

## Colorado Association of Ski Towns

August 28, 2015

Vail

### Meeting Minutes

*The following were in attendance:*

Steve Skadron	Aspen	Joe Gierlach	Nederland
Jennie Fancher	Avon	Pam Larson	Ouray
Virginia Egger	Avon	Patrick Rondinelli	Ouray
Tim Gagen	Breckenridge	Greg Schulte	Pagosa Springs
John Warner	Breckenridge	Jennifer Green	Pagosa Springs
Aaron Huckstep	Crested Butte	Andy Beerman	Park City, UT
Tom Breslin	Dillon	Jason Glidden	Park City, UT
Dean Brookie	Durango	Clint Kinney	Snowmass
Kathy Chandler-Henry	Eagle Co.	Tom Acre	South Fork
Frank Lancaster	Estes Park	Deb Hinsvark	Steamboat
Gary Wilkinson	Frisco	Sonja Macys	Steamboat
Kim Cancelosi	Frisco	Walter Magill	Steamboat
Bill Efting	Frisco	Michael Lund	Stifel Nicolaus
Jim White	Grand Lake	Steve Jeffers	Stifel Nicolaus
Russ Forrest	Gunnison Co.	Jenny Patterson	Telluride
Bob Lenz	Jackson, WY	Todd Brown	Telluride
Bob McLaurin	Jackson, WY	Tyler Sinclair	Teton Co, WY
Lea Colasuonno	Jackson, WY	Andy Daly	Vail
Sara Flitner	Jackson, WY	Kelli McDonald	Vail
Anne Corrock	Ketchum, ID	Patty McKenny	Vail
Joe Fitzpatrick	Mt. Crested Butte	Suzanne Silverthorne	Vail
Dan Caton	Mountain Village	Stan Zemler	Vail
Jim Myers	Winter Park	Drew Nelson	Winter Park

*The meeting was called to order by President Aaron Huckstep at 8:10 am.*

#### *Approval of Minutes*

There was a motion and a second to approve the June 2015 meeting minutes, which was passed unanimously.

*Andy Daly, Vail Mayor*

Andy Daly welcomed the group and gave the group a presentation on Vail. Included in his presentation were statistics on the community, their events, accommodations, real estate, leadership and vision. The 2015 FIS Alpine World Ski Championships marked the third time that the Vail Valley played host to this

event and has helped grow their international business. Vail's real estate market is also really starting to come back. The ratio of winter vs. summer business is about 70/30.

*Hans Vollrath - Vail Resorts Inc.*

Hans Vollrath, Senior Director Summer Operations at Vail Resorts, gave an overview of Vail's Epic Discovery program. Epic Discovery came about because there is a large part of summer that is untapped. Summer guests are distinctly different than winter guests. Epic Discovery helps grow Vail's summer brand, enhances the guest experience and drives visitation and business. It is a connected on-mountain experiences that immerse our guests in learn-through-play activities and is integrated with nature. Hans formerly worked for Disney and a lot of what he learned at Disney is being applied to Epic Discovery. In the Wildlife Exploration Trail, a series of installations are placed along the Fireweed hiking trail. Each installation resembles a different animal ability. Now a 15-20 minute trail extends to 30 min - 1 hour because of the activities. There are new activities planned for Vail in 2016, which includes the Game Creek Canopy Tour and Forest Flyer. And in Heavenly they are planning several new activities. They plan on opening activities in Breckenridge in 2017. At this point, they're still working through pricing for guest.

*Melanie Rees - Rees Consulting Inc.*

Melanie Rees and her team compiled the Vacation Home Rental (VHR) report that was commissioned by CAST. They used the term VHR for the purpose of the guide, which is to help towns govern and manage VHR's. Her team included Wendy Sullivan (attorney and housing consultant) and Chris Cares from RRC Associates, who brought in his research staff and hospitality knowledge. Ten CAST towns participated in the study and also contributed dollars. An extensive 12-page questionnaire was required to be filled out by each town. Research extended across the nation as well, and the final report covered six major topics. At the end of each section of the report, there is a best practices guide outlining which communities are leading the way and addressing each topic.

