

**Elko Convention & Visitors Authority
Lodging Committee Meeting
Home2 Suites by Hilton Elko
2572 East Jennings Way
Elko, NV 89801
Wednesday, July 24, 2019
6:00 PM
MINUTES**

Committee Members Present: Toni Jewell, PlayElko Prop. /Committee Chairwoman
Sarah Khouangrasvongsay, Red Lion Hotel & Casino
Denise Goff, Best Western
Jolene Stone, Home2 Suites
Jairah Ramirez, Hilton Garden Inn
Haley Ragland, Marriott Townplace Suites
Hannah Morrison, Marriott Townplace Suites
Kathy Estridge, Baymont Inn
Carrie Massie, Wingate by Wyndham
Kris Pachigar, Thunderbird
Sam Bhakta, American Inn
Bob Bhakta, Esquire Inn
Mahendra Bhakta, Budget Inn

ECVA Staff Present: Juli Nelson, Marketing Coordinator
Amber Merz, Administrative Assistant
Tom Lester, Tourism & Convention Coordinator

1. Welcome & Introductions; Toni Jewell, Chairwoman

Lodging Committee Chairwoman, Mrs. Toni Jewell, called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm. Introductions were made around the room.

2. Public Comments – Non-Action Item

Pursuant to N.R.S. 241.020, 2 (c) (3) this time is devoted to comments by the general public, if any, and discussion of those comments. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item on the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on a successive agenda and identified to be an action item.

Ms. Merz stated that she had given each of them a form that they would need to fill out to receive emails regarding Lodging Committee Meetings. She explained that there would no longer be reminder phone calls made prior to each meeting as it was very time consuming.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the May 22, 2019 meeting – **Action Item (public comment)**

Mrs. Jairah Ramirez made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2019 Lodging Committee Meeting. Mrs. Hannah Morrison seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Review of ECVA Activities and Room Tax Update - **Non-Action Item**

Mrs. Jewell stated that Mrs. Neddenriep was not able to attend today's meeting and asked if any ECVA staff member would like to update the Committee for her.

Mr. Lester stated that things have been going well at the Convention Center. He stated that Mrs. Neddenriep has been making a lot of positive changes. He stated that the ECVA had an Employee Retreat at the end of June. They also had a fire extinguisher training with the Elko Fire Department and they will be participating in a CPR class next month. He stated that they were awarded grant funding to help with Rebranding of the ECVA and updating the Website. Mr. Lester then referenced the room tax spreadsheet and stated that room tax has been holding pretty steady.

Mrs. Nelson stated that the ECVA did end up hiring a comptroller. Her name is Cheryl Garcia and she is fitting in very well with the rest of the ECVA staff.

Further discussion took place.

5. Review of ECVA Marketing Activities – **Non-Action Item**

Mrs. Nelson stated that she included a report in the packet and she would let them read through it on their own time. She stated that there was one thing she wanted to touch on from her report. Mrs. Nelson then explained that she had been working on a campaign with the Boise Hawkes, this included the option to offer vacation getaways packages for a drawing they do at every home game. She stated that they recently had someone win the Casino Vacation package, the winner was a young girl and the Red Lion was able to work with her on changing the Casino Package to a family friendly vacation package. She stated that Mrs. Neddenriep also worked with one of the Balloon Pilot and got them a hot air balloon ride since they will be vacationing in Elko during the Ruby Mountain Hot Air Balloon Festival.

6. Review of ECVA Event Activities – **Non-Action Item**

Mrs. Toni Jewell stated that Ms. Myers was not able to attend but she also included a report in the packet for them to read through. She stated that based on Ms. Myers report it looks like the Safety Olympiad went well and that the ECVA is looking to hand off full control of that event to the Mines in the next year.

7. Review of ECVA Convention and Tourism Activities – **Non-Action Item**

Mr. Tom Lester went over the reports for various marketing campaigns with the Committee. He then read through his travel schedule. He stated that he working on a Sales Mission to Carson City and he will also be attending the Nevada Global Tourism Conference in Las Vegas in November. He stated that he recently did a Sales Mission to Salt Lake City and took Michelle from the LedgeStone with him. It went very well and he feels like they made some good connections. He stated that he is currently running ads in the Idaho and Nevada markets for the Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival, Elko County Fair, Fairgrounds Horse Racing and other summertime events. He stated that a group called AmericArt will be in Elko filming for their travel series in the beginning of September. He is hoping to use this to help promote the upcoming Mural Festival. He stated that the Mural Festival website is now up. Mr. Lester then talked about school children from Owyhee attending the Mural Festival and how they will be adding native language and imagery into the murals to help teach people about their culture and help to bring awareness to the importance of preserving their language. He then stated that the updated Elko Area Fun Maps are almost finished and he hopes to have them sent to print soon. The Ghost Towns Brochure is finished and they should receive it back from the printers shortly. He stated that the In Your Backyard campaign is set to run July through September. Mr. Lester then discussed the possibility that National Park fees may be more than doubling for Tour Operators bringing groups in. He explained how this may affect the Elko area as a lot of overnight buss groups that Elko gets are coming through on their way to or from a National Park.

Further discussion took place.

8. Discussion of lodging related opportunities or issues – **Non-Action Item**

Mrs. Jolene Stone stated that she was very excited to hear about the children from Owyhee taking part in the Mural Festival, she thinks this will be a great addition. Mrs. Stone then stated that she really loves the idea of creating an annual art themed event for Elko.

Mrs. Jairah Ramirez asked if anyone had heard what happened with Shilo Inn not paying their room tax to the City.

Mrs. Jewell stated that she is not positive but she believes that they took care of the late payments.

Mrs. Stone stated that a few years ago she and a few other businesses had discussed trying to start a new Motorcycle Jamboree type event in the Summer. She explained that this event was great for the hotels, especially the smaller properties. Unfortunately, they were never able to work out all of the details to make it happen.

Further discussion on reviving the Motorcycle Jamboree took place.

Mrs. Hannah Morrison stated that the TownePlace Suites by Marriott will be hosting the Chambers Business after hours event on August 15th. She stated that everyone was welcome to attend.

Mrs. Haley Ragland stated that anyone who attends Business after hours has the opportunity to enter a drawing for a two-night stay by bringing a bag of school supplies to donate.

9. Next Lodging Committee meeting: **September 25, 2019** – Location: **Ledgestone Hotel**

None at this time.

10. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.



Katie Neddenriep
Executive Director