



Utah County Tourism Tax Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, April 8, 2024 @ 11:30am
Location: Hyatt House PG
544 S Pleasant Grove Blvd, Pleasant Grove, UT

~MEETING MINUTES~
(APPROVED AT THE 6/3/2024 BOARD MEETING)

Board Members Present:

Danny Wheeler (Chair), Utah Valley Convention Center
Kurt Christensen, Hyatt House
Chad Linebaugh, Sundance
Kevin Santiago, Heirloom Restaurant Group
Lee Adamson, Explore Utah Valley

County/Other Representatives Present:

Ezra Nair, Utah County Commission
Kathi Lewis, Orem City
Adam Beck, Utah County Attorney
Laurel Price, Utah County Commission
Lisa Shepherd, Utah County Commission
Nicole Neer, Utah County Commission
Alice Black, Utah County Clerk

(Meeting Called to Order: 11:30 am)

Agenda

Welcome, Working Lunch

Danny Wheeler – Welcomed everyone. Stated that the minutes were not ready, so will be approved at the next meeting.

Funding Review update and Discussion – Kurt Christensen

Kurt Christensen – Stated:

- Only looking at less than \$150,000 in requests today.
- Revenue is continuing to grow but not at the high rate as it was last year.

Sundance Nature Alliance

Project Funding Request: \$25,000

Project Reviewer: Chad Linebaugh

Chad Linebaugh introduced Julie Mack, Executive Director of Sundance Nature Lands

Julie Mack – Stated that this is a non-profit organization. There has been a lot of controversy over the construction of Provo canyon road, so it is so important to keep the recreational beauty of the canyon. There are also issues with invasive weeds in the canyon that with the county's help, have been able to get a handle on this issue as well as the support of the state. There is a conservation easement that protects these 864 acres of land.

Stated that she is asking for marketing dollars to help market educational and stewardship and outreach efforts for Sundance Nature Alliance. Noted that the main focus would be social media outreach and expertise. There is a website available (sundancenaturealliance.org) that some of the dollars would go into updated the site.

Stated that the mission for the organization is all about preserving the land (land preservation, plant and soil restoration, big horn sheep, water conservation, etc.) and watershed in the North Fork of Provo Canyon by inviting curiosity and developing a connection with the land from the visitors. There are approximately 5,000 privately owned acres at Sundance, with approximately 1/2 of those that have been preserved and Sundance is surrounded by 245,000 acres of US Forest Service land. Stewardship is a very important part of what the alliance does and has a very robust relationship with the Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service as well as education such as the program called *Voices of Nature* as well as hiking programs. Nature is art and are promoting people out to experience art in nature.

***Voices of Nature* was launched last year with 6 events (2 films and 4 guest speakers). 50-75 people showed up to each program with great comments. April 23rd will be the beginning of the 2024 series with a film entitled, *Common Ground* that will have a panel discussion afterwards with 2 regenerative farmers along with service some food from these farms including Snuck Farms and Clifford Farms. In May, there will be a film entitled *Deep Rising*, then *Brave the Wild River* as well as the author of *Beaverland* and then the last film will be *Giants Rising*.**

Stated that there will be the launching of The Tree Room Fireside series where there will be naturalists from BYU and UVU sharing their expertise to anyone that comes to the series. It will be free and open to the public. This will begin at the end of September – November.

There are also self-guided trail hikes that can be accessed through the website.

Danny Wheeler – Inquired as to what is the goal and success look like with the assistance of the financial request.

Julie Mack – Wanting to increase the audience and diversity of the audience. Currently have a mailing list of approximately 400 people and want to triple that number.

Chad Linebaugh – Noted that Sundance also contributes to this alliance monetarily as well as promotes them on the Sundance media channels.

Kurt Christensen – Inquired what the goal is that the Alliance wants the public to do.

Julie Mack – Become connected to nature and join the organization, environmental awareness.

Harrington Center for the Arts
Project Funding Request: \$54,466
Project Reviewer: Kurt Christensen

Summerisa Stevens, President - Stated the non- profit was formed in 2017. Put on high caliber concerts, festivals, art exhibits and events in arts education. Doubled impact in 2023 going from 32,000 to 75,000 attending. Have partnered with Yesco and McNeil printing to get advertising out to all demographics with a capture of 183 cities including 9 states that come in for events.