The VHR market, lead by VRBO and Airbnb, is an explosive, innovative industry. Towns are slow to respond and require constant adaptation and keep on their toes. Community concerns are changing and prohibition is moving towards regulation. Community and neighborhood impacts are increasing and neighborhoods are mobilizing and organizing. Safety and visitor experience are also major concerns. Melanie's suggestion for future CAST initiatives include developing efficient database/tracking systems, negotiate disclose agreements with hosting sites, and supporting state initiatives.

*Margaret Bowes - I-70 Coalition*

The I-70 Coalition is a non-profit organization representing local governments and businesses along Colorado's I-70 mountain corridor. The cost of congestion along the I-70 corridor is estimated to be about \$839 million per year (2005 dollars). The situation will only get worse as Colorado's population is estimated to increase 47% by 2040. The Coalition works closely with CDOT to work on operational improvements that are intended to enhance mobility. These include ramp and safety metering, holding commercial vehicles during bad weather, hold commercial vehicles during adverse weather, increase maintenance staff and equipment availability for snow plowing, passenger vehicle traction laws and more.

In 2007, CDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) convened a group of 27 diverse local governments, agencies, environmental groups and private-sector interests that were able to reach consensus on a preferred solutions for the I-70 mountain corridor. This consensus recommendation is incorporated into the I-70 corridor Record of Decision which was released in 2011. This is the guiding document for I-70 improvements to 2050. Advanced Guideway System (AGS) is not feasible because of funding. Recent project to increase capacity are the Twin Tunnel widening and the Mountain Express Lane, a 13-mile toll lane. The next project to tackle is westbound Floyd Hill to Empire. The I-70 Coalition puts out travel forecast, travel tips and carpooling and transit information on their website [GOI70.com](http://GOI70.com). Long term solutions need to be multi-modal; can't add lanes as more lanes eventually put us back where we started. Funding is a huge obstacle. Public support is crucial; everyone says the roads need to be fixed, but their is no support for increase taxes.

#### *Diana Madson - The Mountain Pact*

The Mountain Pact was founded on the principal that tourism-based mountain communities in the West are experiencing detrimental effects to our environments and economies as a result of climate change: increases in catastrophic wildfire, the spread of the mountain pine beetle epidemic, and reduced snowpack. The Mountain Pact's mission is to help mountain communities build resilience in the face of economic and environmental stresses through federal climate and conservation policy. They launched in 2014 and secured nonprofit status & seed funding from Aspen, Durango, Park City, and Lake Tahoe. Organized mountain communities & coordinated with Vail Resorts to provide public comment on USFS proposed ruling on ski area water rights. The Mountain Pact supports the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (W DFA) and is working closely with our towns to ensure the passage of this bill. The other area of focus is coal. They feel in the face of climate change, mountain communities are paying more while coal companies are paying less. Worked with 11 mountain communities on a joint public comment letter to DOI supporting coal royalty reform & 4 town representatives provided public testimony at BLM listening sessions. They ask that towns get involved by forming regional and peer community groups to advocate for federal climate policy and funding.

#### *Luis Benitez - Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office*

In June 2015, Gov. Hickenlooper appointed Luis Benitez as the state's first Director of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office. The creation of this office exemplifies the importance of the \$13.2 billion outdoor recreation industry in Colorado. Utah already has this office, and other states such as Washington and Idaho are looking at creating the same. The outdoor recreation industry has been recognized as huge economic driver. With a mountaineering background, Luis is one of the more experienced, respected and busiest professional guides and leadership development consultants in the world, and has many years of experience on Everest. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides strategies for sustaining Colorado's outdoors heritage for current and future generations. Millions of visitors and residents enjoy the wide array of outdoor recreation activities on the state's public lands every year. However, providing sustainable and quality outdoor recreation experiences continues to be a challenge. Are we proactive or reactive? The quality of outdoor recreation in Colorado is closely tied to effective stewardship and management of natural resources, and one of his major goals is to support and expand opportunities to engage active stewardship partners.

*Updates and Other Business*

The members discussed topics for upcoming CAST meetings. The topics discussed were homelessness and people camping in the forests; event management and event burnout/fatigue; emergency preparedness involving a case study of what it really looks like; role of DMO's and EDC's; CMC and education; transportation and the use of transit; safety and town police forces.

The next meeting will October 22-23 in Estes Park.

*The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm*