



**ACRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES  
JULY 27, 2021**

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

**Attendance: Present:** Cristal Logan, Debbie Braun, Charlie Bantis, Jeff Bay, Dave Ressler, Donnie Lee, Rose Abello, Henning Rahm, Patti Clapper, Sam Barney, Nina Eisenstat, Alan Fletcher, Cari Kuhlman, Michael Goldberg, Dan Bartholomew, Lisa LeMay, Maria Morrow, Heather Steenge Hart, Bill Tomcich, and Torre **Absent:** Riley Tippet, Andrew Ernemann, Bill Tomcich **Press:** Rick Carroll, and Scott Condon **Guests:** Sara Ott, Jeanette Darnauer and Michael Miracle, David Corbin, and Rana Dershowitz. **Staff:** Sarah Reynolds Lasser, Jennifer Albright Carney, Kristen Anderson, Liz Cluley, Alycin Bektesh, Mackenzie Sexton, Eliza Voss, Jessica Hite and Bridget Crosby

**Approval of prior meeting minutes:** Minutes from June 29<sup>th</sup> BOD meeting were approved.

**Conflict of Interest:** Patti had to excuse herself from Pandora Expansion presentation.

**Pandora Expansion Presentation:** Jeanette Darnauer who is working with the Aspen Skiing company on the project. From Aspen Skiing Company; Michael Miracle, David Corbin, and Rana Dershowitz.

Presentation link:

[https://aspenchamber.sharepoint.com/:p/g/EUDaD\\_5Ne75OIGV9tuTZRd8BmjdQfae98ZSi3Bh9cgaNmg?e=4XeI3Q](https://aspenchamber.sharepoint.com/:p/g/EUDaD_5Ne75OIGV9tuTZRd8BmjdQfae98ZSi3Bh9cgaNmg?e=4XeI3Q)

[Fact Sheet](#)

[www.friendsofpandoras.com](http://www.friendsofpandoras.com) Website

[FriendsofPandoras@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofPandoras@gmail.com) Contact for questions, etc.

**Presentation Questions:**

**Torre:** Does this trigger more development activities. Other plans for cabins or other flexibility of development. Answer: Just the terrain, supporting buildings and committed not development anything more. This is only about skiing and no other development.

**Charlie Bantis:** Are you finding the resistance generally founded in further development. Answer: Public concerns falls into a few categories – personal real estate portfolio, would like the terrain as it is, others are concerned about general growth issues and environmental issues.

**Chair Update:** Congratulated the city of aspen and ACRA on a successful 4<sup>th</sup> of July. All events have been going very well and have onsite testing. Added an upcoming event featuring Liz Cheaney and CEO of Google. All events are free and open to the public. Watching conversation in regard to Wheeler Rett Fund.

**President Update:** Apologize for the technical difficulties this morning. Happy to report next month we will be live at the Gant. Thanks, Donnie, for squeezing us in.

Quick Board update to **Strategic Planning Process** for Q3-4 2021

- The staff has reviewed the plan and included progress comments.
- We've hired Live Bright Now – Candra Canning to facilitate a mid-august staff retreat and review of current culture and how to be productive in the hybrid work environment.
- The Board will reconvene in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to prioritize strategy goals from the plan and input more into the Destination Management Plan. We will present initial findings at the Tourism Outlook Forum on 10/26 and you will also be invited to the Dec 2 CTO full day workshop to action one of the priority items identified through the management process.
- ACRA staff will reconvene and produce a 2021 Annual Plan, highlighting year two achievements.

And speaking of the Destination Management Plan

“We have now officially kicked off the Destination Management Plan with DestinationThink.

They are well underway with conducting individual interviews and tourism town halls. Thank you all for participating in those as requested.

We have one action item for you all which is to please send out the resident survey to your own employee networks so we can receive the maximum amount of participation.... And as a reminder if you haven't taken it yourself - please do so!”

We've received around 500 surveys to date – and more coming in daily. The goal is between 400-900. Survey closes on August 6<sup>th</sup>.

We've also produced two summer events in July with 4<sup>th</sup> and the Arts festival.

### **Special Events**

- Events took center stage – 4<sup>th</sup> of July had a different feel this year - lots of feedback regarding the parade.
- Arts Festival was in Paepcke Park on July 17 – good attendance people happy to be outdoors enjoying summer in Aspen.
- Deep into planning the 2021 Food and Wine event. And our first in person event with the luncheon on Sept 9th unless the delta variant is rampage. Get vaccinated!
- Little bad news this year F/W events is at around half capacity - therefore for the 2021 Classic the Chamber is only able to offer one complimentary pass to our board members.