Harrington Center for the Arts has 9 programs, but are requesting funding to assist with 4 which receive the highest return on investment:

- **Fork Fest – Showcase of Utah Bands over 2 days with 32 bands across 3 stages. Anticipate having 4,000 attendees that is family friendly with food trucks, bounce houses, vendor village, art installations, etc. Had 8 food trucks and 50 vendors.**
- **Chalk it Up – Utah’s largest Chalk Festival. Last year there were 11,000 attendees and 200 artists. This year the festival will be at the Adobe campus, and they will be helping market it. It will be at the same time as the Lehi Roundup. Admission is free. Had 35 vendors and 5 food trucks.**
- **Concerts in the Park – Expanding this year from 5 concerts to 6. Last year the attendance increased to 1,100 per concert and believe it will increase to 1,300. Possibility of the last concert being The Beach Boys which could bring in an attendance up to 4,000.**
- **Living Bethlehem and Christmas Market – This was new last year, and the 4,000 tickets sold out in 4 days. Had over 6,000 attendees. Going to extend the length of days this year so are anticipating over 11,000 attendees this year.**

Have approximately 2 events almost every week during the summer. Worked with Elite media for the demographic media ads. Yesco and McNeil will double anything TTAB will fund. Looking to make our name more established in the Salt Lake area.

Goals:

- Increased ticket sales
- Increased attendees
- Extending outreach to SL County
- Create more ways to support local restaurants and hotels

Spencer Stevens, Vice-President – With the past data and expectations for 2024, there is an overall increase of 41% growth year over year. This year the ask is for 14% of the program/ad budget for the 4 events listed above. Harrington Center for the Arts in based in American Fork City. The city gave a large parks/rec grant of \$127,000 last year which is spread out between all the events. Also received grants through Lehi City Park/rec as well (\$34,000 for Chalk it Up).

Festival Latinoamericano

Project Funding Increase Request: \$50,000

Project Reviewer: Danny Wheeler

Howard, Ben, Edgar, Organizers – Been put on this event for 22 years. Is a 3-day event that is held at the County office building grounds in Provo.

Edgar, Chairman of the Board – Mission is to unify the community. When the festival first started there were about 75 people in attendance with a total of 300 (including vendors /performers). Festival is a 501©3 organization. All committee works as volunteers.

Ben Perez – Estimated \$3-4 Million in sales during the event. Multiple businesses have been born due to the festival. Expenses have extremely increased ever since the pandemic (construction, insurance, etc.) so have had to lower advertising to be able to cover the additional expenses in other areas. Have attendance coming from Colorado, Arizona, etc. This is the largest Latino even on the west side of the United States. Have representation from Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, etc. The location has plenty of room to expand with the state grounds and the city has offered to close whatever surrounding city streets needed. Has turned into not just a Latino event, but a multi-cultural event as well.

Funding Recommendation Discussion & Voting

Sundance Nature Alliance

Project Funding Request: \$25,000

Kurt Christensen – Inquired as to what organizations have the stewardship of protecting this resource.

Chad Linebaugh – Cottonwoods, Utah Open Lands, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, etc. Sundance Resort does give a lot of money to the alliance but encouraging them also get other outside funding.

KEVIN SANTIAGO: MOTION TO APPROVE \$25,000

LEE ADAMSON: SECOND

AYE: ALL IN FAVOR

PASSED: 5/0

Harrington Center for the Arts
Project Funding Request: \$54,466

Danny Wheeler – Stated that he asked Adam Beck to pull the contract for Harrington Center for the Arts from last year. The recommendation last year focused on *Chalk It Up* and *Fork Fest*. Last year the board felt like the concerts in the park (they went to Lehi City and got \$34,000) was more local where *Chalk It Up* and *Fork Fest* had more potential to bring in outsiders. Last year's request was \$49,500. Feels like we should suggest to the Commission to make all these requests on a reimbursement basis through submitting receipts for reimbursement (*board agreed*).

Chad Linebaugh – Stated that he thought the year before they presented for a capital expenditure that was declined by the board.

Board Members all agreed that all their events are very impressive and very well attended.

Lee Adamson – Stated that they did run some numbers on *Chalk It Up* and *Fork Fest* and it looks like *Fork Fest* had 207,000 attendees and *Chalk It Up* had 507,000 attendees, but he is not confident on the calculations due to the software. His organization doesn't have the correct data collecting module to accurately calculate festivals, so his organization is going to pay to upgrade the software needed.

Ezra Nair – Stated that in regard to the Freedom Festival, from 2004-2007 the county gave in-kind donations of the space for the festival. In 2008, did a sponsorship of \$100,000 and has pretty much been the same ever since.

