

**Elko Convention & Visitors Authority  
Lodging Committee Meeting  
Elko Convention Center  
Cedar Room  
700 Moren Way  
Elko, NV 89801  
Wednesday, July 25, 2018  
6:00 PM  
MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present:** Barry Bhakta, Rodeway Inn/Committee Chairman  
Mike Patel, Scottish Inns  
Chuck Lal, Days Inn  
Danny Bhakta, Centre Motel  
Kris Pachigar, Thunderbird Motel  
Bob Bhakta, Esquire Inn  
Hannah Morrison, Marriott Townplace Suites  
Becky Plaizier, Marriott Townplace Suites  
Christopher Boyd, Marriott Townplace Suites  
Jolene Stone, Ledgestone Hotel  
Toni Jewell, Red Lion Hotel & Casino  
Rebecca Watkins, Red Lion Hotel & Casino  
Sarah Khouangrasvongsay, Red Lion Hotel & Casino

**ECVA Staff Present:** Don Newman, Executive Director  
Tom Lester, Tourism & Convention Coordinator  
Juli Nelson, Marketing Coordinator  
Amber Merz, Administrative Assistant

**1. Welcome & Introductions;** Barry Bhakta, Chairman

Lodging Committee Chairman, Mr. Barry Bhakta, called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m. 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.

None at this time.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the May 23, 2018 meeting – **Action Item (public comment)**

*Mrs. Jolene Stone made a motion to approve the May 23, 2018 Lodging Committee Minutes, Mrs. Toni Jewell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

4. Discussion and update regarding the Elko City Councils review and amendment to the “Room Tax” City Code –**Non-Action Item**

Mr. Newman told the Lodging Committee members he would like them to use this time to discuss how they are feeling about the amended “Room Tax” City Code. He asked if the City of Elko ever trained the hoteliers on the new policies and occupancy reporting procedures.

Mrs. Toni Jewell stated that the City send out a letter outlining the changes and an explanation of how to report on occupancy but they never held instructional workshops like they said they would.

Mr. Newman stated that he spoke with Debbie from the City of Elko and that she was very pleased because every property but one had reported occupancy in the month of June. He explained that June was just a trial month and it was not mandatory to report occupancy until July.

Mrs. Jewell asked the other hoteliers if they had received any pushback from guests about the room tax exemption portion of the code.

Mrs. Jolene Stone stated that the only time she has had an issue was when she had Federal Marshals at her property. She explained that they are essentially undercover so none of their credit cards or identification can say anything about being government employees.

Further discussion took place.

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

Mr. Newman stated that Room Tax numbers for June 2018 were great. He stated that they are the highest numbers for any June on the spreadsheet, even from the years when gold was at its highest.

Further discussion took place.

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

Mrs. Juli Nelson stated that she continues to promote Elko area events as well as ECVA events. She passed around various materials she had worked on recently and went over them with the Committee. Mrs. Nelson stated that the September True West Magazine just arrived and it featured an article about Museums and Elko's California Trails Center was included. They also featured the Cowboy Arts and Gear Museum on their website. She stated that social media continues to be a great tool for marketing Elko and area events. She explained that it is especially useful in getting the word out about a lot of the smaller events going on this summer.

Mr. Newman stated that the Madden Media Story Telling campaign is still running and it is going very well. The current story they have featured is one told by Jan Peterson.

Further discussion took place.

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

Mr. Newman stated that Ms. Erin Myers couldn't make the meeting. He told the Committee that her report was in the packet for them to read through. He stated that the most recent event she worked on was the Safety Olympiad. There were 17 registered teams this year which is the most we have ever had as far as we know. He stated that 7 of the teams were from out of state and even more of them were from out of the area.

Further discussion took place.

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

Mr. Tom Lester went over his travel schedule with the Committee. He stated that he did an interview with Good4Utah in Lamoille Canyon on June 16th. He stated that he had included the website link to that interview in his report. Mr. Lester stated that the In Your Backyard commercials are playing in the Boise area. He has scheduled the new Elko marketing video shoot to take place August 10<sup>th</sup>-12th. Filming will begin at the Chilton tower and from there he is planning to go to Lamoille Canyon and then to various other locations over the weekend. Mr. Lester then stated the Meet Me in Elko redirect campaign is still running and doing well. He went over the most recent results from that campaign with the Committee. He explained that this is paid for in part by a grant from the NCOT. Mr. Lester then stated that an Adventure Race group came into the ECVA yesterday and he was able to sit down and meet with them. They are looking at holding a race in the area next July and then continuing it annually. This group holds races all over the world and they have participants that would come from all over the US as well as international participants. He then stated that Travel Nevada went to Japan recently and forwarded some leads and information requests to him. He has reached out and had correspondence with one group already. He explained that the Salt Flats are a huge travel destination for Japanese tourists right now so he is trying to market Elko as an overnight stop on the way to the Salt Flats.

Mr. Lester then played the “In Your Backyard” and summer events commercials that the ECVA has been running for the committee.

Further discussion took place.

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

Ms. Hannah Morrison stated that the Marriot is doing well, their occupancy is up right now. She stated that they will be starting renovations in October.

Mrs. Toni Jewell stated that the Red Lion is staying very busy as well.

Mrs. Jolene Stone stated that the Ledgestone is also very busy, July has been a record month for them. Mrs. Stone stated that she is short staffed at the moment though.

Mr. Newman stated that he has heard that they are moving forward with the Old Chicago Pizza in either the Commercial Casino or the Stockmen’s Casino. He stated that he was also told that they will be hiring a staff of around 80 people.

Further discussion took place.

10. Next Lodging Committee meeting: **September 26, 2018 – Location TBD**

Mrs. Jolene Stone stated that she would be interested in hosting. She asked that Ms. Merz email her tomorrow to confirm that the date is available as she does not have access to the calendar unless she is on site.

11. **Adjourn**

*Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.*



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Don Newman  
Executive Director