And finally, we continue to

**Engaging and convening on behalf of business: Work session**

- A part of a committee on **Temporary Housing Solutions for the Roaring Fork Valley** – first meeting first week of March – The meeting was set to discuss options / solutions for temporary housing in the RFV. Stakeholders from the County, City, open space, forest service, ACRA. Committed to working together to find opportunities. TBD on outcome.
- Unable to attend the **VHA Board** meeting so I will defer my comments to Dave Ressler. I did however meet with **Valley Health Alliance marketing committee** yesterday with all the Chambers – working on how to better market program and capture the local business audience. Provided feedback on their website and marketing collateral.
- **Fly Aspen/Aspen Snowmass Meeting**. Bill is providing the update from that meeting and Kristen is including that in the chat. One take away was ASE capturing more passengers this month due to the unreliability of the ground connection thru Glenwood Canyon closures.

### **Director Comments:**

**Bill Tomcich: Future Schedules:** Other than the recent addition of Delta’s winter nonstops from ATL & LAX starting December 18, there have been no schedule changes since last month’s update. Peak summer schedules with up to 23 flights daily (24 on Saturdays) remain in the schedules through August 16, after which we will see a slight reduction to 20 flights daily through Labor Day, then a total of 15 daily flights from September 8 – October 4. While United’s schedules are generally finalized through October and November, I am told that American is still planning some further tweaks to their Fall schedules beyond October 4. I plan to send out a separate update once those are finalized or whenever any other significant schedule changes occur. The winter schedules as currently published but are still subject to further tweaking. Those schedules now include two daily flights on Delta with total winter seat counts that are comparable to what was originally scheduled in both ‘18/19 and ‘19/20.

**Torre:** City Council had their first in-person meeting since the pandemic. The council focused our time on three main goals: housing, the environment, and childcare. Torre is seeing the frustrations with locals regarding employees. Looking at a regional approach to employee housing, our employees live anywhere from rifle to aspen, we will not solve the housing issue alone. COVID and the Delta variant are still very relevant, and we cannot let our guard down. Thank you to the Belly Up, Aspen Institute, Aspen Music Festival and School, and others who are requiring proof of vaccination or negative test.

**Sam Barney:** Construction activity continues to be healthy in Aspen, Pitkin County, and TOSV. There is a significant amount of work under construction, in planning, and permitting.

- Permitting
  - Pitkin County – 3 to 9 months depending on scope of project
    - Maybe 6 weeks for first comments depending on project
  - City of Aspen – similar to Pitkin County for permitting timelines
  - Town of Snowmass Village – 2 to 4 weeks depending on scope of project
    - Timelines can be very project specific
- General state of the industry:
  - Continuing to see commodity changes occurring which may affect construction materials in the future.
    - Wood commodity (Lumber futures) crashed about 50% and regained about half of the loss over the last month.
    - OSB and plywood pricing is adjusting down

- LSL (laminated strand lumber) and engineered joist products remain in short supply and high demand – depends on resins for manufacturing, see next point
    - Resins (plastics futures) – this commodity price continues to rise and supply is not meeting demand, affects:
      - Glues
      - Pipe (PVC, ABS, PEX, polypropylene, etc.)
      - Packaging
      - Tapes
      - Insulation
    - Steel joist & deck – often used in commercial and high-performance residential buildings – high demand, long lead times and increased prices – limited suppliers, primarily Nucor (Vulcraft) product
  - AGC indicates materials are up anywhere from 8 to 127% over the last year (this includes lumber which is just now starting to stabilize in cost) with service inputs up 26%
    - This means your construction project is likely much more expensive now than it would have been a year or two ago.
  - Same as last month, many materials have long lead times and limited availability – plan accordingly.
  - Delivery issues – there do not seem to be enough truck drivers to meet demand. This is affecting construction as well as the price of fuels.
  - Construction labor – qualified labor is in high demand, most construction and related industry employers have hired recently, are hiring, and some are not able to fully staff to meet demand. I believe this is generally occurring nationwide.
- City of Aspen
  - E waste collection event – September 18<sup>th</sup>, 9a to 1pm at 100 Marolt Place – it is FREE!
  - City Council goals (construction related items)
    - \$8 mil childcare facility (\$950/sf budget).
      - COA Engineering Department could not even get a bid on Paepcke Park bus stop improvement solicitation so they are tabling it for a year.
    - Reduction of GHG emissions and solid waste
    - Construction of affordable housing
  - Other news
    - Newspaper articles – Crystal Palace Hotel (this became a Restoration Hardware concept earlier this year) – appears there will be changes in the project which are not yet in the permitting queue. Project is currently on pause. RH is making investments of over \$100m in the built environment in and around Aspen in the immediate future according to the press release.  
<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1528849/000119312521001999/d17009dex991.htm>
    - Lift 1 Corridor project – COA Planning indicated entitlements are scheduled to be complete by the end of 2021. Finalizing permit documents for submission would follow entitlements. This is a significant amount of future construction work as well.
- Pitkin County

