

Date/Time

Tuesday, December 20, 2016, 1PM-3PM

Location

Los Alamos County Municipal Building, Boards & Commissions Room 110
1000 Central Avenue, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Members Present

- Ryn Herrmann (Chair), Public-At-Large Representative
- Linda Deck (Vice Chair), Tourism Industry Representative
- Katie Watson, Tourism Industry Representative

Staff Present

- Kelly Stewart, Marketing Specialist, Staff Liaison
- Joanie Ahlers, Economic Vitality Administrator
- Linda Matteson, Assistant to the County Manager
- Katie Thwaites, Acting County Attorney
- Dianne Marquez, Recreation Program Manager
- James Naranjo, Assistant Planner
- Perry Rutherford, Permit Technician

Others Present

- Elijah Black, Hampton Inn, General Manager
- David Empey, Griffin and Associates (County tourism marketing services contractor)
- Melanie Pena, Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation (County visitor center operations and management services contractor)
- Felicia Duran, General Manager, Comfort Inn & Suites

I. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

A. Call to Order/Introductions

As a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order at 1:06PM.

B. Approval of Today's Agenda

The agenda was approved without objection.

C. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Deck moved to approve the minutes as amended. Member Watson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

None.

II. WORK SESSION

A. FY17 Workplan Assessment/FY18 Workplan Goals and Actions

Ms. Stewart presented a draft work plan for fiscal year 2018 and walked those present through several changes. Ms. Stewart stated that she would email out another iteration incorporating the feedback and comments from today's session prior to the next meeting.

III. PENDING PROJECTS

A. Board Terms and Vacancy Status

Chair Herrmann informed the board that Ms. Jayne Sizemore, recently appointed to this board as a representative of the lodging industry, had resigned her position and is moving out of state to pursue a new opportunity. This resignation leaves two vacancies on the board.

B. Airbnb

James Naranjo, an Assistant Planner in the Los Alamos County Community Development Department (CDD), described several recent cases related to the permitting and regulation of short-term rentals, similar to those listed on Airbnb and Vacation Rentals By Owner (VRBO) internet sites. Mr. Naranjo confirmed that the new owner of the Canyon Inn is currently working with the County's Community Development Department to submit to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustment requests for exceptions to the current regulations to allow off-street parking to accommodate multiple guests at a time. The board members discussed the need for additional rooms since the loss of the Hilltop House and Motel 6 and expressed general support for short-term rental properties, as long as the owners comply with County regulations.

C. Star Report Status

Kelly Stewart provided an update regarding purchase of a subscription for a lodging report showing the average daily rate (ADR) and occupancy data for Los Alamos area hotels that is required by hotel developers who have expressed interest in building a new hotel property in Los Alamos. The Smith's Travel Accommodations Report (STAR) is the service that the Los Alamos area hotels submit data and has been determined to be the industry standard per hotel and developer input. Ms. Stewart reported that the County's Procurement office is requiring the Economic Development Division to solicit bids for these services.

D. Visitor Data Collection Criteria

Vice Chair Deck stated that in order to collect the appropriate visitation data, the Board should determine what it is that the Board wants to measure and by what criteria. The brand action plan contractor should be used as a resource to identify key metrics in the lodging and tourism industries.

E. Visitor Guide

Mr. Empey stated that Griffin has sold about \$27,000.00 of advertising to date and is scheduled to meet with representatives from Metzger's Do It Best and Zia Realty later today.

IV. NEW PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

A. Nothing to report.

V. REPORTS

A. Tourism Marketing Report

Mr. Empey presented the report prepared by Griffin and Associates to the Board.
No action was taken.

B. State/Regional Tourism & Hospitality

Chair Herrmann reported that the State Tourism Department was not expected to offer Tourism Marketing Co-op Grants for FY17. This adversely effects Los Alamos' ability to promote special events like ScienceFest or target specific audiences (Santa Fe Visitor Guide). Currently, the tourism marketing services contract managed by Griffin and Associates cover essential print advertising buys in Texas Monthly magazine, the New Mexico Adventure Guide and key issues of New Mexico Magazine.
No action was taken.

C. Lodger's Tax Revenue Reports (Accrued/Actual) Review

Ms. Stewart presented the two reports. Accruals in the first five months of FY17 are ~20% higher than the same period of FY15. Payments received for the first quarter of FY17 (July-September) are up approximately 16% year-over-year when compared to those same months in 2015. The board attributed the significant decrease in Lodgers' Tax Revenues during November 2015 to significant early season snowfall.
No action was taken.

D. Visitation by Attraction/Visitor Centers

Melanie Peña presented the report from the Los Alamos Meeting and Visitor Bureau for November 2016. Total monthly visitation for all attractions showed a slight increase over November 2015 figures. Member Deck commented that the graphs would be easier to understand if the color assignments for trend lines in different years were consistent between the various charts. Ms. Marquez asked what attractions are included in the All Attractions chart. Ms. Peña explained that the number for all attractions is the combined total of each individual facility, including Bandelier National Monument, Bradbury Science Museum, the History Museum, PEEC Nature Center, and the Los Alamos and White Rock visitor centers. Vice-Chair Deck added that we do not know how many people visited every attraction or if they were visitors to only one attraction. Ms. Marquez pointed out that recreation facility usage is not included on the monthly reports of tourist attraction visitations.

E. Group Marketing Events/Opportunities

No additional group marketing events or opportunities were presented.

F. County Recreation Report

Ms. Marquez presented the Recreation Programs Report for December 2016.
No action was taken.

G. Tourism Materials Distribution Update (Fun and Games)

No presentation.

H. County Tourism Strategic Plan Update

No Presentation.

I. Other Announcements

No other announcements.

VI. NEXT MEETING(S)/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Tue., Jan 17, 2017, 12-2PM, Municipal Bldg, Rm 110

VII. ADJOURN

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier, qualified sign language interpreter, or any other form of auxiliary aid or service to attend or participate in the hearing or meeting, please contact the County Human Resources Division at 662-8040 at least one week prior to the meeting or as soon as possible. Public documents, including the agenda and minutes can be provided in various accessible formats. Please contact the personnel in the Community and Economic Development Department at 662-8006 if a summary or other type of accessible format is needed.