

Board of Directors Meeting

Date: March 27, 2024

Aspen Meadows Resort

Present: Cristal Logan, Dan Bartholomew, Debbie Braun, Patti Clapper, Nina Eisenstat, Alan Fletcher, Heather Kemp, Lisa LeMay, Justin Nyberg, Henning Rahm, Dave Ressler, Dwayne Romero, Heather Steenge-Hart, Julia Theisen, Maria Ticsay, Justin Todd, Bill Tomcich, Torre, Brenda Wild, and Pete Yang.

Absent: Jeff Bay, Cari Kuhlman, John Rigney, Donnie Lee, David Baugh, Matt Cook, Michael Goldberg, and Steve Skadron.

Staff: Jennifer Albright Carney, Alycin Bektesh, John Clay Davies, Savannah Grant, Casey Graves, and Julie Hardman.

Guests: Michael Buglione, Kim Ferber, Emmy Garrigus, and Andre Salvail.

Call to order: Cristal Logan called the meeting to order at 8:33 AM

Approval of the February 27th Minutes: Approved

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest: None

Aspen Police Department Public Safety Update: Police Chief Kim Ferber provides an update on public safety initiatives, focusing on leveraging technology to enhance law enforcement effectiveness. Highlighting the appointment of a digital forensic expert and the implementation of "DigiTicket" technology for more efficient traffic stops, Ferber emphasizes efforts to minimize officer time on the roadside, aiming for education over citation. In collaboration with the sheriff, license plate reader technology has been instrumental in solving crimes, such as a notable domestic violence and child abduction case, due to its strategic deployment at town entrances. Ferber outlines internal improvements, including the completion of a comprehensive evidence audit and the adoption of a national training program to foster a culture of de-escalation and reduce use-of-force incidents. The department's push for state and eventually national accreditation signifies a commitment to high standards and community service. Addressing operational effectiveness, Ferber mentions data-driven approaches to tackling homelessness and public safety. A pending Supreme Court case could influence local enforcement of camping bans, addressing challenges posed by the ninth circuit's ruling. Efforts to manage the bicycling community, including education on proper bike etiquette and safety, are also discussed, emphasizing the department's proactive stance on community interaction and public education. The discussion also touches on concerns about illegal ride-sharing practices, underscoring a case-by-case approach to enforcement and the importance of community vigilance. Ferber invites community feedback and questions, reinforcing the police department's dedication to responsiveness and collaboration in addressing public safety and quality of life issues.

Pitkin County Sheriff Office Public Safety Update: Sheriff Michael Buglione provides an extensive update on the public safety efforts and initiatives from the Pitkin County Sheriff's Office. He begins by addressing the collaboration with the Aspen Police Department to investigate a recent robbery on the Smuggler hiking trail, mentioning the intensive review of surveillance footage, including from residential and city cameras, to identify a suspect. Buglione announces the arrival of a new county emergency manager with a strong background, emphasizing the importance of emergency management in the area. He proudly notes that the Sheriff's Office will soon be fully staffed for the first time in decades, with new cadets graduating and completing their field training. The sheriff discusses the use of license plate reader technology for various purposes, including locating overdue hikers, and outlines a speed reduction plan for Highway 82. This plan involves increased enforcement, public education on traffic safety, and data collection on traffic incidents to advocate for safer driving behaviors. He also addresses efforts to improve highway safety through potential long-term infrastructure changes and immediate enforcement actions. Buglione highlights initiatives to combat the influx of fentanyl and other substances, including seeking grants for advanced drug detection technology to assist in safe substance identification. The Sheriff's Office is also considering accreditation and has conducted a staffing assessment to address the growth in demand for law enforcement services in the area. Buglione emphasizes the importance of a livable wage for deputies and the challenges of recruiting in a high-cost area. Throughout his update, Buglione emphasizes collaboration with local and state partners, the use of technology to enhance public safety, and a commitment to addressing the community's concerns about traffic safety and drug-related issues.

Chair's Comments: Cristal Logan shares an update from the cultural and nonprofit sector, indicating that things are progressing positively. The winter season has been successful, and she regularly convenes a group of arts and culture nonprofit CEOs, where there seems to be a good sense of collaboration and positive feedback. She highlights the value of the ACRA calendar, appreciated for its comprehensive updates by various contributors, and encourages everyone to keep their calendars current. Logan concludes by expressing enthusiasm for the upcoming summer season.

