is still too early; goal is to announce mid-September. We are starting to think about X Games and other big winter events.

Alinio Azevedo: Busier than expected. Main challenge has been enforcing social distance. Thinking about bringing in employees just to enforce social distancing. Lesson of the summer, hard to find employees last minute as business is ramping up. Which is surprising when you look at the unemployment numbers.

Bill Tomcich: Bill personally has flown American and Delta, onboarding perspective has never been better. Genuine customer service and appreciation for flyers. American and United have loaded their schedules through end of

September, will mirror August schedule. Winter capacity, the more guests we confirm now, the stronger the flight schedule will be in winter. It will be a challenge to add more flights mid-winter.

Cari Kuhlman: Debbie and her team are on top of everything. Confident on their capability on working through all of the difficulties we are facing due to COVID. We are working with membership payments. Stock market up and down, will continue end of year.

Jeanette Darnauer: Jeannette has spoken with a lot of locals and town is busier than expected. Locals are not going out in town and dining. Sport stores are up 16% over last year and staff is stressed due to reduced hours. Stores are seeing a huge demand for bikes. Service businesses are surviving. Rafting is still happening. Kudos to ACRA to pushing content to businesses. Applaud the Arts and Culture sector, wonderful virtual offerings. 150 more kids enrolled into Aspen School District, due to people moving here and second homeowners who are staying longer.

Jeff Bay: Thank you Rob. Business levels continue to be strong. Usually we see a dip in mid-August due to school. However, this year we do anticipate seeing extended business patterns. We will face a double edge sword; employees will have a job and facilitate school at home. Employment is going to be extremely hard due to restraint on visas, international students and parents having to homeschool. Jeff shared ACRA's How To Lodge Safety videos to the American hotel association. They in return are using it to be a part of their welcome back campaign. It is great to live in a community that is business positive. Our Other geographic location, stripped funding DMO and is strongly against tourism. Instead, they are only focusing on local community business.

Lisa LeMay: Business is up which has been amazing. Businesses are going to be able to pay rent until December. Staff is stressed due to amount of business and only ½ the staff. For the most part people have been super supportive and wearing a mask.

Maria Morrow: Nothing new to share. Rob enjoy your new adventure!

Nina Eisenstat: The service category is reporting business is on the upward trajectory. Landscape and plumbing seem to be busy. Personal services, going to people's homes for beauty treatments are going up. Kudos to ACRA. Article about Jackson Hole, Chamber, webinar on guidance on hostile guests on mask orders. Would like to see something similar from ACRA. Observation around town and how busy the streets are with cars, bikers and busses. Worried about pedestrian accidents.

Cristal Logan: Cristal ended the meeting with a sincere thank you to John Kinney Thank you for your service and great addition to our board. Thanks to you Rob also for your service on the board.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Additional Updates:

Patti Clapper: I think what is of most importance for the ACRA Board to be updated on is Pitkin County's airport planning process. Obviously due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was a delay in holding public hearings related to the ASE Vision Committee's final recommendations. Last month the BOCC decided these hearing, this process, needed to proceed sooner than later. Therefore, on Thursday August 6th the County will be holding the first of 3 (or more?) public meetings. The meeting on the 6th will be a ZOOM meeting and will also be broadcast live on Grassroots. The time of this meeting is currently/tentatively scheduled to start at 4PM and to end at 7PM. The agenda for this meeting is for the Vision Committee's recommendations to be presented, then to allow time for the BOCC to ask questions. There will be no public comment at this meeting. The second meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday August 13th from 4-7PM. This will be an in-person public hearing with a reservation system for those wanting to attend and provide comment. This meeting will also be taped by Grassroots. A third public hearing/meeting is currently

scheduled for Monday August 17th from 4-7PM. This will be a ZOOM meeting also broadcast live on Grassroots. Due to the number of members of the public who will want to comment we might need to schedule a 4th public hearing. The BOCC will need a final meeting in order for the Board to discuss this matter and to provide their individual comments/opinions, with the potential for the Board to either provide Staff with further direction or to make a final decision.

