MINUTES
Emery County Travel Bureau
August 7th, 2019 11:00am
Canyon Conference Room
Castle Dale, Utah

ATTENDANCE:
Board Members: Danny VanWagoner, Travis Bacon, Kent Wilson, Kolton World, Doug Stilson,
Staff: Adriana Chimaras, Natalie Olsen
Excused: Penney Riches, Joshua Rowley
Guests: Stephen Durrant, Larry Johnson, Amanda Leonard, Eric w/ Utopia
Conducting and Welcome: Danny VanWagoner

1. **Approval of Minutes: July 3rd, 2019:** Doug motioned to approve the minutes from July with a second from Kent.

2. **Discussion of Financial Report: Adriana Chimaras:** If you look near the bottom of our budget there is a line that says Tourism Infrastructure. There are 2 of them, one says East, the other says West. We haven't located the contracts that are associated with these but essentially we have been paying both Ferron and Green River golf courses somewhere between $15,000-$20,00 out of these every year for as far back as we can see. We just want to track down those contracts to see how much longer that contract will run.
   Second line item on the budget we want to talk about is called O&M/Museums and Info Centers. That money solely goes to Green River Info Center. It has taken a lot of research on our end trying to figure out the line items and what the budget ideas were last year. It has also been a head ache not having definitions to each line item. We are getting things figured out, slowly.

3. **Discussion of Transient Room Tax: Natalie Olsen:** In doing the TRT and Restaurant Tax numbers, we are still quite a bit lower than last year. Don't know if we still want to contribute that to a wet spring, or if there is something else going on. We are down about $40,000 YTD. Green River is about 97% of the taxes. Castle Dale is not a taxing entity but it is on their Agenda for tomorrow nights meeting. Ferron and Huntington should change theirs as well. If we do have real concerns Adriana said she can check into it and start doing audits to make sure everyone is reporting if that seems necessary. Everyone thought that would be a good idea.

4. **Discussion of possible New Board Member:** Jesse has resigned. We are sad to see him go. We do have a candidate. Her name is Laurel Magnuson from Magnuson Lumber. The one thing Adriana really likes about Laurel being on the board is that she is also on the board for the Business Chamber. Adriana has let us all know in the past that it has been very difficult reaching out to local businesses and to spread the word for people who want to start tourism businesses, on how to communicate with the community at large and with businesses. With her being on the Chamber it makes it really helpful to continue to give that information to everyone. Adriana would like to have someone vote for her to take over Jesses term. We will put it on the agenda to approve Laurel next month.

5. **Discuss/Approve/Deny Stephen Durrant to the Board:** Kent made a motion to table this item for Septembers meeting with a second from Doug.

6. **Discuss/Approve/Deny Eric from Utopia**: Utopia re-did the ending to the Good Water Rim trail and added a little dedication to LaMar at the end. Go take a look at it when you get some time. Every business in the county has access to the footage that Utopia does. Emery County has a lot of footage to share with those that want it. Utopia has a few new sponsors, Utah Symphony and Snow Bird Resort has come on as sponsors, so Emery County is in good company. Utopia went on the MECCA bike festival and scouted out the Saucer Basin. Really cool spot. They want to show a family camped out there for the weekend. They want to get out fishing. They are planning to do both this fall. They are wanting to do a float down the San Rafael river. Just checking it out right now. Eric is wide open for suggestions of new businesses to do commercials, maybe wants to do a 30 second commercial on the golf courses. This fall Eric wants to focus on more programming and less commercials just because he feels like we have a lot of commercials. Eric is asking for another 6 month contract for $7500. Travis made a motion to approve the 6 month contract for $7500 with a second from Kolton. Voting was unanimous.

7. **Discuss/Approve/ Deny Quartzsite Show:** Quartzsite is the biggest OHV show. We got some data from the state and our numbers of visitation out of Arizona are impressive. So many visitors from Arizona. We have a feeling it has to do with our Quartzsite show because it's in Quartzsite. Kent suggested to advertise in the paper for people to put in a bid on what they would charge to take the material down and also sit at the booth for the Quartzsite show. It needs to be a public process. Kent made a motion for the Travel Bureau do the Quartzsite show and start the process for advertising to have someone staff the booth and get the materials down there with a second from Doug. Voting was unanimous.

8. **Discuss/Approve/Deny Raising Green River Info center funds from $25,000 to $32,000:** This is money that goes to the information center in Green River. It has been at $25,000 for 10+ years and with the cost of living that has gone up they are looking to increase that. The info center is open when the museum is open. Travis wasn't quite sure what they get paid hourly. It was discussed that we need more info before we can make a motion on this. Travis was going to bring the info to next month's meeting with a 4 year history.

9. **Discuss/Approve/Deny Digital Board Reader:** Travis said he thought the Travel Bureau had approved money for a couple digital board readers. Natalie looked in the minutes for the last two years and couldn't find anywhere that these boards were approved. They were talked about and money was budgeted for, just no signs approved. Travis will dig up some information on the bill boards and what it would cost us and bring it to next Board meeting. The thought was we need to pay for the Bill Boards with an invoice.

