

Board of Directors Meeting

Date: June 27, 2023

Zoom

Present: Cristal Logan, Jeff Bay, Cari Kuhlman, John Rigney, Dan Bartholomew, Debbie Braun, Patti Clapper, Matt Cook, Nina Eisenstat, Alan Fletcher, Michael Goldberg, Heather Kemp, Lisa LeMay, Maria Morrow, Justin Nyberg, Dave Ressler, Steve Skadron, Heather Steenge-Hart, Bill Tomcich, Torre, and Kathleen Wanatowicz

Absent: Charlie Bantis, Donnie Lee, Rose Abello, David Baugh, Henning Rahm, and Justin Todd

Staff: Jennifer Albright Carney, Susan Bantis, Alycin Bektesh, John Davies, Savannah Grant, Julie Hardman, Nichole Hellinger, Jessica Hite, and Liz Watson

Guests: Julie Bielenberg (The Aspen Times), Maureen Poschmann (PROMO Communications), Gary Tenumbaum (Pitkin County), and Megan Webber (Aspen Daily News)

Call to order: Cristal Logan called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM

Approval of the May 30th Minutes: Approved

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest: Kathleen Wanatowicz: Currently working with City of Aspen and Pitkin County on Brush Creek Park and Ride to AABC Trail

Moment of Silence: A moment of silence was observed for the passing of Jim Crown.

Brush Creek Park and Ride to AABC Trail: Kathleen Wanatowicz and Gary Tenenbaum present on the engagement and analysis initiative planned for the upcoming summer. The project aims to evaluate public opinion and conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the Infrastructure Transportation initiative, which focuses on the Brush Creek Park and Ride to AABC trail connection. They begin by describing the overall view of the project. They are seeking to create a more seamless connection from the Brush Creek intercept lot to the ABC and Aspen. While multiple options have been considered, the process is ongoing, with no final decisions yet. To better understand the community's needs, they have been conducting surveys since 2016, finding consistent support for this project. A question regarding paving sections of the trail will be included in the next survey. The city of Aspen and the EOTC are partners in this project, with the goal of improving mobility. Tenenbaum emphasizes the purpose of the project and the public process, which includes hosting focus groups, talking to groups like ACRA, conducting neighborhood meetings, and setting up a project interest group. They are also working with Kimberly Horn to conduct a cost-benefit analysis and understand what the community connections could be. They have analyzed various alternatives, including improving shoulders, separate alignment on the bridge, and potentially attaching another pedestrian bridge. However, challenges arose due to the difficulty of building on the shell bluffs and the high cost. They are also considering options to build twin bridges, which are more preferred due to their connectivity benefits. They could be phased over time, or potentially one could be built at a time. Finally, they encourage audience members to provide feedback through a live survey available on the [Pitkin County Open Space project page](#). They hope this feedback will help them understand how the trail might impact existing trips and potentially reduce vehicle trips. They will be available for further engagement at the upcoming Bike to Work Day event.

Chair's Comments: Cristal Logan praises the ACRA team for their successful Food & Wine event and celebrates its 40th anniversary as a great way to kick off the summer. She mentions that the Aspen Ideas Festival is in its 19th year and going well, with free events that are open to the public but require registration. She brings attention to an important airport meeting and urges Kathleen, Bill, Dan, and Patty to attend what could be the last and only public hearing. Cristal concludes by paying tribute to Jim Crown, acknowledging his invaluable contributions over the past 25 to 30 years to the community's quality of life. She praises his leadership and values which not only benefited business but were also community-oriented. She expresses that Jim was an exceptional leader and friend, and his loss is deeply felt and nearly impossible to put into words.

President's Comments: Debbie Braun thanks the board members who attended a work session regarding the Armory and the organization's space needs. She mentions that the plan for temporary usage of the space is underway, but the move won't happen until 2024. She encourages everyone to stay engaged in the process. She expresses gratitude to those who participated in the 40th



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Anniversary of Food & Wine events, noting that despite the rain, the event was a success and positively impacted the local retail sector. She praises Cristal and the Institute for their amazing programming, particularly Spotlight Health, which the staff had a chance to attend for the first time. She looks forward to securing tickets for future sessions. She shares that Mark Hunt and Jimmy Marcus have expressed their interest in continuing the dialogue after the previous board discussion. Alycin is coordinating and hoping to get them to work with the Public Affairs committee. Debbie encourages board members to join the conversation if they receive an invitation. Finally, she expresses her condolences over the loss of Jim Crown, whose presence had a significant impact on the community, even though she did not know him personally.