CHAD LINEBAUGH: MOTION TO APPROVE \$54,466

KEVIN SANTIAGO: SECOND

AYE: ALL IN FAVOR

PASSED: 5/0

Festival Latinoamericano

Project Funding Increase Request: \$50,000

Kirt Christensen – Feels this is a great and beneficial festival.

Danny Wheeler – Stated that his only concern is that the festival doesn't have a lot of measurement tools to give us information as to the increase in dollars/attendance over the years. Will talk with the organization to see if they can do some tracking of some sort of attendees/dollars coming in.

Lee Adamson – Stated they have a tool that can measure where people are coming from through cellphones and can actually go back so that might help in seeing if there is increased traffic for the festival through the years.

KURT CHRISTENSEN: MOTION TO APPROVE THE \$50,000

CHAD LINEBAUGH: SECOND

AYE: ALL IN FAVOR

PASSED: 5/0

Roundtable Discussion

Kurt Christensen – Inquired as to if a vote or anything needs to take place on the administrative item regarding the requirement for receipts for reimbursement?

Adam Beck – Stated that he didn't think that a formal vote needs to be done, it's just a contractual thing.

Danny Wheeler – In June the next meeting will be at Sundance. Still needing hosts for August and December. Kevin Santiago to host August.

Laurel Price – Nothing

Lee Adamson – Have a remodeled website. The last legislative session was an interesting one. They were looking at using tourism money to build a stadium in Salt Lake which we felt wasn't the best use of Utah County money. For now, they are not going to do that. The bill passed but it's currently not using any money, but they see the tourism tax as something help close up loopholes. They did increase the tax on rental cars.

Kevin Santiago – Opened 2 new businesses in Utah County: one is like a salad and go where we make salad/meals and deliver them to homes every Thursday night. Currently have about 250 homes we deliver to. Then there is a drive thru called Tossed that are salads as well.

Ezra Nair – Stated that on the Commission agenda for this week is an item to approve an Assistant to the County Administrator position. If that passes, you will see more help from that new person to this board.

Nicole Neer – Stated that she is working on the Commissioner's Cup and gave a huge thank you to those that helped last year. This event is a fund raiser for Giant Steps Autism Preschool. Looking for sponsorship for lunch which you would get significant advertising. The date of the Cup this year is June 21st and will be at Spanish Oaks Golf Course in Spanish Fork. (*handed out a flyer to the board*).

Chad Linebaugh – Stated that ski season ended yesterday (April 7). Ski attendance numbers were higher this year than last. Will be breaking ground for *The Inn at Sundance* in May-June in coordination with MIDA (Military Installation Development Authority). This will be a 63-room hotel located at the base of the ski area. It will be an approximately 2-year project. Summer theater this year will be the musical *Newsies*. The board will be invited to VIP preview night.

Danny Wheeler – Stated they are having a great year partnering with Lee Adamson and his team. Corporate/association events stronger than ever. February-March didn't have a nonevent day.

Alice Black – Nothing

Kurt Christensen – Stated that revenue is going up for the hotel industry. STAR (Smith Travel Accommodations Report) shows revenue up nationwide as well. Because of inflation and wages, hotel operations income in 2023 was down (materially). Noted that there are 120 Hyatt Houses nationwide. At the Hyatt Christmas party the staff was told that they would receive a bonus if the PG Hyatt House got in the top 10% of all Hyatt Houses in the nation regarding the satisfaction surveys and PG ranked #1.

Adam Beck - Nothing

2:00 pm Adjourn Meeting

CHAD LINEBAUGH: MOTION TO ADJOURN

LEE ADAMSON: SECOND

AYE: ALL IN FAVOR

PASSED: 5/0

MEETING ADJOURNED

(Meeting Adjourned: 1:43 pm)

UTAH COUNTY TOURISM TAX ADVISORY BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING ATTENDANCE SHEET
April 8, 2024

PRINT CLEARLY

Name:

Agency:

Kurt Christensen

Danny Wheeler

Chad Linebaugh

Ezra Navir

Kewon Santiago

Kathi Lewis

Adam Beck

Lauvel Price

Lee Adamson

Lisa Shepherd

Mark N

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Steve Black

Hyatt House PG

Utah Valley Convention Center

Sundance

Utah County

Herblom

City of Orem

Utah County

Utah County

Explore Utah Valley

Commissioner Sakuma

Commissioner Gordon

DC Clerk Office