

**Elko Convention & Visitors Authority
Lodging Committee Meeting
Elko Convention Center – Cedar Room
Elko, NV 89801
Wednesday, September 28, 2016
6:00 PM.
MINUTES**

Committee Members Present: Barry Bhakta, Rodeway Inn
Hannah Morrison, Townplace Suites
Jairah Ramirez, Hilton Garden Inn
Jolene Stone, LedgeStone Hotel
Michelli Leedy, Holiday Inn Express
Toni Jewell, NavElko Properties
Missy Fowler, Gold Country Inn
Laura Dorfman, Quality Inn & Suites
Michelle Mota, Comfort Inn
Terra Schuette, Oak Tree Inn
Sam Bhakta, American Inn
Dan Bhakta, Holiday Motel
Mike Bhakta, Stampede Motel
Mike Patel, Scottish Inns
Mahendra Bhakta, Budget Inn
Chuck Bhakta, Days Inn
Bob Bhakta, Esquire Inn

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

Visitors Present: Abby Wheeler, Get My Ride

1. Welcome & Introductions; Barry Bhakta, Chairman

Lodging Committee Chairman, Mr. Barry Bhakta, called the meeting to order at 5:53 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 July 27, 2016 meeting – **Action Item (public comment)**

Mr. Mike Patel made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 27, 2016 meeting. Mr. Chuck Bhakta seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Presentation by Get My Ride regarding establishing a regular route between the lodging properties - **Non-Action Item**

Mrs. Abby Wheeler introduced herself and stated that she is with Get My Ride/Elko County Transit. She explained that they have a couple of local transit options. In the City of Elko they have Blueline, a public transit route with regular scheduled stops, this program costs \$1 a ride. The other part of the program is called Demand Response, this is for people who need rides that are either not on the Blueline route or they need a ride at a specific time. They will take people as far out as Lamoille and the rides are between \$2 and \$5. They do require that the ride is scheduled at least one business day in advance so as to not create any more competition with Elko Taxi. She stated that she was here today to tell them about the service that they provide but also to see if they felt there may be a need to develop regular routes between the airport and the local hotels or special routes between the airport, hotels and special events taking place in the community.

Mr. Lester asked how he would go about setting up a route if he wanted to put one together for a group coming in.

Mrs. Wheeler explained that at this point she is just here to open the lines of communication and find out if it is something that they feel the community needs. She explained that they do have to jump through some hoops when setting up new routes and programs as it is all federally funded. She stated that they are also only able to run Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm currently but that these are things that she can work on if they feel it would be beneficial for the community. She stated that if Mr. Lester wanted to discuss special events with her he could call her and set up a meeting to go over specific details at a later date.

Mr. Lester asked her what the cost difference would be between her service and Coach USA.

Mrs. Wheeler stated that their costs have to do with many different factors but that she knows she can operate for significantly less than Coach USA can.

Mrs. Jairah Ramirez stated that she feels it would be really great to have something running between the hotels and the airport.

Mrs. Wheeler asked if there was a specific time that they noticed they got more calls for rides from the airport.

Mrs. Ramirez stated that the Hilton normally has issues with the evening flight. She explained that they do have a shuttle but that in the evening they don't always have enough staff to run the shuttle and the hotel so they usually have to send a taxi to pick up guests from the airport if they come in on the late flight.

Discussion regarding the airport took place.

Mrs. Stone stated that she hears a lot about issues during the Cowboy Poetry Gathering as many of the attendees do not bring their own vehicles.

Mr. Bhakta stated that he thought that the Western Folklife Center had their own shuttle for attendees.

Mrs. Stone stated that they did not.

Mrs. Wheeler asked who she could talk to about public transit during the Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

Mr. Lester stated that he would love to discuss it with her.

Further discussion regarding the Cowboy Poetry Gathering took place. The Committee agreed that a route from the airport to the various properties would be beneficial and that they would like Mrs. Wheeler to pursue that.

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

Mr. Bhakta stated that Mr. Newman was in Las Vegas but he did include the room tax report for the committee to review.

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

Mr. Bhakta stated that Mrs. Nelson was in Las Vegas but she did include a report for the committee to review.

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

Mr. Bhakta stated that Mrs. Fallowfield was in Las Vegas but she did include a report for the committee to review.

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

Mr. Tom Lester listed his travel schedule for the Committee. He stated that he will be attending Small Market Meetings in Huntsville Alabama. He and Mr. Newman will then attend the Governor's Conference on Tourism in the Reno area. Then he will be in Gerlach for the next Cowboy Country Territory Meeting on October 25th. He and Mr. Don Westfall from the Northeastern Nevada Museum will then attend the Nevada Museum Association Conference where they will be bidding to host the event in Elko in 2017. In November he will be doing a NCOT sales mission to Los Angeles and then possibly another sales mission with the NCOT, after Thanksgiving, to Mexico. Mr. Lester then stated that he just got back from Connect in Dallas Texas, it is probably the largest Meeting Planner Trade Show. He stated that he did come away with 3 RFPs from that show and those leads and RFPs have already been sent out to all of the properties who have the amenities that are required. Currently Cowboy Country Territory has over 3,400 likes on their Facebook page, the Quarterly Cowboy Country Territory newsletter is now out. Territory will be doing 5 Consumer Travel shows, the Bay Area Travel Show, the Denver Travel and Adventure Show, the ISE show in Sacramento and a couple of shows in Utah. Second cycle grants are coming up, the deadline is September 30th for those. Mr. Lester passed around various leads reports for campaigns he has been working on and explained them to the Board. He stated that he has been working on the new 2017 Elko Area Visitors Guide and it is coming along. The new Meet Me in Elko Video is finished and he stated that he will be playing it for them shortly. He then passed around various publications featuring Elko. He stated that he is working with the NCOT on bringing in two Media FAM Tours, the first being a Go West group and the second for Cowboy Poetry.

Mr. Lester then played the new video for the Committee.

Further discussion took place.

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

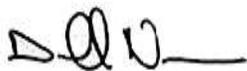
None at this time.

10. Next Lodging Committee meeting: **November 23, 2016 - TBD**

Mr. Bhakta stated that we may cancel this meeting due to the Thanksgiving holiday but he will speak with Mr. Newman about it when he returns.

11. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.



Don Newman
Executive Director