

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

Thursday, February 5, 2009, 8:30 am

**Visitor Center
86 South C Street,
Virginia City, NV**

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

Roll Call:

Chairman: Angelo Petrini

Board Members:

Carol Fain (excused absence)

Joe Curtis

John Flanagan

Leisa Findley

Staff:

Susan Sutton/Executive Director

Dawn Neamo/VCCTA Bookkeeper

Patrick Gilmore/Convention Services

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Flanagan moved to approve the February 5, 2009 agenda. Findley seconded and motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JANUARY 8, 2009: Findley moved to approve the January 8, 2009 minutes. Curtis seconded, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bonnie Matton, president of the Wild Horse Preservation League, introduced herself to the board. Matton reported their non-profit group educates the public on preserving wild horses in Nevada and will participate in Virginia events.

Jim Clark confirmed his appointment with the Virginia City Ad-Coop for Tuesday, February 10, 2009.

Curt Chapman, Virginia City Highland resident introduced himself to the board and presented an update on Virginia City's Grand Prix (VCGP) April 25-26, 2009. Chapman continued the Grand Prix Association is organizing a youth mentorship program, producing a documentary and promoting a reunion of top motocross racers.

FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS FUNDING/DISCUSSION ACTION*: Karen Woodmansee, Virginia City Chamber of Commerce treasurer, reported she is aggressively fundraising to raise money for this years Fourth of July fireworks show. Woodmansee requested the VCCTA consider holding \$5,000.00 in reserve if fundraising efforts run short. No action taken.

PIPER'S OPERA HOUSE REQUEST FOR FUNDING/TO ATTEND RURAL ROUND-UP/DISCUSSION/ACTION: Pauline Fitzpatrick, Piper's Opera House director, requested \$65.00 registration to attend Nevada Convention on Tourism's Rural Round-Up April 1-2, 2009 in Fallon Nevada. Sutton shared attending Rural Round-Up offers the tools and knowledge to

market and promotes Virginia City as a destination. Curtis moved the VCCTA pay \$65.00 registration fee for Pauline Fitzpatrick to attend Rural Round-Up April 1-3 in Fallon, Nevada. Flanagan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT/

DISCUSSION/ACTION*: Neamo presented the current financials and reported room tax paid through December. Neamo reminded the board the VCCTA must designate an auditor by March 31, 2009. Neamo continued the budget will need to be augmented due to decreasing revenue and \$20,000.00 received from Storey County for the Sesquicentennial celebration. Neamo reported Barbara Mackey and Erlene Flanagan, Historic Fourth Ward School, requested accounting detail from the beginning of the fiscal 2008/2009 year for online Silver Line Express (SLE) tickets. Sutton and the board discussed the time and costs to implement their request. Sutton reported the on line SLE ticket breakdown can be available beginning July 1, 2009, the beginning of the new fiscal year.

Sutton reported tracking SLE tickets tells us how long visitors stay in Virginia City and is important for grants and Nevada Commission on Tourism. Findley moved to approve the financials. Flanagan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

NATIONAL TOUR ASSOCIATION REQUEST FOR FUNDING/FAMILIARIZATION TOURS/DISCUSSION/ACTION*:

Sutton reported the National Tour Association's (NTA) Convention will be in Reno, November 14-18, 2009. Sutton continued Virginia City has been invited to participate in a pre-familiarization tour with an overnight and also host several sightseeing bus tours. Sutton continued the estimated costs may range from \$9,000.00 to \$15,000.00 which will include Virginia City attractions, venues, entertainment, food and a possible V & T train ride to the Highway 50 Bridge. Findley moved to fund up to \$10,000.00 to host the NTA familiarization tours to Virginia City in November, 2009. Curtis seconded, motion passed unanimously.

