

ELKO CONVENTION & VISITORS AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2009
ELKO CONVENTION CENTER
CEDAR ROOM
8:00 A.M.

1. Roll call

ECVA Board Present: Ruben Abeyta
 Connie Campbell
 Jay Elquist
 Gary Morfin
 Charlie Myers

ECVA Staff Present: Don Newman, Executive Director
 Tom Lester, Convention & Tourism Manager
 Delynn Jones, Comptroller
 Mike Benzie, Facility Manager
 Juli Nelson, Administrative Assistant/Graphic Design

Visitors: Charlie Ekburg, Sweetlight Photography
 Sandy Ekburg, Sweetlight Photography
 Adella Harding, Elko Daily Free Press
 Ken Worthington

2. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m. by Board Vice-Chair, Charlie Myers. Board Chair, Gary Morfin was not yet present. Board member, Jay Elquist was present through phone conferencing.

3. Public Comments

No public comment was made at this time.

Board Chair, Gary Morfin arrived at the meeting at this time.

4. Approval of minutes from the Rescheduled Board meeting of August 18, 2009

Charlie Myers made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 18, 2009 Rescheduled Board meeting. Connie Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

5A-0915-09 Discussion and possible approval of the ECVA joining the Elko County Health Insurance plan

Don Newman stated that the Elko County Treasurer, Jeri Underwood referred him to Cash Minor with the County to discuss how the County's health insurance plan works. He further stated that Mr. Minor explained to him how the County plan was funded and helped him compare the ECVA's current health insurance plan to the County's. Mr. Newman pointed out that the County's health plan was considerably less and reviewed the County insurance health plan and what the new costs for ECVA employees would be with the Board. He further pointed out that \$52,000 would be the revenue needed to fund the County health insurance plan at expected levels which could be set aside in a special account over a period of time.

Mr. Newman stated that he sent a letter to ECVA employees with the comparison of the current ECVA health insurance plan to the County's plan. He further stated that he met with Max Belcher who works with developing health plans for various entities in Elko City and County and that Mr. Belcher strongly recommended the County's health insurance plan.

Ruben Abeyta inquired for the reason why the ECVA was looking at a different health plan.

Don Newman stated that this would enable ECVA employees to add additional dependents to their insurance.

Charlie Myers stated that it was not advantageous on the current ECVA health insurance plan for employees to include family members.

Charlie Myers made a motion to approve joining the Elko County Health Insurance Plan and developing a plan to budget the \$52,000. Ruben seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Don Newman stated that the ECVA will continue to work with Cash Minor from the County to join with the Elko County Health Insurance Plan.

Delynn Jones pointed out that the Board needs to approve how the ECVA would set up an account for the \$52,000.

Gary Morfin stated that a special fund could be budgeted for in the new fiscal year budget.

Don Newman stated that a certain funds that were not being used could be earmarked for this fund.

Charlie Myers suggested initially reserving \$12,000 in the general fund earmarked for health insurance.

Gary Morfin stated that an amendment to the prior motion was needed.

Charlie Myers made a motion to add as an amendment to the prior motion to immediately apply \$12,000 into a restricted fund for health insurance. Ruben Abeyta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6A-0915-09

Discussion and possible approval of the low bid for the production of the 2010 ECVA Event Calendar

Don Newman reviewed the requests for bids on the 2010 ECVA Event Calendar. He pointed out that the calendar would be available after December 1, 2009 and that 7,000 copies would be printed. He stated that bids were received from the Elko Daily Free Press and Print n' Copy. He further stated that the bid from the Elko Daily Free Press was lower than the bid from Print n' Copy. He suggested that the bid would be awarded to the Elko Daily Free Press.

Gary Morfin inquired if the Elko Daily Free Press met all the requirements outlined in the bid.

Don Newman confirmed that they did.

