

CARBONDALE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
TOURISM COUNCIL of CARBONDALE (TCC) MINUTES
June 24, 2021, Zoom

TCC Mission: The Tourism Council of Carbondale's mission is to create a strong tourism economy by promoting the town.

In Attendance/Not In Attendance:

TCC Chair Michelle Marlow, Ascent Events

Jamie Wall, Town of Carbondale Rec Dept

Kellyn Wardell, Carbondale Arts

Troy Hawks, Sunlight Mountain Resort

Sue Gray, Carbondale Historical Society

Julie Warren, River Valley Ranch Golf & Homestead Bar and Grill

Andrea Stewart, Carbondale Chamber Executive Director

Erkko Alm, Alpine Bank, Chamber Board Treasurer

Shawn Brugge, FootSteps Marketing, TCC Web Contractor

John Runne, Runne & Associates, Chamber Board President

Emily Ravn, Carbondale Comfort Inn & Suites

Renae Gustine, Town of Carbondale Finance Director, Town Liaison

Taylor Rogers, FootSteps Marketing, TCC Web

Contractor Sarah-Jane Johnson, TCC PR Contractor

Marty Silverstein, Town of Carbondale Trustee Liaison

Mark Hardin, Field-to-Fork Kitchen

Jessi Rochel, Town of Carbondale Rec Dept

Minutes:

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:01am.
2. Industry Updates and Trends
 - Mark shared that summer is filling up quickly with several large events. Running into some stage 2 fire restrictions but that is not deterring folks. Most is pre booked with weddings etc. Last minute events more at risk. Employees are asking for a lot more money to work and that is driving costs up.
 - Emily has a new puppy! Concurred that is has been busy this June and folks are spending money. Fire worry has changed booking pattern for the current situation with some cancellations. I 70 Might be closed with burn scar flash flood risk. Long term bookings: fall bookings now, but the hotel is more last minute bookings. Folks booking well into October. Mountain Fair: Not filling in quickly but that weekend is very restricted (higher rates, two night minimum etc). Labor shortage is a big problem right now. Supply chain is affected.

- Michelle shared that events are stepping up, labor shortage effects tent rentals, caterers are triple booked. Crazy in the event world.
 - Andrea applying for funding from Colorado Tourism office. There is a free job posting board on the chamber website getting more traffic. Very competitive labor market.
 - Julie shared that the Brett Dennen concert is on for July 16 and that tickets will become available July 1. It should bring significant traffic into town.
 - Emily shared that the Colorado tourism office is offering a free concierge training program (customer service etc). Check out the link. Michelle has shared several helpful links. CADMO is an association in the tourism office, went to my first in person conference: staffing shortages were discussed. Gaylord Hotels are only at 43% staffing capacity. We were used as an example with regards to the responsible tourism page. Similar challenges face other towns. CTO selected Carbondale for a Stories feature (photos).
 - Sarah Jane there are 30 applicants for the program (32 spaces): application in collaboration with the 5 DMOs in the valley. We are the local champion with the CTO. Program to facilitate to set up a stewardship council program for collaboration on destination management issues: crisis management and responsible tourism messaging. The announcement from Crested Butte that they are cancelling their marketing is a sign of more to come: Sedona, Tahoe etc. are moving away from marketing and moving towards environmental stewardship. Bob Rankin also gave a letter of support. More to come.
 - Andrea submitted an application for a photography matching grant of \$2500. Includes a photographer and focus is on agrotourism and recreation.
 - Shawn shared with regards to photography: in the past the TCC used to help with Instagram photos but we have gotten away from that...we would like to ask everyone if they would share some photos with us. Rather than sharing folders, we will have a shared album. He will continue instagram posts, but if you have a good photo you can add it to the album from your iphone. We are working on building our Carbondale Library. Sarah Jane suggested responsible tourism hashtags could be added. Perhaps launch the #spiritofsopris.
3. Approve Meeting Minutes
The meeting minutes from the May 27 meeting were presented for approval. John Runne motioned to approve the meeting minutes, and Kellyn Wardell seconded the motion; the motion was approved.