10. **Discuss/Approve/Deny See Source Program. Presentation by Better City:** Kelvy with Better city, who is a Economic Development consulting firm, talked to us about what they have been doing with Green River city lately. One of the things they have had a lot of discussions with Travis about is how to better grow and better take a proactive approach to the tourism industry. How can we better use some of the tools available to growing tourism? They have a program that can help us target and know where our visitors are coming from and also how much money they are spending in our county. Adriana mentioned that since she has been hired on in February we haven't had a chance to sit down and work on our strategic plan. We are leaning toward pushing development in our recreation infrastructure, especially since we have just been designated a wilderness and recreation area. Marketing is kind of taking a back burner right now. We want to make sure, before we invite people into our area, that we are actually ready for them, at least in the recreation natural area perspective. This is a great service, we just aren't ready to move forward with something like this yet. Travis said he thinks this is a great product. He thinks we have enough going to get this up and running, bring people in with what we have now, and then bring them back because we will have more to offer soon. Kent said the west side is behind the curve from the east side of the county right now. It would benefit Green Rivers tourism industry where the west side isn't ready for this. Kent asked if there is any desire on Green Rivers end to be a partner in this. He said if you do this right it could be a boom to the local businesses. Adriana thought that we could apply for a grant to help with the cost of the program next year. That would be a great program to have the grant help pay for. It was decided that we will hold off on this program for right now, but will definitely look at this program again at a later date.

11. **Update, Discussion on Possible Recommendation of the Following:**
    a) **State Parks:** Goblin Valley is meeting with the BLM tomorrow to work on getting an MOU to take over the Little Wild Horse area. The expansion at Millsite is just waiting at the BLM office. The dam construction is kind of on hold. Stephen spoke with an engineer last week and they are still waiting for decisions from the NRCS as far as how to proceed with fixing the spillway. The engineer was optimistic that they would have the whole thing done before water comes down next spring. Currently, the water level is at 68% at Millsite. They are still able to launch boats, they haven't had to move the docks a whole lot this season. The water situation is looking good for us as far as recreation. Millsite's visitation is up from last year. Huntington State Park is full every weekend.
    b) **Trail's Committee: Adriana:** There is a crazy amount of trail work being done right now. Lots of new way-finding signs have been put in. BLM is almost done with the Travel management plan for the San Rafael Desert and then they will start working on the management plan for the Swell and the Quarry. The Forest Service wasn't aware of the Reel Rock film. They were thinking they were done for a bit but Adriana informed them that they would see a significant increase in visitation in the next couple of years because of this movie coming out. BLM is going to help us out with our toilets down at the Buckhorn Visitors center. They want to do a grant system with the Trails committee to help anyone who wants to build a trail in the area. It's not a huge grant, around $1200. They have the application set up and Adriana is working on putting it out on Jotform. It will be an easy connection with folks who want to apply for help in building trails in our area. We want to put on Volunteer appreciation dinner for all of those that have helped on trails. They have put in a lot of time and work. Robyn Nelson has shown interest in being on the committee. It will be a good thing for her to join and us have representation from Green River.
    c) **Business Groups:** Nothing to report
    d) **Museums**: New register at the San Rafael museum. They received their first grant in several years to update their stuff. We are hoping to get funds increased for Green Rivers museum. John Wesley Powell after hours event went very well. There was an author that wrote a book about the area there giving a lecture and signing books. John Wesley Powell museum also just got a $20,000 grant from the state. It will help with some much needed projects.
    e) **Expos:** Talked about Quartzsite earlier. Also Adriana wanted to mention that she wants to move away from doing Expos and focus more toward events where we can have direct connection with our demographics. It costs us half as much so we can do twice as many.
    f) **HUB:** Website is live. We need lots of help updating that so if you take the time to look please tell Adriana.
    g) **Event Coordinator:** Amanda has a few updates. ATV jamboree is coming up next month. There will be about the same amount of people as last year. It happens at the Castle Valley Ranch. There is a new volunteer, his name is Wayne Paul, who is on the Castle Country OHV club who is really excited to be an advocate for the Emery County and revitilizing the OHV

community and Emery County specifically so there is an internal source. Amanda said he really deserves a shout out because the Castle Country OHV club had some huge nay sayers over the Public Lands Bill, even causing a lot of problems and he has done really good to try and get rid of that negativity and tell them they need to work with the county instead of against. He has just been trying to create peace with those upset ATV riders.

The Joes Valley Fest is coming along. Isaac Caldiero, is coming to the fest. The official contract still needs to be approved in Commission but they are planning on coming. Isaac was a pro climber for a long time, wrote the first guide book dedicated to Joes Valley, and then got on Ninja Warrior and is the only person who has ever won the Ninja Warrior course. He is a really good bridge between the non-climbing and climbing community. He will also be doing some assemblies at the schools while he is here.

A few weeks ago Adriana suggested that we try and bring an Ultra Race to our area and mentioned this company called Aravaipa running based out of Phoenix. An Ultra Race means they do anything from a 5K to 100 miles. They love the back country stuff. Jamil is the main guy over it, its his company. He was able to came here last week and meet with Amanda and Ben Heaton. Ben took him out and showed him the wedge and Buckhorn wash. Jamil was really excited about the area and thinks it's perfect for his group. They are planning on bringing a race here next spring.

Adriana wants to refocus Amanda and have her start working on large recreation events that will bring in over 500 people. Jamils race will be one of them, and another one will be a big raft trip down the San Rafael.

h) Community Awareness: Nothing to report.

i) Grants: We find out on Friday if we got the UOT grant

11. Discussion of Old Business: Nothing

12. Discussion of New Business: Travis talked to a guy by the name of Noelle. He was at our last meeting in Green River, No one knew who he was and he left a little bit early so we didn't get a chance to talk to him. He bought a house and ranch in Green River and wants to jump in and help wherever he can. He brought to Travis's attention about a trade delegation that the governor is going on to Hong Kong and Japan next month. He was wondering if we wanted in on it, because he is really interested in going as well. He was even suggesting that he would help pay the cost. Travis talked to Adriana, and both of them had things already lined up that week and couldn't go. Travis is wondering if it is ok to send him over there to represent and be the Ambassador for our County? Everyone was on board with that.

13. **Adjourn** – Thank you for coming!