- Upcoming analysis of embodied carbon associated with residential construction and demolition. The first meeting is this week.
- Updated building codes. 2021 building codes are likely to begin their adoption process in all three of the upper valley jurisdictions over the next year.

**Patti Clapper:** COVID is still very present. Our working community includes counties that have low vaccination rates. Town is packed and traffic coming in and out of town is concerning. Patti will pass along the Aspen resident survey to her staff. ACRA has done a great job this summer.

**Sara Ott:** Presenting Wheeler RETT recommendation to city council this week. Another conversation in regard to downtown core pedestrian safety, making a few streets one way. An opening on the APSHA Board for a Pitkin resident to join APSHA.

**Rose Abello:** Snowmass has been busy, Christmas like occupancy in July. Getting ready for Heritage Fire, Thursday night concerts and rodeo have been very popular. Labor Day Jazz Festival is almost sold out.

**Nina Eisentat:** The service category is very diverse, ranges from property management, interior design to landscape and everything in-between. Everyone is very busy and having a successful summer. Expecting to stay the same until mid-October.

**Michael Goldberg:** Employee shortage and burnout is a major hurdle in the restaurant category. Sales are stronger than 2019. Changing of ownership and names are the hot topics. Belly Up – still requiring vaccination validation, testing is more difficult to find. Worried about Delta variant, testing in becoming more difficult to find.

**Maria Morrow:** Thank you to Jennifer for a great 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival and Arts Festival. Maria is curious to know if Rumors are starting to talk about going backward on restrictions.

**Lisa LeMay:** Employee shortage and burnout. Well over 2019 numbers and half the number of employees. Main street cross walk lighting around downtown core rather than one-way streets.

**Jeff Bay:** Record breaking July and August and September are following. We will not see international travel coming back this winter and will have to market to the domestic market this winter. Jeff is working with Eliza and team on the Destination Think planning process along with the CTO Grant. A lot of locals are voicing their opinions and wondering with the future of Aspen will look like. Jeff's hotels continue to offer flexible reservations due to highway closing, school schedules and other various COVID related issues.

**Henning Rahm:** Henning is concerned going into the winter season with lack of international travel. Will have to rely on domestic travel to fill occupancy.

**Donnie Lee:** Summer has played out as we expected, employee shortage and record occupancy. Winter is more uncertain with the Delta Variant. Not expecting to be back to pre-pandemic levels for winter.

**Dave Ressler:** Delta variant is real and spreads quickly. There is only one defense – high vaccination rate. Symptoms are low for those vaccinated. Unlikely to have severe symptoms. In Colorado, 98% of cases are unvaccinated. Other viruses – Rhino, Flu, RSV are on the rise. Stay home, get tested. Currently there are no discussions on requiring masks indoors for vaccinated. However, there are contingent plans in place if the cases rise. Mesa County hospitals are very frustrated and concerned with their communities and not vaccinating. We have done a fantastic job in our community and have a high vaccination rate. Valley Health Alliance is seeing a strong individual insurance plan presence.

**Patti Clapper:** Patti has not heard anything about requiring indoor masks, however, would not surprise her due to the Delta variant.

**Dan Bartholomew:** Airport has been incredibly busy. Near record passenger levels. Closely monitoring the fuel shortage that others are seeing. There is an opportunity to join the Airport Advisory Board, for anyone who is interested.

**Cari Kuhlman:** Vectra Bank is also seeing the labor issue in the area. It would be great if ACRA could host a round table or discussion to help members hire and retain staff. Destination Think town hall meeting yesterday was great.

**Alan Fletcher:** Offering comprehensive testing. No one yet has been positive but today we are testing everyone. Halfway through the summer season and going very well.

**Andrew Ernemann:** Continued strong demand and short supply both for sales and for rentals. The commercial leasing and sales market is also incredibly tight and strong. I do think the trends are starting to slow down just a bit and it won't be until this "off season" (if there's such a thing anymore) that we have a sense of how the summer really shaped up.

Cristal adjourned meeting at 10:30 a.m.