

Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board Meeting
August 20, 2019, 12:00 p.m.
Room 110

I. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Members Present: Linda Deck, Katie Bruell, Stacy Baker,

Members Not Present: Catherine Mockler and Jacqueline Shen

Council Liaison Not Present: James Robinson

Others Present: Linda Matteson, Assistant to the County Manager; Kelly Stewart, Marketing Specialist; Joanie Griffin (by telephone) Sunny505; and Barbara Lai, Administrative Support.

A. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 12:10 pm by Chair Deck.

B. Approval of Today's Agenda

The August 20, 2019 agenda was approved.

C. Approval of Minutes from July 23, 2019

Motion:

Member Baker moved to approve the minutes with revisions. Vice Chair Bruell seconded the motion. The board approved the minutes from the July 23 meeting. (3/0).

D. Public Comment

No public comment.

II. PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. Collecting Lodgers' Tax From Short-Term Lodging Establishments

Karina Armijo, Director of Marketing and Tourism for the Town of Taos, presented the Taos Short Term Rental (STR) program.

Ms. Armijo explained that the Taos approach took three main steps regarding STRs, i.e. craft the ordinance; identify STR properties; and enforce compliance. She reported that STRs are in their eleventh year and outpace hotels in revenue. They are an important part of the lodging mix. She went on to explain the town's timeline, ordinance, and requirements. She pointed out that less than 12 units were registered over the two-year period that the ordinance has been in effect.

Ms. Armijo said that Taos hired Host Compliance to audit compliance with the STR ordinance. Reports from the consultant indicated that there are 121 STRs registered, with 80 still non-compliant and 89 addresses still to be identified.

Ms. Armijo stressed that a STR program must be monitored because a concentration of STRs in a neighborhood can change the character of the community resulting in parking, noise, trash, and congestion issues, etc. In addition, hotel lodgers' tax revenues may be affected.

Ms. Armijo went on to explain Senate Bill 106 and House Bill 6 and some of the changes made to avoid confusion concerning the law among New Mexico cities and counties. She ended the presentation with a discussion of what makes Los Alamos unique when considering a STR ordinance. Throughout the presentation, she responded to a number of questions from the board members and other participants.

III. NEW AND PENDING ITEMS/PROJECTS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Marriott Hotel and Conference Center Project

Ms. Stewart distributed the Hotel Marriott staff report to the board. She reported that the ordinance was introduced by Council on August 6 and the public hearing was held on August 27, 2019. The proposed Marriott, known as the Town Suite project is an 86-room property will have a conference center and accommodate 250 to 300 people. The project meets all the goals of current county strategic plans.

Motion:

Chair Deck moved that the LTAB write a letter to Council supporting the Marriott project. Vice Chair Bruell seconded the motion. The board approved sending the support letter. (3/0).

B. Roadway Construction Update/Impacts

Chair Deck said that she is impressed with the schedule STAR Construction is maintaining. All road projects appear to be on schedule.

Ms. Lai reported that she forwarded a business license report on the number and location of DP Road businesses to the Public Works Department. PW staff is preparing road signage to assist detour traffic during the construction.

Ms. Matteson reported that the Diamond Drive project is also on schedule. She also reported that she has not yet received any update from the state on the Trinity Road project.

C. LTAB Priority Projects – Status/Updates

Chair Deck requested updates on the three priority projects: short term rental assessment, metrics, and hospitality training. She noted that the STR presentation was very helpful and the metrics project has not yet started. Ms. Stewart reported that training will start in the fall.

D. LTAB -Affiliated Projects – Status/Updates

No report.

IV. TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY REPORTS

A. Councilor Report

No report.

B. Boards & Commissions Reports

No reports.

C. State/Regional Tourism & Hospitality Report

Ms. Stewart reported that she will be attending the North Central Board meeting in Angel Fire on September 16.

She also said that in coordination with the Tourism Department, she secured a booth at the Balloon Festival for October 5 and October 12.

D. Tourism Implementation Task Force

No report.

E. Tourism Marketing Report

Ms. Griffin reported on work progress including social media activities, PR hits, and printed media entries.

F. Lodgers' Tax Revenue Report

Ms. Stewart reported that the end of FY2019 revenues will not be available until September. However, she said that revenues do appear to exceed FY2018 levels.

G. Visitation by Attraction/Visitors Centers

Chair Deck reported that the Bradbury Museum is evaluating a better way to count visitors to the museum. The staff will count each visitor as the person comes through the front door.

The number of visitors to the Manhattan Project National Historical Park has increased since the new office opened. Ms. Stewart also reported that the MPNHP signs will be replaced.

Chair Deck noted that the Bandelier numbers are not accurate due to reporting problems.

H. Gateway 3 National Parks

1. Manhattan Project National Historical Park
2. Bandelier National Monument
3. Valles Caldera National Preserve

At this point the board lost its quorum and the meeting was officially adjourned at 2:13.