4. Financial Review

Tourism Council of Carbondale

Treasurer's Report – Executive Summary

Period Ending May 31, 2021, Cash Basis

Erkko is out on paternity leave. Heather our bookkeeper created the treasurer report on page 6. Please review.

Lodging Tax Report – Town of Carbondale

- Lodging Tax for April 2021 is \$8,659: a 663% increase from April 2020, and a 35% increase over April 2019.
- 2021 Year to Date is \$37,487.

YTD P&L Actuals May 31, 2021 (Blue Column)

- Lodging Tax Income: \$45,920 actual vs YTD Budget \$26,975
- Total Income: \$45,928 actual vs YTD Budget \$27,084
- Net Ordinary Income: \$14,353 actual vs YTD Budget -\$17,906
- Net Income including Other Income: \$14,353
- Net Available Operating Funds as of 5/31/2021: \$77,734

Balance Sheet as of May 31, 2021 (Blue Column)

- The Operating Account balance is \$112,931 compared to \$71,577 at 5/31/2020
- Money Market account balance (Opp & Reserve Funds combined) is \$73,332
- Reserve Fund Equity account is \$67,979 (interest earnings now included in Equity account); Opportunity Fund Equity account is now at \$5,350

June Preliminary Numbers

Preliminary revenue for lodging tax collected in June is \$11,267.40. That's 144% over last year and 21% above 2019. Year to date we are 42.5% above 2020.

2021 Budget

- As in years past, our budget figures are based on the previous year's budget figures, taking into account any potential increases or decreases that we may see on specific line items.
- Please see notes on Balance Sheet and P&L regarding budget changes going forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Beach, Bookkeeper (for Erkkko Alm, Treasurer)
June 22, 2021

Please direct any questions or comments to erkkoalm@alpinebank.com
Thank you!

Additional Discussion

- Andrea shared we have the lowest lodging tax in the state at 2%. Changes to taxation can affect lodging companies, although Emily would like to see it higher as well. We need to be very strategic how we go about this as far as community information etc. Sarah Jane thinks the house needs to be in order with a shift first through some destination planning and resident sentiment surveying. Limited funding opportunities from Garfield County. This is a county wide conversation. Highlighting efforts of the chamber and the TCC to strengthen the position and value of this change would help.

Sarah Jane shared that Durango increased their lodging tax recently 2% (up to 4%) and spent upwards of six figures to market it. It passed narrowly. It is important therefore that contextual marketing and education is done in advance of this effort.

- Consensus that housing remains a challenge in our valley. Long term searches are common among employees and folks have to leave the area due to inability to find affordable housing.
- Responsible tourism messaging is rising to the top as a priority for mountain town tourism management and budget allocation.

5. Chamber & TCC Updates

- Colorado Creative Corridor website launch
- Mountain Fair program ad

6. Subcommittee Updates & Breakouts

- Carbondale-related tourism/industry partner monthly “Tourism Matters” newsletter: highlight industry trends and how they relate to Carbondale Tourism eg. Grant applications, media coverage, updates from contractors, SEO tips from Titan, highlight board members on the TCC, call for board members etc.

“How to Carbondale” for tourists, eg. Create a business card/sticker with a QR code provided to local business. Scan the QR code and link to events, town parks, access to amenities, dog friendly places. Link to website. Would love to announce some of these things for July if possible.

- Partnership Committee: Troy, Taylor and Emily. Tourism Matters: Sent to our partners talking about industry trends how it relates to Carbondale, grants etc.
- Visitor Experience: Julie, Shawn, and Kellyn “How to Carbondale” the visitor messaging piece, responsible tourism etc.

7. TCC New Business/Items Not on the Agenda

- Andrea suggested that July we often do more volunteer time vs. a meeting, but it is important to meet and perhaps have an open work meeting to continue these conversations and sub-committee template development.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07am

Respectfully Submitted,
Julie Warren
River Valley Ranch Golf & Homestead Bar and Grill