Marketing Advisory Committee Update: Jeff Bay shares that the Marketing Advisory Committee had a productive meeting in early June. They discussed the challenging pace of bookings for the summer, acknowledging a slight recovery but predicting it unlikely to match previous years' occupancy levels. Despite the strong Average Daily Rate (ADR), Jeff attributes this to the closure of two lower ADR properties last year, causing an artificial inflation. He emphasizes the need to continue monitoring the competitive environment to ensure Aspen offers good value for the price it charges. Jeff then praises Aspen for its unmatched value proposition, recognizing ACRA staff Eliza and Nichole for achieving professional certifications in destination management. The committee also reviewed resident stakeholder data and found that most residents felt the level of business was appropriate and many businesses enjoyed the offseason downtime. This feedback will influence future marketing and destination management efforts. Various discussions took place about outdoors retreats, social media, public relations efforts, and international PR efforts. Jeff notes that marketing has regained a positive connotation post-COVID, and the committee wants to ensure Aspen remains attractive to visitors while embracing what makes the community unique. Jeff describes an open roundtable discussion about the visitor center, emphasizing the importance of having a welcoming space that informs both locals and visitors about the valley's offerings. He mentions positive feedback from a work session and the desire to collaborate with the council on this. He concludes with updates on the airline situation, noting a decrease in prices and more direct flights to Texas and California. However, there are challenges with the Australian market due to economic situations and stiff competition from Japan and Canada. This makes it crucial to stay focused and ensure Aspen remains a valuable destination for this key international market.

Directors' Remarks:

John Rigney expresses sorrow over the loss of Jim Crown and sends thoughts and prayers to his family. He mentions that Snowmass is back up and running, with the bike park open and numerous events taking place. He congratulates the team on a successful Food & Wine event, mentioning that people were extremely happy. John also reveals that they are making good progress on the installation of the new Pandora's lift and continues to operate daily activities on the mountain gondola.

Patti Clapper expresses her excitement for a forthcoming work session focusing on aviation demand forecasts. She then points to a significant public meeting about the airport set for the next day, emphasizing the importance of hearing from everyone, especially ACRA members. She commits to facilitating the meeting by distributing the Zoom link and anticipates a second reading on the issue later in the month. Patti acknowledges the challenging nature of this issue, describing it as the most difficult one she has encountered in her 21 years in office. She notes the lack of input from the business community and the sentiment she's hearing from Aspen residents who seemingly don't want any changes at the airport. However, she's not convinced this viewpoint is universally held and would appreciate hearing more diverse opinions. Switching to a positive note, she shares her enjoyment of the Food & Wine event, particularly the luncheon. She fondly recounts attending with her daughter for her birthday and appreciates the atmosphere and people-watching. She praises ACRA for an excellent job with the event, viewing it as a fantastic kickoff to the upcoming season. After expressing her intention to attend the Mayor's session, she plans to move on to an executive session.

Torre is still shocked and saddened by the incident that occurred two days ago involving Jim Crown, someone he has known for the entire 30 years he has lived in Aspen. He shares his plan to honor Jim during the city's Fourth of July celebration and hopes for a community gathering to pay tribute to him. He reflects on the lessons he learned from Jim about the special nature of Aspen, attributing the town's uniqueness and small, uncrowded character to the Crown family's influence. He emphasizes the importance of preserving this character despite pressures of expansion, increasing visitor numbers, and rising costs. Torre apologizes for being somewhat unfocused due to the event's emotional toll. He explains that his city council members are currently in Aurora for a Colorado Municipal League meeting, resulting in a brief pause in council meetings. He is busy planning a way to honor Jim and his family, potentially as part of the Fourth of July celebration. On a separate note, Torre draws attention to a recent community public art collaboration—a mural painted in front of the Wheeler in conjunction with the Institute. He highlights the city council's ongoing efforts to connect the community through arts and make arts and culture a more integral part of everyday life in Aspen. He



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expresses his commitment to make downtown more welcoming and business-friendly despite ongoing construction and renovation work. He looks forward to welcoming visitors and hosting a successful Fourth of July celebration, underscoring the community's yearning for connection after the pandemic.

