

Date/Time

Tuesday, November 21, 2017, 12PM-2PM

Location

Los Alamos County Municipal
Building County Council Chambers
(12PM-2PM)
1000 Central Avenue, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Members

- Ryn Herrmann (Chair), Public-At-Large Representative, **Present**
- Linda Deck (Vice Chair), Tourism Industry Representative (Bradbury Science Museum Director), **Present**
- Katie Bruell, Tourism Industry Representative (PEEC/Los Alamos Nature Center Director), **Present**
- Catherine Mockler, Lodging Industry Representative (North Road Inn Owner/Operator), **Present**
- Elizabeth Allen, Lodging Industry Representative (Pueblo Canyon Inn & Gallery), **Absent**

County Staff Present

- Kelly Stewart, Economic Development Division Marketing Specialist and County Staff Liaison
- Linda Matteson, Assistant to the County Manager/Project Manager for Manhattan Project National Historical Park, Tourism Strategic Plan and Wayfinding Plan
- Barbara Lai, Senior Management Analyst, Community Development Department

Others Present

- David Empey, Griffin and Associates (County Tourism Marketing Services Contractor)
- Melanie Pena, LA Commerce and Development Corporation (County Visitor Center Services Contractor)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

A. Call to Order/Introductions

As a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order at 12:04 PM.

B. Approval of Today's Agenda

The agenda was approved.

C. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of October 17, 2017 were approved as written.

D. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Katie Bruell passed around a County brochure entitled “Los Alamos Attractions & Amenities” that is begin distributed at Fuller Lodge. The piece includes both County and non-County attractions, but excludes the Los Alamos Nature Center. Linda Matteson confirmed that the brochure is published out of the County Communications and Public Relations Office (CPR). Kelly Stewart stated that she will follow up with CPR to get the piece removed from attractions and visitor centers and determine if it will be updated and reproduced.

II. NEW/PENDING PROJECTS for possible action

A. 2018 Meeting Calendar for Approval

The 2018 Meeting Calendar was approved unanimously with all meeting scheduled on the third Tuesday of each month from noon to 2:00 p.m. While most meetings will be held in Room 100 of the Muni building, some will be moved to Council Chambers due to voting and construction projects. Ms. Stewart will send Outlook calendar meeting invites for all meetings to the LTAB distribution list.

B. 2018 Inter-Board-Commission Liaisons

Chair Herrmann introduced the item and the Board members determined which County Boards LTAB members should monitor and assigned an LTAB member or staff to monitor and participate in each board’s meetings and activities, as follows:

- 1) Historic Preservation Advisory Board - Linda Deck
- 2) Planning and Zoning Commission – Catherine Mockler
- 3) Parks and Recreation Board – Elizabeth Allen
- 4) Transportation Board – Kelly Stewart
- 5) Library Board – Katie Bruell
- 6) Art and Public Places – Ryn Herrmann

Kelly Stewart will be added to the email list for Boards and Commissions and will forward the board meeting agendas, and relevant topics, to the assigned contact.

C. Motel 6 Update

Ms. Lai reported that Motel 6 is completing the renovations required by the County Development Department and Fire Marshall to meet County Code. The contractor completed remediation of asbestos in the ceiling and is currently working to complete drywall replacement and reroofing of the building. The contractor is assessing the condition of the floor coverings. The motel has 42 rooms and the ownership remains with the Patels.

D. IPW/Tour Operators’ Conference in Denver 2018 – Discussion

Ms. Stewart reported that she attended a quarterly meeting of the New Mexico Tourism Department’s North Central Region Board while at the New Mexico Hospitality Association’s Top HAT Awards Banquet on Tuesday November 14. A major topic of discussion during the meeting was the upcoming IPW Conference in Denver in May 2018 and the opportunity for the North Central New Mexico region partners to lock in tours of our destinations with the tour operators that attend from around the globe. Ms. Stewart stated that fellow board member Cynthia Delgado, Director of Marketing for TOURISM Santa Fe, expressed interest in partnering with Los Alamos to build Santa Fe-based day-trip itineraries based on Native American,

Manhattan Project and National parks themes and attractions. Ms. Stewart also mentioned a possible itinerary package campaign proposed by the brand consultants that promotes Los Alamos, Taos and Santa Fe as the “must-see” destinations for Northern New Mexico.

Board members acknowledged that tour buses from several different operators are a constant fixture at Los Alamos locations. Linda Deck reported that several contact the Bradbury in advance to ensure that the museum is open and can receive the larger groups at the times they are in town. Katie Bruell stated that she has monitored the tour bus operators that she sees in town and has contacted them all to encourage them to include the Los Alamos Nature Center on their itineraries. She has never received a call back. Board members recognized that bus tours are currently “happening” to Los Alamos and that there was a need for a proactive approach targeting tour trip planners and their audiences with itinerary packages and pricing for experiences that maximize exposure to County tourism attractions and hospitality businesses and services. Board members also discussed the need to coordinate with all County tourism and hospitality entities to begin assembling itinerary packages. Ms. Matteson cautioned for LTAB to wait to the recommendations of the Tourism Strategic Plan before expending resources to prepare and/or attend the May 2018 IPW conference. In the meantime, Ms. Stewart requested that the board email the names of the tour bus companies they have observed or coordinated with to determine a baseline.

