



Minutes

August 29, 2008

Estes Park

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

Introductions were made.

The minutes from March and June were approved unanimously.

Tom Pickering, Director of Estes Park Convention and Visitors Bureau, Tim Gagen, Breckenridge Town Manager, and Stan Zemler, Vail Town Manager led a roundtable discussion on town-chamber relationships.

Pickering gave a history of the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce. During the '80s, the chamber was cyclically running out of money. In the 90s, the chamber seasawed between focusing on marketing or providing member services and they saw a separate lodging group wrapped into the chamber.

The town owned the visitor center but let the chamber use it and paid the chamber for calls to the visitor center. The town found that the chamber was dropping 50% of the calls coming into the visitor center. The town then drew up a performance based contract for the chamber but the chamber would not sign it.

The town examined many different examples of separate chambers and convention and visitor bureaus (CVB.) The town evicted the chamber from the visitor center and set up its own CVB. The chamber then sued the town. Legislation was passed to allow towns to do marketing, not just the advertising that was allowed under previous statute, rendering the lawsuit moot.

An Estes Park business license also makes the business a member of the CVB. They plan to start a Local Marketing District including properties outside the town limits to fund the CVB. The chamber is no longer in existence.

Zemler said that Vail operates the Chamber under one roof but different silos; advocacy, communications, member services and economic development. There is an economic development division that cost \$5000 to join and has between 20 and 30 members. The CVB has a dedicated tax. The town also has a downtown management group.

Vail had two chambers; one that was local and one that was valley-wide. They put out an RFP to run the visitor's center and it was awarded to neither of the chambers but to a third party. The marketing tax is dedicated to summer marketing. Many of the problems at the chamber can be traced to a dysfunctional board of directors.

Gagen said the Summit County Chamber is dedicated to member services. In Frisco, the town does all the marketing. In Breckenridge, the chamber does both marketing and

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member services. The chamber runs the visitor's center, does training, events and meetings. The chamber is trying serve all the functions and does a good job across the spectrum but not a great job at each individual function. The Town Council has a seat on the chamber board as does the ski company.

Jason Neff from the University of Colorado introduced a panel from the University. CU has a history of tourism study but it has declined due to budgetary issues. They realize that tourism is very important to the State and are looking to start a new program.

This program will focus on: marketing, management, climate sustainability, entrepreneurship, and economic, environmental and community issues.

Items discussed included workforce sustainability, transportation, pine beetles, second homes or the "visitor economy" and why we have a need for constant redevelopment when the European ski communities have shown the ability to preserve the historical development.

Vicki McIntire and Sonny Subia from the U.S. Census Bureau gave an overview of the upcoming 2010 Census process. The first task they will undertake is to have someone physically go down every street and list individual dwelling units. They will speak to the manager of "group housing quarters" to determine whether they are hotels or condominium projects.

They would like to see each town set up a "Complete Count Committee" to be formed by the mayor. The low response rates seen in mountain counties in the 2000 census are thought to be caused because of the large number of vacant units in ski towns.

People will be able to mail the census forms or go to drop off sites. There will also be sites where people can go in to fill out forms. They are currently trying to recruit people to fill various census positions.

Paul Strong gave an update on the Governor's climate conference and the associated Rocky Mountain Climate Organization workshop happening on October 15th.

The future meeting sites are: October 2008 – Vail, January 2009 – Mountain Village, March 2009 – Denver, June 2009 – Vail (CML), August 2009 – Park City, October 2009 – TBA, January 2010 – Mt. Crested Butte.

The meeting was adjourned at noon.