Nina Eisenstat praises this year's Food & Wine event, describing it as fabulous and commending the ACRA staff for making it a wonderful occasion. She enjoyed the luncheon and was both humbled and amused to see her old photo from the Aspen Historical Society archives. She attended some Aspen Ideas events and was particularly impressed by Surgeon General Murthy's talk on the significance of community connection, loneliness, and social infrastructure. She reports that the Jazz Aspen event was very successful, with over 40 performances that attendees appreciated. Eisenstat is excited about the upcoming music festival and the positive buzz surrounding Theatre Aspen. She also attended the opening for the new art museum exhibits, marveling at the variety of activities taking place in the town. She expresses her shock and sadness at the news of Jim Crown's passing, acknowledging his significant contributions to the community, particularly to the Aspen Institute, the Aspen Community Foundation, and other non-profit organizations. She echoes the sentiments of others and expresses her hope that the community will honor him appropriately. She believes that his legacy will continue to influence Aspen.

Alan Fletcher shares a personal story about Jim Crown from approximately 20 years ago, recounting how his husband, Ron Schiller, worked closely with Jim Crown at the University of Chicago. He portrays Crown as an embodiment of leadership, knowledgeable and caring, while allowing everyone to do their work effectively. Fletcher moves on to talk about the Aspen Music Festival and School, stating that they are kicking off their season with the first concert on Thursday. He mentions the convocation they had for students, faculty, and staff, and appreciates Torre's graceful and sometimes humorous speech. He also expresses his enjoyment of the Food and Wine event, recommending the yellow tomato gazpacho they had. Lastly, Fletcher highlights a collaboration with Theatre Aspen on July 9 and 10, where they will present Terrence McNally's Tony-winning play, "Master Class," starring Felicia Rashad, at the Wheeler Opera House. He is excited about this production and mentions that tickets are selling well.

Cari Kuhlman expresses her enjoyment of both the Food & Wine festival and the Jazz Aspen event, praising the intimate setting and the affordable JAS ticket prices. She highlights how the venues scattered across town likely brought in business for local restaurants and other establishments. She encourages those who missed the event to attend next year. She is also looking forward to the upcoming music festival and theatre events. Kuhlman was unable to attend the Ideas Festival this year due to a busy schedule, but appreciates the wide array of activities available in the community. She offers her condolences to the family of Jim Crown, SkiCo, and the wider community. On the topic of finance, she briefly mentions the fluctuating state of world finance, noting the slight rise in interest rates.

Kathleen Wanatowicz highlights the importance of air service into ASE for various local events such as Aspen Ideas, Food & Wine, Jazz Aspen, the Music Festival, and Theatre Aspen. She argues that now is an opportune time to move forward with the redevelopment at the airport, insisting that it can be done consciously, sustainably, and with the community's benefit in mind. She expresses concern over the toxic polarization within the community and suggests that removing it is crucial for true community connectedness. This sentiment comes in the wake of the community's loss of Jim Crown. Wanatowicz represents professional services, particularly the construction industry, and shares concerns about ongoing struggles for people to find work and housing, even amidst the summer season. She brings up the continued issue of infrastructure matters impacting professional services. Lastly, she apologizes for missing the previous meeting and expresses her interest in hearing the presentation from Mark Hunt.. She concludes by expressing her gratitude for being part of the group and having the opportunity to present.