As for public comment...we are working on a way for the public wishing to comment to “register”, to reserve a time slot to speak (to call in) for the third meeting. We need to do this due to the large number of public we know will want to comment and the fact we will won't be able to hear all of the comments at one meeting. The number of comment slots that will be available at these meetings is yet to be determined. We are also encouraging the public to submit written comments especially if they have more to say then they can say in the 3 minutes allowed for public comment as part of our meetings. Submitting written comment does not preclude the public from also commenting at the public hearing.

Sam Barney:

General

- Pitkin County, City of Aspen, Town of Snowmass Village, and Basalt portions of Pitkin County construction continues under COVID safety plans, no significant changes since last update.
 - Some occasional losses of labor resources due to COVID and required time off if coming into contact with COVID or contracting COVID
 - Generally still going well, working through the situation
- “Great Urban Exodus” appears to be occurring. (as reported by Andrew)
 - Real estate activity is reported to be at high levels, cash sales, fast closing, multiple offers – entire valley
 - Likely to drive more construction activity
 - Home inspections, maintenance,
 - With school enrollments increasing, high likelihood of an increase in school impact fees for redevelopment/development to address need for more classroom space and staff
 - Other impact fees? More than likely
- Upcoming winter construction challenges....
 - Keeping handwash stations unfrozen
 - Uptick in seasonal illnesses
 - Sharing more indoor air, fewer windows open
 - Looking to South American successes in reducing COVID as well as influenza

City of Aspen

- Stephen Kanipe is settling back into his role as Chief Building Official, again
- Community Development has indicated expediting permitting over the past three months is not sustainable.
 - Staff has had to re-prioritize tasks and needs to fast track permitting
 - First round reviews were completed on average in five weeks vs. three months
 - There are multiple vacancies in planning and building departments
 - Long term solutions are being planned for
 - Uptick in straightforward minor interior renovations in private residences
 - Permit pace is down slightly vs. 2019, about 10%
- City of Aspen Engineering is making compliance checks which are not complaint driven on projects operating under COVID safety plans.

Pitkin County

- Growth management public outreach work is continuing. Anyone interested may participate here: <https://pitkincounty.com/1293/Growth-Management-Public-Outreach>

- Topics being addressed are:
 - TDR's
 - GMQS
 - Growth & square footage
 - Intensity & impacts
 - Climate change

Heather Kemp: Retailers are mixed in their feedback but the general trends I am seeing are-

- Grocery sales are up year over year
- Galleries are conducting sales virtually to stay afloat while many of our visitors are not back this summer
- Specialty retail (clothing, lingerie, jewelry is down as people have less events to attend and shop for)
- Wedding and event items are down but people are splurging on floral atmospheres and plants while spending more time at home. (My sales are down year over year since covid started)

Second wave of ppp loans are potentially coming through Congress and qualification will be based on reduction of sales revenues compared to first or second quarter and ability to increase ppp loans based on final rules that came out after receiving original loan. Watch what congress passes and contact your accountant for the latest guidance.

Chat updates:

Andrew Ernemann: Great updates from everyone, thank you! 25 new residential real estate contracts in the past 5 days for Aspen/Snowmass. Over 70 new contracts this past month. Unprecedented real estate activity for such a short time span, especially considering it was just 7-8 weeks ago we weren't sure if there would be any real estate sales occurring this summer. Lots of people from urban areas looking to move to our area part time or full time. Much more activity on rural properties than we've seen in years as well. Have a great day everyone!

Rose Abello: Thanks to Rob and John for their service. Thanks, Jeannette, for the SM ad! yes, come use your love a local voucher; we have lots of weekly activations that are small and fun and like everyone else, we are turning our attention to winter too! bye!

Torre: Thank you all for the work and the conversation surrounding our new normal. I know that we will succeed through this challenge because of the work that all of us are doing. I have to get off call, thank you Cristal. Please reach me with any comments at Torre@CityofAspen.com. Have a great day!