SESQUICENTENNIAL UPDATE/KICK-OFF PARTY: Curtis and Sutton reported plans continue for the Sesquicentennial celebration which includes a parade, Antique show, Collectable Gun Show, Pasty Cook-Off and Sale, Nevada Mining Exhibit, Mountain Man Encampment and Civil War History Exhibit. Sutton reported the February 8, kick-off party at Pipers will debut the new Sesquicentennial song composed by Chris Bayer. Also included in the program will be the National Trust for Historic Preservation presentation of 'Top 12 Distinctive Destinations' award to Virginia City. Curtis reported the Sesquicentennial pole banners will be installed on 20 town lampposts. Curtis continued he is still working on the historical markers and selling Sesquicentennial merchandise to help finance the markers. Curtis thanked Hugh Roy Marshall for his financial help in producing the markers.

DIRECTORS UPDATE: Sutton discussed and presented the following to the board:

- A destination marketing organization tutorial hand-out
 - Correspondence from Preservation Magazine's editor accepting an invitation to Virginia City
 - ABA (American Bus Association) travel meeting recap
 - Planned tour with the UK Tourism media representative
 - Overview of new event 'Finding the Joy - Have Cancer – Had Cancer' event April 18, 2009, at the Ramada
- Sutton thanked Joe Curtis for donating the event brochure.
- Update of Sisters in History brochure /Virginia City and Carson City reprint \$15,000.00

- Advertising USCB (United States Congress of Bowlers) coupon books distributed to 50,000 Reno bowlers
- Recap of conversations with Deputy Director of the Nevada Commission on Tourism to discuss agency possible merger with state economic development agency.
- Travel Alliance Partners (TAP) Conference in Rapid City South Dakota attendance.
- Announcement of Shara Bouvier as new Virginia City Living Legend program coordinator.
- VCCTA listed in Western Association of Convention & Visitor Bureau's (WACVB) guidebook.

2009 WEDDING FAIRE & EXPO UPDATE: Findley reported the Wedding Faire at the Grand Sierra Hotel was very successful. Findley continued "there was a huge interest in Virginia City". She distributed several VC collateral materials.

CONVENTION SERVICES REPORT: Gilmore reported on the following:

- Attended Quartzsite Travel Expo with the Nevada Commission on Tourism in January which had an estimated attendance of 60,000 visitors
- 28 people attending Qigong Health Convention at the Ramada for six days which included 6 days of shopping and meals
- Connecticut Ski Council brought a group to Virginia City while attending a conference in Lake Tahoe. This group visited Virginia City as a result of the VCCTA's and RSCVA's partnership and participation in last year's Ski familiarization tour
- Over 50 members of the Daughters of the American Revolution are planning a function in Virginia City
- Nevada Commission on Tourism invited VCCTA to participate in the LA Times Travel Show at little costs (Sutton provided free Southwest ticket and no hotel costs)
- Negotiating with the Nevada Association of Student Councils who will bring 1000 participants to Virginia City in March
- VCCTA & the Reno Sparks Convention & Tourism Authority(RSCVA) will partner with the Hearth & Patio Expo which will bring over 4,000 participants to the region
- VCCTA will participate in Affordable Meetings Conference partly funded from a rural grant from the Nevada Commission on Tourism
- Participate in Sunset Celebration Travel Show in June to promote Virginia City and the region funded by the Reno Tahoe Territory

CORRESPONDENCE: Gilmore presented the board with the following correspondence:

- Quarterly loss run from Pool Pact
- Email from Anne Basile, tour operator from Mirage Tours interested in booking travel to Virginia City
- Letter from Western Nevada College congratulating Becky Orr for making the dean's list
- Letter from Greg Hess, owner of Ponderosa Mine, thanking Sutton for the success of the Silver Line Express Project to his business.
- Complaint letter regarding rude treatment at the Silver Queen Hotel

The board discussed this complaint letter and addressed the question of an ordinance regarding the use of restrooms in saloons and restaurants. The board recommended Sutton write the owners of the Silver Queen and the Storey County Commissioners to address the continued complaints.

Public Comment: Petrini reported talking to Pat Whitten, Storey County Manager, to research establishing a redevelopment district. The board recommended gathering information from other cities. Petrini requested this issue be on March board meeting agenda for further discussion.

ADJOURNMENT: 10:45 am