President's Comments: Debbie Braun highlights ongoing initiatives and updates within ACRA. With part of her team on spring break, she references an email from Eliza detailing the launch of a DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) survey, a collaborative effort with Snowmass Tourism, Challenge Aspen, and the Colorado Tourism Office. This survey, open until April 5, aims to understand the inclusivity challenges and opportunities faced by Aspen and Snowmass Village businesses. It's part of a grant from the Colorado Tourism Office and seeks to establish a baseline for future capacity-building efforts. Braun notes the absence of committee board members Donnie Lee, Cari Kuhlman, and Jeff Bay, mentioning that committees are operational again and encourages checking the minutes linked in the staff report for updates. She expresses excitement about an upcoming sister cities business exchange trip to Queenstown with Torre, Maria, and others, including a packed agenda focusing on arts, culture, housing, transportation, and destination management. This visit will also involve re-signing the sister cities agreement and a visit to the high school in preparation of an Aspen High School exchange program. Additionally, Braun welcomes Julia Theisen, of Snowmass Tourism, to the ACRA Board of Directors. Finally, Braun also announces the April board meeting will be a retreat at the Armory building, giving board members a preview of ACRA's temporary relocation site. She addresses concerns about ACRA's future office space during the council's redevelopment discussions, highlighting the importance of securing a location through negotiations and the existing master lease with the city.

Directors' Remarks:

Torre expresses excitement about an upcoming trip to Queenstown, emphasizing the value of exchanging ideas on government, business, and sustainable tourism. He mentions the strong relationship developed with Queenstown's mayor during the pandemic, highlighting the anticipation for the government and business exchange aspects of the trip. As Aspen winds down from the winter season, Torre invites feedback on last summer's activities—both positives to continue and negatives to reduce—to help prepare for the upcoming summer. His message focuses on looking forward to the trip and seeking community input to enhance the summer experience in Aspen.

Patti Clapper shares her experiences and updates related to Pitkin County's initiatives and concerns. She begins by presenting Torre with a coin she received from Congresswoman Lauren Boebert during a trip to Washington D.C., noting its significance and expressing pleasure in passing it along. Clapper describes the productive meetings held in D.C. with various officials, including Senator Hickenlooper, Senator Bennet, and representatives from the FAA and the National Association of Counties. These meetings focused on issues related to airport development, community support, and funding, highlighting the positive reception and support received. Clapper updates on the airport advisory board's decision to move forward with the Airport Layout Plan, incorporating community feedback on safety, environment, and noise reduction. She addresses concerns raised by a new group opposing the airport expansion, questioning their survey's validity and the potential confusion it may cause among the community. Clapper emphasizes the need for clear and truthful communication from the county to counter misinformation. She concludes by mentioning upcoming discussions with the public policy group on construction issues within the county and efforts to revise the land use code based on a Citizen's Advisory Group's recommendations. Clapper reassures that these changes will not be retroactive, especially concerning the energy code, and plans to keep the community informed and engaged in these developments.

Bill Tomcich discusses the recent survey related to Aspen Airport developments and the public's perception of runway and taxiway modifications. He points out that despite the survey's focus on larger planes, three out of four questions received positive support for improvements in pilot training, noise monitoring, and terminal replacement. Tomcich suggests that the concern over larger planes might be overemphasized and that such aircraft could offer benefits like quieter operation and better environmental performance. He cites his observation of a Global 7500, noting its remarkably quiet operation compared to other jets. Tomcich also addresses the misconception about larger private aircraft, suggesting that fear of these planes is largely unfounded. He believes progress is being made in the airport layout plan (ALP) process and shifts to discuss the flight schedules as the winter season closes. He highlights the extended service by Delta and United through early April, with Delta continuing year-round service. This connectivity to the five largest U.S. airports marks a significant achievement for Aspen, improving accessibility. Finally, he notes the



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airport closure on May 6 for renovations, with reopening scheduled for the evening of May 23. United Airlines will resume a full schedule on May 24, ensuring a smooth transition into the summer flight schedule, including daily services to major destinations.

Julia Theisen, the new Tourism Director at Snowmass Tourism, shares her enthusiasm for returning to the area after nearly a decade with ACRA and a significant stint in Bend, Oregon. She brings a wealth of experience from managing destination marketing across a diverse region, including both urban and rural areas. Three weeks into her role, Julia reports strong occupancy rates for Snowmass through March, attributing it to the spring break crowd, with even April showing promising numbers compared to the previous year. She mentions the return of the Disabled American Veterans group in early April and anticipates some challenges due to higher rates but remains optimistic about the event's impact. Julia also highlights the national snowboarding championships taking place from April 8 to 14 and the closing weekend activities set for April 14, featuring various activations to draw visitors. She announces the release of the summer calendar of events, which includes signature events and new community-focused activities. Plans for more music on the mall from Wednesday through Saturday, a pre-show for the Thursday night concert series to feature local musicians, and a new jazz series on Sundays in July and August aim to enhance community vitality and visitor experiences. Excited about the upcoming summer season, Julia notes that the full concert schedule for Thursdays will be announced soon, promising more updates as she settles into her new role and gathers more insights into Snowmass Tourism's activities and initiatives.

