

**VIRGINIA CITY CONVENTION & TOURISM AUTHORITY MEETING
MINUTES**

Thursday, August 6, 2009, 8:30 am

**Red Dog Saloon & Restaurant
76 North C Street
Virginia City, NV 89940**

Call to Order: Angelo Petrini called the VCCTA meeting to order at 8:30 am

Roll Call:

Chairman: Angelo Petrini
Board Members: Joe Curtis
Carol Fain (excused absence)
Leisa Findley
John Flanagan

Staff: Susan Sutton
Patrick Gilmore
Dawn Neamo

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR AUGUST 6, 2009: Petrini requested agenda item for corner lot on C Street and Taylor be heard after Boomtown Kiosk Signage. Curtis moved to approve the agenda as amended. Findley seconded, motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JULY 2 2009: Flanagan moved to approve the July 2, 2009, minutes. Findley seconded, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Izabella Hunt-Jones, Virginia City Civil War coordinator, reported planning continues for the Virginia City War Days. September 4-7.

Steve Rahim, introduced himself to the board and reported he is the manager of the newly named Silverland Inn & Suites (formerly the Ramada)

Flanagan reported his concern for the V & T excursion train arriving from Carson City and transporting 140 passengers from F Street station to town. Sutton reported with the help of Virginia City Trolley, and the golf cart shuttles, the majority of the passengers would be handled. Dean Haymore, Storey County Community Development director, reported he will research and get back to Sutton and Storey County Manager, Pat Whitten.

Curtis recommended a list of businesses that do not participate in the Ad Co-Op published in the paper.

Wrangler Rich, Silverland Stables, reported his business is struggling getting people down to his riding stables and requested advice. Discussion and recommendation included advertising in the Reno market, signage and getting the word out on the internet

such as You-Tube. Haymore reported the Storey County sign ordinance is in the process of being revised.

Haymore reported working with over 115 businesses in Tahoe Reno Industrial Park with about 7 – 10 new companies. Haymore continued a welcome and invitation letter from the VCCTA will go out to every new business. Haymore continued most TRI business want privacy and he has to sign a non-disclosure contract.

Doug Woodmansee, Virginia City News, presented a letter from Karen Woodmansee, Virginia City Chamber of Commerce, to be read into the record during correspondence.

BOOMTOWN KIOSK: Haymore reported Storey County has a grant to finish the street lights on East side of C Street, rebuilding the stairs beside the Ponderosa Saloon on C Street, landscaping and lights to the middle school and replacing the bathroom on the North end of town. Haymore continued plans call for a head frame on the north end of Virginia City for signage. Haymore reported Storey County Planning department would support the kiosk signage and permit it with no fee but grant money would not be available to pay

David Proud, Young Electric Sign Company, reported the signs cost about \$45,000.00 each and are being donated to Virginia City. Proud continued the signs cost is approximately \$7,500.00 each, or \$22,500.00 installed which includes engineering, refurbishing and painting. Sutton reported costs are not in the budget and will discuss payment plans with Proud. The board recommended Curtis as the point person to assist and monitor YESCO with design and installation. Sutton shared the positive aspects of this purchase included additional media coverage, the partnership with a private enterprise and the VCCTA, Storey County's approval of the project and the three year payment plan.

Curtis moved to approve \$22,500.00 for the Boomtown sign project. Findley seconded, motion passed unanimously.

CORNER LOT/C STREET & TAYLOR STREET: Haymore reported this property is owned by Julie Lope and is considered a nuisance and blighted property. Haymore requested the board send him a letter regarding the blighted property and he will contact owner. Haymore reported he could then apply for grants to purchase the lot. The board discussed the possibility of rebuilding a replica of the original building, the Black & Howell.