Bill Tomcich emphasizes the importance of community support for the redevelopment at the airport and encourages business voices to join the conversation, especially for the upcoming Board of County Commissioners work session. He mentions that the current air service is in good shape with plenty of summer flights and increased schedules from American Airlines into Aspen next winter. Tomcich shares his recent meetings with airlines including American, Delta, United, and SkyWest. He confirms that the demand forecast presented aligns perfectly with the airlines' plans but this is in stark contrast to what Aspen Fly Right has proposed. He notes the transition from CRJ 700s to E 175s has already taken place in other airports, and he is confident that it will be a positive change for Aspen. However, Tomcich asserts that this is not about growth or larger planes. He insists that the airlines are not interested in bringing larger aircraft into the community. The only exception would be Delta's interest in flying the Airbus A220-100, which is quieter, more environmentally friendly, and efficient. When asked about the possibility of nonstop flights from cities like



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Miami and New York, Tomcich states that while possible, there are technical issues to consider, and the main priority is maintaining service from existing hubs, particularly Atlanta, which is a high priority for Delta.

Dan Bartholomew emphasizes the importance of today's workshop discussing the aviation fleet mix and forecasts for the airport, which he describes as crucial to the airport layout plan and FAA approval. He warns that without this approval, the airport risks losing hundreds of millions of dollars in future funding over the next 20 years and could jeopardize the prospective passenger terminal project. He notes that misinformation and misunderstanding of economic principles regarding the operation of the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) could also hamper the airport's future. Bartholomew mentions that the FAA will be present in the meeting to provide guidance and correct any misinformation, given their primary mission is to ensure safety and access to all airport facilities that receive substantial federal funding. He adds that discriminatory actions or denial of access are not allowed when receiving grant funding. He brings up the E 175 aircraft, saying that based on discussions with airlines, it seems they're ready to bring those in, and the airport is prepared to accommodate them. Regarding public participation, he suggests that the best time for public comment is during the regular board session tomorrow. A second reading may occur in early or late July. Lastly, Bartholomew expresses sadness over the passing of Mr. Crown. Despite being a significant stakeholder in the Gulfstream Corporation, Mr. Crown never pushed that agenda on the airport, something Bartholomew respects and views as a testament to his character.

Andrew Ernemann discusses the changes in the Aspen real estate market. He notes that while the market generally fluctuates quickly, recent trends have been especially notable. Despite the strength seen in the high-end market over the last few years, this summer season is witnessing a significant change. Ernemann explains that the current market has approximately 185 free-market residential listings in the Aspen area, with about 10% of these under contract, a rate below the historical average. During the peak of the pandemic, about 30% of listings were under contract at any given time, but this has now slowed significantly. Specifically, there are around 85 listings priced above \$10 million, but only five are under contract. This is a marked difference from the last few years, where these high-priced properties were selling quickly with a large portion under contract. Hence, the top-end market appears to have significantly slowed. Despite this deceleration, prices haven't started to drop or even flattened—they're still rising. Ernemann describes this as the first sign of a slowing or shifting market, though he is uncertain what the summer's activity could mean for the real estate market. On the topic of rentals, short-term rentals are still tracking fairly strong despite new regulations. There has been a change in rental listings and rental lengths, with more 30-day-plus rentals seen as owners seek to avoid red tape and associated taxes.

Maria Morrow extends her condolences to the Crown family and SkiCo, acknowledging the profound impact their loss has had on the community. She expresses her admiration for those who have helped shape the community, even when they are not always appreciated or are sometimes targeted. Maria expresses her love for the community events such as Food & Wine and appreciates the sense of community and pride that they foster in Aspen. She notes the positive feedback from visitors about the friendly atmosphere and exceptional service in Aspen. Maria observes the extraordinary efforts by the community, especially amidst the challenges of coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. She notes that although the world has faced loneliness, the community spirit of Aspen has been resilient and inspiring. She expresses her gratitude for being part of such a wonderful community and finds the work of its leaders and non-profit organizations inspiring.

Steve Skadron thanks ACRA and its staff for the Food & Wine event and expresses his appreciation for the involvement of local Colorado Mountain College (CMC) students from various campuses. These students were able to gain valuable experience by working behind the scenes to prep food for the featured chefs. He also shares that faculty members from CMC came to support operations and participate in the Best New Chefs competition. He mentions that the Aspen campus of CMC is in the early stages of developing its own kitchen, indicating an exciting development for the college. Steve recalls his first meeting with Jim Crown, arranged by Mike Kaplan when Steve was newly elected as mayor. He fondly remembers Jim's challenging business questions and his own deference to SkiCo's expertise in running the business over the Aspen city government. He acknowledges Jim's loss as a significant one for the community.