Dan Bartholomew shares updates on the Aspen Airport, including the recent trip to Washington D.C. with Patti Clapper, where they secured valuable information for moving forward with the airport layout plan (ALP). The plan is set for board readings in April, with hopes for expedited FAA approval due to previously approved elements. This fast-tracking could make the airport eligible for funding under the bipartisan infrastructure law. Bartholomew highlights the urgency of addressing runway issues, with cracks worsening and shoulder problems emerging, necessitating a supplemental budget for repairs. The goal is to avoid emergency closures, but he cautions that temporary fixes might be necessary for safety, suggesting a potential shutdown. Looking ahead, the airport plans to host an open house and tours in May before the construction gets underway. Also, a triennial mock exercise required by the FAA is scheduled for June, inviting volunteers to participate in an emergency response drill.

Justin Nyberg expresses caution about the community's response to the current discussion surrounding the funding for the Aspen Airport project. He notes the temptation to oppose growth and questions the lack of counterarguments in favor of leveraging federal funds for the airport, rather than relying on a self-funded, bond-financed model. Nyberg emphasizes that if the community is to consider significant financial investments, priority should be given to affordable housing rather than the airport's restructuring. He underscores the opportunity to utilize federal funds for the airport project as a more beneficial approach for the community.

Lisa LeMay remarks on the retail sector's mixed performance, with some businesses experiencing their best year, others averaging, and some below expectations, without a discernible pattern. She hopes the town can at least match the previous year's performance as a positive outcome. The timing of Easter is affecting business forecasts, with expectations for a significant guest influx from Mexico City in March, shifting to April due to the holiday's timing. The presence of Chicago visitors is anticipated in April due to their Spring Break schedule. Additionally, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) event scheduled for April 1-7 is expected to bring a strong showing, potentially extending the retail surge into early April, offering an optimistic outlook for the retail sector.

Alan Fletcher discusses the exciting developments for the upcoming 75th anniversary season, highlighting a notable collaboration with Medici TV, the world's largest broadcaster of classical music, based in Paris. This partnership involves live streaming their performances, granting them exposure on a platform equivalent to that of the prestigious Salzburg Festival in Austria. With millions of subscribers around the globe, including 50,000 in Hanoi, this initiative is expected to significantly enhance the global visibility of Aspen's classical music scene. Fletcher sees this as a pivotal move in bolstering Aspen's reputation and the institution's standing within the international classical music community.

Nina Eisenstat expresses her excitement at welcoming Julia back to the Valley, joining Snowmass Tourism. She eagerly anticipates insights from the upcoming Queenstown delegation trip, recognizing Queenstown as an international peer of Aspen and expecting valuable lessons from the exchange. Regarding the service category, Eisenstat acknowledges the uncertainty surrounding what the offseason might bring, whether it will be a traditional offseason or just a slowdown, but she asserts her readiness for whatever comes.

Dwayne Romero starts by welcoming Julia Theisen and acknowledging her smooth transition with Rose, expressing excitement about having her on board. He mentions the involvement of Romero Group's senior leaders, John Kenny and Sean Gleason, in Snowmass Village's marketing and financial advisory boards, respectively. Romero notes the positive uptick in revenues from restaurants and retailers in the Snowmass mall area, which he sees as beneficial for both Snowmass Village and Aspen, highlighting the interconnectivity and mutual support between the two resort areas. He then mentions two upcoming events: a business focus group on April 1 and a Business Outlook Forum on April 24, emphasizing their importance for feedback and messaging. Romero expresses interest in land use code amendments aimed at reducing energy consumption from growth and development. Despite coming from the development and construction industry, he and his peers welcome these changes, seeing them as an opportunity for greater environmental responsibility. He advocates for education within the trades to foster a commitment to environmental ethics.