III. REPORTS

A. State/Regional Tourism & Hospitality Report

New Mexico Hospitality Association’s Regional Tourism Economic Summit in Los Alamos. The Summit, held October 25, was deemed by NMHA President and CEO Jen Schroer to be a success with 50 participants and a “robust” discussion panel, including Bradbury Science Museum Director Linda Deck, Bandelier National Monument Superintendent Jason Lott, County Community Services Department Director Brian Brogan, Tourism Strategic Plan, Wayfinding Plan and Manhattan Project National Historical Park Project Manager and Assistant to the County Manager Linda Matteson, and TOURISM Santa Fe Director of Marketing Cynthia Delgado. Kelly Stewart served as “destination champion” and panel moderator and reached out to the audience to provide input to the process. Issues raised included the need for a conference center/hotel at the townsite, and the need for adequate planning and infrastructure for the anticipated increase in tourism. NMHA will be sending a follow-up e-mail to Summit participants with a recap of issues and recommended actions.

Ms. Herrmann reported on the NMHA’s Top HAT awards. The Los Alamos Atomic City Spy Tour earned the *Best New Tourism Experience* for the State of New Mexico.

B. NMTD Grants Update

Mr. Empey reported that he, Chair Herrmann and Ms. Pena are working on digital content for NMTD’s copy, images and video for the New Mexico NM Coop program.

C. Tourism Strategic Plan

Ms. Matteson reported that a Tourism Strategic Plan public meeting was held at Fuller Lodge November 8 to present the outline and format for the Plan with its four

focus areas and tactics to the public. The contractor is now going to the next step and developing actions.

D. Wayfinding Plan

The Wayfinding Project is nearly complete. Council approved the final design concept in October and the consultants from Merje delivered the sign plan, including content and locations. Merje will deliver a bid packet so that once funding is identified, the County will be positioned to immediately initiate the bid process to complete the signs.

E. Tourism Marketing Report

Mr. Empey reported that Griffin prepared and distributed press releases on the film, "Only the Brave" (a post-premiere pitch highlighting Los Alamos County's familiarity with firefighting) and Small Business Saturday (what makes the Los Alamos event unique). The "Only the Brave" release performed surprisingly well, getting picked up by outlets in-state and in the southwest region. A Winterfest news release is in final edits to be distributed within drive market media the last week of November. Griffin is coordinating a Los Alamos winter ski press release with Ski Pajarito owners, Texas Capital Partners. Opening day is currently set for December 16. Griffin has coordinated with Ms. Stewart, Ms. Herrmann and Ms. Pena on story ideas targeting "best of" accolade lists published by media like USA Today.

F. Lodgers' Tax Revenue Reports

Lodgers' Tax revenues show the first year-over-year (YOY) increase since the start of FY18 (July 1, 2017).

G. Visitation by Attraction/Visitor Centers

Ms. Bruell and Ms. Deck reported that attraction visitation is a little slow, but on the rise as programming and events associated with the winter holidays are promoted. The promotion package was offered two years ago and converted a significant spike hotel stays for all lodging properties. Ms. Mockler said that when the promotion was not offered last year, hotel nights at the North Road Inn decreased dramatically. Ms. Stewart stated that she contacted the marketing team at Texas Capital in late October and asked them specifically about the ski and stay promotion. At that point, they had not ruled it out. Ms. Stewart said that she would follow up with the Texas Capital marketing team.

H. Group Marketing

Ms. Deck stated that the New Mexico Association of Museums meeting was a huge success and thanks to everyone. She complimented the County of their positive participation. She remarked that the Fuller Lodge was a remarkable, welcoming, historic environment. She also noted that everyone stayed in Los Alamos overnight.

I. County Recreation Report

Ms. Herrmann remarked on the beautiful new benches in front of the Community Building/Teen Center and thanked the Art in Public Places project. County Councilor Antonio Maggiore stated that additional lighting pieces were scheduled to be added to the installation by year's end.

J. Tourism Materials Storage & Distribution Update

The latest Los Alamos Visitor Guide issued in August, continues to be distributed

County-wide and Statewide, as needed.

K. Other Announcements

Concessions have shut down for the season at Bandelier. A new Interpretative Aide will be hired for Bandelier in the Spring.

IV. FY19 Workplan Work Session #1

Ms. Stewart asked LTAB members to present to state priority goals for the LTAB workplan for fiscal year 2019 (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019). The following targets were stated:

- accurate visitation data, including each visitor's reason for visiting Los Alamos
- accurate occupancy data from the hotels
- return on investment metrics
- consolidated, effective marketing materials
- increase number and tracking of visitors from Bandelier to the townsite
- marketing initiative to tour operators, including a comprehensive package of options based on the operators' goals

V. New Projects/Initiatives

Ms. Mockler asked about the next round of grants awarded by the New Mexico Tourism Department. Ms. Stewart will meet with the State Tourism representatives regarding the next grant application and criteria.

VI. Next Meeting/Future Agenda Items

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 19, 2017.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:07 P.M.

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.