



MINUTES

August 28, 2009

Breckenridge

The meeting was called to order by CAST President Joyce Burford at 8:15.

Introductions were made. In attendance were John Warner, Joyce Burford, Linda Romer Todd, Greg Sparks, Bob Delves, Stu Fraser, Jonahthan Greenspan, Bill Pelham, Micahel Penny, John Younger, Dick Clkeveland, Steve Skadron, Jacquie Halburnt, Stan Zemler, Drew Nelson, Russell Forest, Kevin Batchelder, William Buck, Tim Gagen, Jim White, Allen Best and Paul Strong.

The minutes from June were approved unanimously.

John Warner, Mayor of Breckenridge, welcomed the group to Breckenridge. 2009 is the 150th anniversary of Breckenridge. At the beginning of the year, the Real Estate Transfer Tax was down 60-65% from the previous year. It has recovered some and now is only down 48%. Breckenridge is facing a budget gap of two to three million dollars.

Ralf Garrison of MTrip and Chris Cares of RRC gave a Mountain Travel Market Update. (Data as of the end of July.) 2008 was the year of the financial rollercoaster with the systemic financial meltdown. 2009 is the year of new realities. 70% of GDP comes from consumer spending. Consumer confidence now sits at 54 up from a low of 28 last winter. Leading indicators are turning positive. The consumer price index is down from last year and travel prices are down.

Winter occupancy from last season was down 15% with a wide variation between resorts. Rates were down 9% and when rates and occupancy are combined it results in a 22% in lodging revenue. Sales tax receipts were down 13.9% and lodging tax was down 21%, in line with the decrease in lodging revenue.

Skier days in 2006-07 were 55 million, in 2007-08 were 60 million and in 2008-09 were 57 million. So while down from last year they were still up from two years ago. You frequently hear that "snow trumps the economy." The data support that to some extent but not as much as generally credited it. Similarly, vacations are being booked with shorter lead times but not to the extent given by the grapevine.

Preliminary data from the summer of 2009 show huge differences in occupancy rates among the different resorts.

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Looking ahead to winter 2009-10, the data is premature to draw any real conclusions. Advance reservations are down 38% from last year but the reality of the recession had not hit home with last year's data from July.

We need to be conscious of the different shopping patterns between the boomers and the millennials. There is a lot of post-reservation shopping; continuing to look for better deals even after the reservation has been made. Current shoppers are thrifty but not cheap; they are looking for value. Skiing has the advantage of being a "it is who I am, not what I do" sport.

Chris discussed using the MTrip data to help with mountain town revenue management. The data can be used to develop a lodging tax forecast and an idea of sales tax can be linked to lodging tax.

Judy Dorsey of the Brendle Group presented "Hitting the Bumps: Leveraging Your Sustainability Programs During Tough Times." The Brendle Group has been working with the National Ski Area Association on a "Sustainable Slopes Initiative." There is and needs to be more collaboration between resorts and towns and sustainability programs. It is important for the key players to work together to identify footprints and strategies.

The Governor's Energy Office has \$5.7 million in grants available with an RFP deadline of November 1, 2009. They are looking for applications with a regional approach. Because of their visibility, it is important to have climate friendly gateway communities. A resource guide for gateway communities and ski areas is being developed.

The next steps for towns are to prepare an emissions inventory, apply for the GEO grants and to work with economic development of clean/green industries. Inventories are important because they help to develop priorities and show the Return On Investment which is required for many grants.

Tad Kline is developing the GO I-70 web site and gave an overview what it will offer. GO I-70 is a transportation demand management system. The site is expected to go live at Thanksgiving 2009. Historical data from CDOT will be available so you can see what traffic was like last week, last month or last year at the time you want to travel. The site will also interact as a social networking site so real-time data from users will be available which should make it have the most current data available. The site is GOI70.com.

Next was a discussion on medical marijuana dispensaries. Many towns have enacted moratoriums to allow time to research, draft and pass ordinances to cover the dispensaries. Most towns have decided that is a land use issue and will be covered under a business license. Issues to be addressed are: safety and security – they are a target for thefts; location – not downtown or in residential areas and away from schools, playgrounds and parks; similar to pharmacies – no onsite use, for pickup and not delivery. Medical marijuana is subject to sales tax.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15.