Charlie Myers made a motion to approve the low bid from the Elko Daily Free Press for the production of 7,000 copies of the 2010 ECVA Event Calendar in the amount of \$9,856. Ruben Abeyta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6B-0915-09

Discussion and possible approval of upgrading meeting room lighting

Don Newman pointed out that upgrading the meeting room lighting was included in the ECVA budget and suggested replacing the current chandeliers with ceiling fans with lighting. He showed an example of a ceiling fan with lighting that was installed in the Cedar Room. He explained that a total amount of 11 fans would be needed to replace the old chandeliers throughout the Convention Center and that Home Depot would be willing to sell each fan for \$199 each. He further explained that the fans would be a better, quieter and more efficient way to light, cool and circulate the air in the meeting rooms during meetings along with being great fluorescent lighting during dinner parties, weddings, etc.

Charlie Myers inquired if installation of the ceiling fans would be done by the ECVA maintenance crew.

Mike Benzie confirmed that the ECVA maintenance would install the fans.

Don Newman explained that the fans were 60 in. Brookedale II Ceiling Fan in Brushed Nickel Finish

Charlie Myers made a motion to upgrade the Convention Center meeting room lighting to the 60 in. Brookedale II Ceiling Fans from Home Depot at the cost of \$199 per fan. Connie Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6C-0915-09 Discussion and possible approval for the purchase of a new phone system from Frontier Communications, not to exceed \$9,000

Mike Benzie explained that the current ECVA phone system is approximately 10 years old and is leased from Frontier Communications. He further explained that it needs to be upgraded and with the cost of the lease it could be feasible to just purchase a new system from Frontier Communications.

Delynn Jones pointed out that the ECVA has paid over \$30,000 in leasing the old system from Frontier.

Don Newman stated that if the ECVA were to lease a new system from Frontier then the cost would be approximately \$15,000 over a 5 year period versus out right purchasing a new system at a cost of approximately \$8,500.

Charlie Myers inquired if a new phone system has been budgeted in the ECVA budget.

Mike Benzie confirmed that it was.

Charlie Myers inquired if the three different phones included on the hand out in the Board packet cover all the needs of the ECVA.

Mike Benzie explained that phone systems have not changed much over the last 10 years and that phone systems being offered by Frontier would cover the needs of the ECVA.

Charlie Myers inquired if Frontier Communications would install the new phone system.

Mike Benzie stated that Frontier Communications would install the new phone system and installation would be approximately a day.

Ruben Abeyta inquired if there was a buy out option on the old lease.

Don Newman stated that it would just be a switch over from the old phone system to the new phone system.

Mike Benzie stated that he did not think that Frontier Communications offered a buy out option.

Charlie Myers made a motion to purchase a new phone system from Frontier Communications not the exceed \$9,000. Connie Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and approval of a 12% increase in the salary range for the Convention and Tourism Manager position

Don Newman stated that it was discovered in doing employee reviews that some positions are approaching a ceiling in their salary range. He pointed out that ECVA policy states that a salary range cannot be exceeded to what is posted without revising the ceiling. He stated that he has discussed with various entities around town and that the 12% range would keep that position competitive within other markets.

Gary Morfin inquired for what positions this revision would apply.

Don Newman stated that it would be just for the Convention and Tourism Manager.

Gary Morfin inquired that it would take the current salary range of \$28,000 to \$53,599 and change it to \$28,000 to \$55,042.

Don Newman stated that Mr. Morfin was correct.

Charlie Myers inquired how often ECVA employee reviews were to be done.

Don Newman stated that ECVA employee reviews are done yearly and that in February when salary reviews are evaluated it will be determined where salary revisions for positions need to be made. He further stated that most positions are within the current salary range.

Charlie Myers stated that all salary ranges are reviewed during the budget process.

Jay Elquist inquired if all ECVA salary ranges reflect the yearly cost of living raise.

Don Newman stated that the salary ranges did reflect the yearly cost of living raise.

Jay Elquist inquired if in addition to the cost of living raise there was a yearly incentive raise.

Don Newman stated that all positions receive a yearly cost of living raise along with a yearly merit increase.

Charlie Myers inquired that the request is to raise the current salary range of the Convention and Tourism Manager position by 12% only covered salary increases over the next 2 to 3 years.

Jay Elquist expressed that he felt a salary increase should be good indefinitely and inquired if another position title could be added to the current title to warrant an indefinite salary increase.

Don Newman stated that an additional title position to warrant indefinite salary increase could be taken into consideration in February when salary reviews are conducted. He stated that Mr. Lester has taken on additional responsibilities during his employment with the ECVA which would certainly warrant an additional title.

Jay Elquist pointed out that if a new Convention and Tourism Manager was to be hired the salary would be at the low end of the salary range. He stated that a new manager should not be rewarded for the level of responsibility that the prior manager had.

Don Newman stated that it would be at an entry level salary depending on experience.

Charlie Myers inquired if eventually all salary positions would need to be capped.

Don Newman stated that during salary reviews in February that this issue will be taken into consideration.

Ruben Abeyta pointed out that in this industry most Convention and Tourism Manager positions would be a commissioned position.

Don Newman stated that it has been tried in the past to make this position a commission position and was not successful.

Ruben Abeyta made a motion to approve a 12% increase in the salary range for the ECVA Convention and Tourism Manager position. Charlie Myers seconded the motion. The Motion passed unanimously.

7. STAFF REPORTS:

7A-0915-09

Comptroller's Report/Approval of July expenditures and all matter related

Delynn Jones stated that the ECVA audit process is currently taking place and that it is going very smoothly.

Ms. Jones reviewed the Comptroller's report for August 2009 included in the Board packet.

Ms. Jones reported that General Fund room tax received in August from the City of Elko for July 2009 was \$40,945.94 which is a decrease of \$15,027 or 26.8% from July 2008. She further reported that a late March 2009 payment was received in August in the amount of \$2,461.

Ms. Jones reported that Marketing Fund room tax received in August from the City of Elko for July 2009 was \$30,165.45 which is a decrease of \$14,475 or 26.8% from July 2008. She further reported that a late March 2009 payment was received in August in the amount of \$1,813.

Ms. Jones stated that Facility Expansion room tax received in August for May 2009 was \$357.08 making the total received for fiscal year 2008-09 was \$69,380 reflecting a decrease of \$88,204 or 21.3% from fiscal year 2007-08.

Ms. Jones stated that Ad Valorem Taxes received for July 2009 from Elko County were \$4,867.81 which is an increase of \$4,842 over July 2008. She pointed out that this is the first payment for the new fiscal year.

Ms. Jones stated that total claims for August 2009 were \$184,473.88 of which \$16,891.52 was eligible for grant reimbursement. She compared this to August 2008 in the amount of \$154,961 of which \$8,076 was eligible for grant reimbursement.

Ms. Jones stated that a Certificate of Deposit in the amount of \$100,318.40 matured on August 28, 2009 at Nevada State Bank and was renewed for three months at .4% while Nevada State Bank is waiting for a Master signature card from the ECVA.

Charlie Myers made a request to review the Board minutes where the Fire Science Academy requested support funding from the ECVA. He explained that there were conditions put on the Academy that he would like to check.

Don Newman stated that the conditions were that the ECVA would offer a minimum of \$25,000 plus a percentage of the overage of the 1% facility expansion room tax revenue from the City of Elko.

Charlie Myers stated there were additional conditions such as the Fire Science Academy staying open in order to receive support funding from the ECVA. He explained that he would like to review what all the conditions were.

Mr. Myers explained that the ECVA has a major interest is the status of the Fire Science Academy because it is giving support funding. He stated that the Academy needs to give the ECVA updates on the status of the Academy and what is being done with those funds.

Charlie Myers made a motion to approve the August 2009 claims in the amount of \$184,473.88. Ruben Abeyta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7B-0915-09

Convention & Tourism Report

Tom Lester reviewed his Convention & Tourism Report for August 2009 included in the Board packet.

Mr. Lester stated that he just returned from attending the Addison Travel Shows in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada where he met with various travel agents and 4 different travel writers that are interested in coming to Elko.

Mr. Lester reviewed his travel schedule through October 2009 with the Board.

Mr. Lester reported that the new Cowboy Country website for the Territory is up and running and looks great.

Mr. Lester stated that the ECVA has received NCOT grant funding for two consumer shows through Cowboy Country Territory for the SAC show in Salt Lake City and the ISE show in Sacramento, California. He pointed out that this will save the ECVA around \$3,000.

Mr. Lester reported that ½ page ads have been placed in Leisure Group Travel for Cowboy Country Territory and the ECVA. He further reported that leader board ads for both the Cowboy Country Territory and the ECVA have been placed Leisure Group Travel's website

along with Nevada Magazine's website. He explained that these leader board ads will focus on attracting tour operators and consumers to the Elko area.

Mr. Lester stated that Sport Leisure Vacation will be attending the 2010 Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival.

Mr. Lester reviewed the ECVA Visitor Guide lead report included in his report with the Board.

Mr. Lester reported that the new "Meet Me In Elko" DVD showcasing Elko as a great meeting and convention destination is finished. He explained that the DVD will be used to hand out to meeting and group planners at various shows as well as web and television marketing. He added that the DVD will also be placed on Media Focus' website.

Mr. Lester stated that he conducted a site visit for the Will James committee on August 14-16, 2009. He pointed out that the convention for the Will James Society scheduled for the fall of 2010 has been confirmed.

Mr. Lester reviewed conventions and meetings scheduled to come to Elko and conventions that he is working on bringing to Elko.

Mr. Lester reported that he has completed a backup grant for an info commercial featuring "The Adventure Starts Here" campaign. He explained that this commercial will combine with the new "Meet Me In Elko" to take to meeting planners along with being put on various websites.

Don Newman stated that the new "Meet Me In Elko" DVD was produced by Flying Seasons using a remote helicopter and was funded in part by the NCOT.

Tom Lester showed the new "Meet Me In Elko" DVD to the Board at this time.

7C-0915-09

Marketing & Events Report

Don Newman reported in behalf of Cathie Horn who not in attendance.

Mr. Newman reviewed the success of various local events that had requested marketing support with the Board. He explained that the Elko County Fair & Horse Races were down races versus the previous year but generated an increase of \$4,800 per race during this year's races. He further explained that attendance to the Fair and Horse Races was up over \$3,600 from the previous year.

Mr. Newman reported that the Morrodders Car Show and Gamblers Run had over 300 cars registered.

Mr. Newman stated that the ECVA is working with the Gold Diggers Motorcycle Club to help promote their races in November.

Mr. Newman reported that the Summit of Mining Communities is scheduled to hold its conference in Elko in October 2010. He explained that the convention will showcase safety precautions in the modern mining industry.

7D-0915-09

Administrative Report

Don Newman reviewed the Administrative Report for August 2009 included in the Board packet.

Mr. Newman stated that the Geothermal Users Group will meet at 9 a.m. on September 16, 2009 to discuss the GBC grant and potential upgrade to the geothermal system. He reviewed a copy of the GBC report included in his packet with the Board.

Mr. Newman congratulated the Elko County Fair Board for their hard work and effort in the Elko County Fair and Horse Races. He reviewed the remaining local area events at this time which included the Morrodders Car Show & Gamblers Run, the Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival, the 2009 Sky Fair, the 2009 Oktoberfest, the 2nd Annual Carlin Chili Cookoff and Capriola's Ranch Rodeo.

Mr. Newman reported that he will be attending the Summit of Mining Communities Conference in Butte, MT on October 12-15, 2009.

Mr. Newman stated that Elko will host a MRANN Sanctioned European Scramble motorcycle Race on November 12-15, 2009. He further stated that the ECVA will help with marketing funds for flyers and mailings. He pointed out that over 300 racers are expected to compete in the races with 80% from Northern Nevada, Northern Utah, Southern Idaho and Southern Nevada.

Mr. Newman shared with the Board letters of appreciation to the ECVA for its support with the ATV Jamboree, the 2009 Sky Fair and the UNR Fire Science Academy.

Mr. Newman reviewed the July 2009 room tax revenue with the Board and pointed out that report was not complete due to three lodging properties not reporting.

Mr. Newman reported that the 2009 EMS Conference will begin this week at the Convention Center.

8. Board Comments

Delynn Jones explained that the Master Signature Card for Nevada State Bank is being set up so that signatures will not be required every time a new account is opened. She further explained that the master card will be set up to include the two signatures from the County. She explained that the County Treasurer's along with one other signature from the county is required.

9. Adjournment

Ruben Abeyta made a motion to adjourn the August 2009 Board Meeting. Charlie Myers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.