Lisa LeMay describes the start of the summer season as a steady climb that peaks with the Food & Wine event, a trend that continues for the rest of the summer. She agrees with Debbie's comment that chillier weather is beneficial for retail in the city core, as it prompts people to make purchases ranging from inexpensive hoodies to pricey cashmere sweaters. She appreciates all these purchases, regardless of their amount. LeMay expresses satisfaction at Mark Hunt's willingness to continue discussions with various groups. She believes that the comfort and ease Hunt felt during a meeting with this group, which has influenced him to maintain



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these interactions, is a testament to the group's effectiveness. She commends everyone on the board for facilitating this relationship. On a personal note, LeMay shares her anticipation for the summer's music events. She eagerly awaits the sight of the first music student in town, which signals the start of Friday night events on the lawn at the music tent. She wishes everyone a wonderful July.

Justin Nyberg expresses his appreciation for the ACRA Food & Wine luncheon, commending Debbie and her team for their work in creating a wonderful experience. Nyberg remarks on the vibrant energy of the town during the peak summer season, mentioning the packed Farmer's Market and the various festivals. However, he also brings attention to a concerning issue - the wildfire danger. He mentions the recent smoke near Glenwood Canyon and urges the leaders on the board to support community efforts in mitigating fire hazards. He highlights Allie Hager's work as the director of community wildfire efforts for the Aspen Fire Protection District. Hager is leading an initiative to secure federal grants and establish private-public partnerships to help mitigate potential fire hazards in and around the Aspen area. Nyberg encourages others to learn about Hager's efforts and expresses interest in inviting her to present to the board in the future.

Matt Cook discusses the importance of accessibility to Aspen, particularly focusing on the significant role of the Aspen airport. He contrasts Aspen's situation with another town, highlighting the differences in the number of visitors during the summer months. Cook believes that the Aspen airport provides essential accessibility not only for tourists but also for participants in events like the music festival and various nonprofits operating in the area. He warns against understating the value and impact of the airport, emphasizing that doing so would be a disservice to the town of Aspen. Although he can't attribute all of Aspen's successes to the airport, Cook believes that it certainly plays a significant role.

Dave Ressler starts by expressing his sorrow over the loss of Jim, acknowledging the significant impact he had on the community and the hospital. He emphasizes the feeling of greatness around Jim and how he will be dearly missed. Ressler then shifts to discussing the concern for wildfires, mentioning that the hospital has been preparing through policies, procedures, and tabletop exercises, though acknowledging that one can never be fully ready for such a catastrophic event. He appreciates the efforts in mitigation and expresses concern about the fuel grown due to the winter and rains. On a positive note, Ressler thanks the community for the Aspen Ideas Health event, stating that it's a privilege to have it in Aspen. He talks about the importance of innovation in healthcare, highlighting the need for sustainable changes and better care for community health. He also touches upon the importance of connectedness and the issue of loneliness, commending the Aspen Ideas Health event for bringing the best minds together to address these issues. Additionally, Ressler thanks the community for participating in the health fair, where almost 1000 people obtained their lab results. Lastly, he stresses the importance of wearing helmets, especially with the increase in E-bike usage. He mentions that the hospital sees many accidents related to bicycle and E-bike use, and urges visitors and locals to wear helmets, watch for cars, and control speed for their safety.

Jeff Bay starts by expressing his condolences for the loss of Jim, acknowledging him as a great leader and influence in the community. He emphasizes the need for the community to carry forward the spirit and ideals that Jim embodied. He then humorously mentions an incident at the Food & Wine luncheon where a Polaroid picture of him was unexpectedly displayed. He praises the ACRA luncheon and Food & Wine event for being fantastic. Jeff highlights the positive energy and excitement he witnessed among people who attended the Food & Wine event and the Ideas Festival. He shares his experience of traveling on a plane with attendees who were discussing their adventures in Aspen and looking forward to returning next year. He reflects on how witnessing this excitement from visitors makes him feel grateful for the special experiences that Aspen offers to both locals and visitors.

Adjournment: Cristal Logan adjourned the meeting at 10:02 AM