Curtis moved the VCCTA write a letter to the Planning Department and the Commissioners calling attention to the blighted lot. Flanagan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

SESQUICENTENNIAL WEEKEND REPORT: Jones reported the sesquicentennial weekend was very successful even though it rained. Jones thanked all the volunteers and

committee members who helped with the event. Curtis also thanked all who had helped and participated in the event. Curtis announced that Sesquicentennial merchandise is still for sale. Jones continued plans are still underway for the Christmas on the Comstock Dickens Fair which will be the final event marking Virginia City's Sesquicentennial Celebration.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Neamo presented the current financials and reported income was \$28,000.00 lower than last year's income. Neamo continued this year's budget included more conservative figures. Neamo pointed out the budget included new line items including the visitor center expenses and tour operator expenses. Findley moved to approve the financial report. Flanagan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

SEALANT FOR VISITOR CENTER: Sutton reported contacting Reyman Brother for a bid on the South wall of the visitor center but has not yet received the bid. Sutton continued the wall leaks during storms and needs a sealant on exterior walls. Sutton reported the budget will have to be augmented to pay for the sealant. No action taken and deferred to future meeting when quote is obtained.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Sutton reported on the following:

- Updated plans for Railfest, excursion rides from Carson City to Virginia City, including VCCTA hosting the VIP reception on Friday, August 14, 2009. Bouvier and VCCTA are working on the project
- Silver Line Express ticket sales paid out \$70,424.00 to Virginia City venues. SLE program seems to get better and more popular
- VCCTA vehicle is used for advertising and all mileage is logged when used for personal use and gas not paid for by the VCCTA
- No NRS statutes referencing having to live in the community and the move to Carson City is based on health reasons
- VCCTA [participating the Nevada State Fair, August 26-30 with Elko CVB
- Letter from the VCCTA to TRI businesses offering incentives and VIP tours at no charge will be hand delivered by Storey County Planning department (Copy of letter in board packets)
- Phil D'Amico, Convention Sales Manger for the Reno Sparks & Tourism Authority invited the VCCTA to do a presentation to their entire sales team on September 14, 2009
- Nevada Commission on Tourism has invited VCCTA to participate in a Canadian trade show in Toronto and Montreal in October 2009
- Lack of interest for store owners, merchants and employees wearing the Welcome to Virginia City buttons. (Board recommended a seconded letter be hand delivered to merchants)
- Certified Destination Management Executive Certificate (CDME) offers the opportunity to fine tune our tourism product

RESTROOM USE ORDINANCE: The board discussed the lack of restrooms for visitors in Virginia City, business that do not allow customers to use their facilities unless they are a customer, use of signage, and an ordinance pertaining to the use of restrooms

in Virginia City businesses. The board recommended having Pat Whitten, Storey County Manager, talk to the District Attorney. Sutton reported she can email merchants and Ad Co-op members.

CONVENTION SERVICES REPORT: Gilmore reported on the following:

- Sports & Leisure is booking a Bed & Breakfast Tour with a show/dinner package at the Gold Hill in June 2010.. The Gold Hill Hotel will help VCCTA market this show as packages to encourage overnight stays
- Frontier Stage lines will be bringing a group of 40 on August 12 purchasing the SLE. Gilmore did a presentation to Frontier two years prior to them booking their first group

CORRESPONDENCE: Wood presented the board with the following correspondence:

- Wood read a letter into the record from Karen Woodmansee, Virginia City Chamber of Commerce secretary, to the VCCTA. Hard copies were distributed to board members and attached to these minutes. Sutton reported the Ad Co-op has directed her to request an accounting for all events from event coordinators
- Letter from visitor complaining of rude treatment at gold panning site
- Letter from visitor expressing disappointment there was no train robbery on the train she rode
- Letters from Sutton to Storey County referencing the first impression from visitors at the Gold Hill portal, restroom ordinance regarding public use of restrooms
- Letter to TRI managers referencing team building, VIP tours and employee incentives
- Thank you letter from Mike & Wendy Munson regarding the help they received for their Railroad Memorabilia sale
- Article about Virginia City in the German newspaper, *Der Tagesspiegel* from the German familiarization tour hosted by NCOT and the VCCTA
- Sutton letter to Nevada Transportation Authority referencing Grant Smith's trolley application

PUBLIC COMMENT: Carl Woodmansee, Virginia City News, reported a comment was made about the VCCTA taking over the Outhouse Races.

Jones, requested help locating a store front to sell civil war memorabilia and attire during Civil War weekend. Jones reported volunteers have booked over 30 rooms at the Tahoe House Hotel and the Silverland Inn & Suites.

Angela Mann, Comstock Chronicle editor, reported attending the last Spark's Farmers Market distributing Virginia City collateral. Mann continued fewer vendors and younger crowds contributed to less interest

ADJOURNMENT: 11:05 am