Maria Ticsay thanks the Patti for addressing construction concerns and looks forward to possibly involving Dwayne in future discussions. She expresses excitement about the upcoming Queenstown trip, recalling a dinner with Queenstown representatives in Aspen about seven or eight years ago. During that dinner, she had a memorable conversation with the individual responsible for Queenstown's affordable housing, from whom she learned a great deal. Ticsay plans to engage deeply on the trip to discover new and innovative ideas in affordable housing that Queenstown has implemented since her last interaction. She appreciates the opportunity to revisit Queenstown, recognizing it as a valuable counterpart to Aspen in terms of housing solutions and looks forward to learning from their advancements.

Henning Rahm shares that the first quarter went well, highlighting an incredibly fast March, which he attributes to the specific market target and the type of guests they are attracting. The Limelight Hotel has experienced a slight decrease followed by an increase, but overall performance is strong. Looking forward to the summer season, there's an adjustment in rate strategy, aiming to reach pre-pandemic business levels, like what was experienced last summer. Rahm is optimistic about the continuous flights offered by airlines into town, indicating strong accessibility for visitors. On the event side, things are looking promising with a lot of group business and a good mix of guests anticipated. The hotel, specifically the Little Nell, plans to close on April 14th, a bit earlier than the mountain, while the Limelight remains open throughout the offseason. This period will be used to tackle some offseason projects, indicating a strategic approach to maintenance and improvement.

Justin Todd reflects on occupancy data, noting that it's a bit outdated but reveals a downward trend: occupancy was trailing by seven percent going into March, with a more significant concern for April, down by 21%, and May, down by 28%. He is curious to see the actual numbers once they are updated. Looking forward, Justin, like Henning, expects a robust summer season on their campus and emphasizes the need to maximize revenue. He shares an anecdote about experiencing an extremely busy day at the airport, where it was so crowded that passengers were being offered up to \$3,000 to give up their seats due to weight restrictions or other issues, possibly related to the warm weather. The airport was, in his words, "absolutely packed."

Heather Kemp shares her astonishment at the constant busyness of the airport, suggesting she sometimes takes videos to capture the disbelief. She asks Dan and Patti if a fact sheet could be maintained for board members to ensure accurate and fact-based communication. Kemp mentions a recent getaway to Hawaii for her birthday and notes the team managed well in her absence. She highlights an upcoming collaboration with The Viceroy, Aspen Snowmass, and possibly Snowmass Tourism, focusing on promoting winter weddings—a niche opportunity in a region where summer and fall weddings are more traditional. Kemp discusses the retail landscape, echoing Lisa's observation of variability in business performance. She's heard about Tiffany' & Co. moving into the Oliver Peoples space and Louis Vuitton expanding, pointing to a continued luxury market push due to their willingness to pay high rents. While walking through the town's core, she notes a vibrant luxury shopping experience, acknowledging its benefits for local employment despite the heavy luxury emphasis. Kemp encourages everyone to explore the town's retail offerings, highlighting the involvement of local workers in these businesses.

Heather Steenge-Hart reports a successful first quarter at The St. Regis Aspen, outperforming 2023, with a relatively short offseason planned due to group bookings, leading to the hotel's closure only from May 4th to May 23rd. Despite the good start, she notes a softening in the mountain markets across the five mountain resort locations she oversees, suggesting a broader trend that may affect others in the industry as well. She advises keeping an eye on this development, indicating it's an area of concern worth monitoring.



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Brenda Wild provides an update on the Aspen real estate market, noting significant activity and interest. Year-to-date closings have reached \$639,431,000, surpassing the previous year's \$428,252,000, indicating a strong market with increases of 42% in January and 30% year-over-year in February. While March statistics are pending, Aspen currently has over \$307 million in pending sales, including an \$80 million contract, with a median house price around \$19 million, a square foot price of \$2,846, 90 days on market, and an inventory of 168 units with a supply of 8.4 months. In Basalt, pending sales are nearly \$54 million across 25 units, with a median price of \$3 million. The median price has fluctuated from \$19 million to \$12 million and \$14 million recently, showing market variability. The average house price in Basalt is about \$2 million, with a square foot price of \$816, 56 days on market, and a 7.5-month supply. Snowmass has \$546 million in pending sales, with the highest contract at \$34 million. The median price is currently \$10 million, with a square foot price of \$1,507—remarkably, this was the median price in Aspen pre-COVID. The market has seen days on market at 61 and a supply of 3.4 months, with 62 units in inventory and a 6-month supply. Wild also mentions her involvement with the Colorado Association of Realtors and her plans to attend state meetings in Denver in April and legislative meetings in May, focusing on housing and real estate issues, with plans to report back on these engagements.

Adjournment: Cristal Logan adjourned the meeting at 10:13 AM