

**Sierra Vista Tourism Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
June 18, 2015
Oscar Yrun Community Center, 3020 E. Tacoma St.**

Call to Order: Ms. Tieman called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Roll Call: Members present: Sabra Albritton, Amanda Baillie, Glen Cobb, Bob Gent and Mary Tieman. Also present Council Liaison, Henrietta "Hank" Huisking and Fort Huachuca Liaison, Angela Camara. Staff present: Judy Hector and Patrice Graber.

Acceptance of the Agenda: Ms. Tieman offered the June 18, 2015 meeting Agenda for review and acceptance. Ms. Albritton made a motion to accept the Agenda, Mr. Gent seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous.

Acceptance of the Minutes from the May 21 Regular Meeting:

Ms. Tieman offered the minutes of the May 21, 2015, Regular Meeting for acceptance.

Mr. Gent made a motion to accept the minutes. Ms. Albritton seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous.

Call to the Public: Mr. Vivek Patel, Sierra Vista resident and General Manager, Gateway Studio Suites, was present and had submitted an application to the Tourism Commission.

Council Liaison Update: Ms. Huisking's update included:

The City budget discussion has been the priority, that the budget will be capped in July (no more negotiation), and that there will be a small increase in taxes to preserve current levels of service.

Important services include street maintenance, facility maintenance, cove renovations, raising lifeguard wages, restore PD vacant positions, maintain funding for branding and for an Economic Development Assistant.

Next week: Hall of Fame activities will be taking place, and there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new MI Museum.

Fort Huachuca Liaison Update: Ms. Camara's update included:

During this summer there will be many changes of command.

The Main Museum and Annex will have a soft opening on June 25, and that the MI Museum will open June 26 at a new location.

Garden Canyon will remain closed at least until the end of August.

The new Fort access procedures will take effect August 3.

Staff Liaison Update: Ms. Hector reported on numerous advertising programs including AOT coop advertising, and ad placements in Living Bird, Sunset Magazine and a Sonoran publication.

Ms. Hector's update also included:

She will be attending the Governors Conference on Tourism next week.

There has been an increase in visitors for birding, especially recently with sightings of rare birds.

She has finished developing a survey for hotels that will help identify basic information regarding visitors.

There has been a second reprint of the Bicycling/Shared Use Path Map.

She is currently working on a mountain biking map.

She has developed four rack cards for one-day trips, and one card for nearby attractions and that they will be distributed locally soon.

She updated members regarding the Cochise County Tourism Council (CCTC) including:

CCTC has completed their AOT coop application, and that their total spend is \$25k which results in a \$50k value countywide. The \$25k is from contributions by participating communities based on population, and the City of Sierra Vista Tourism Department's contribution to that total is \$20k.

CCTC is developing a mobile app with a vendor, supported by advertising, and will direct visitors on where to eat, stay and what to do throughout the county.

The CCTC supports the designation change for Chiricaua National Monument to a Park, which will hopefully coincide with the National Park's 100th Anniversary.

That she invited CCTC to the upcoming SEAHA Invitational, co-coordinated by Cochise College and SBDC.

The June 24, CCTC meeting is cancelled due to the Governor's Conference.

New Business:

Museum Tour: Ms. Baillie opened discussion and reviewed information presented by Dave Bishop. Mr. Bishop had presented a map of museums in Cochise County, and was interested in promoting a museum tour that possibly included package deals.

Members discussed that there is already a county museum map and video created by the CCTC, and that the Commission will focus on promoting the Henry Hauser Museum.

Old Business:

Best of Sierra Vista: Ms. Baillie opened discussion.

Discussion included how the Best of Sierra Vista Awards might be organized, promoting the awards and businesses to tourists, how the Herald may help promote the event, and possible categories to include.

Members agreed to move ahead with the "Best of Sierra Vista" award, brainstorm ideas and categories, and to present them at the next meeting. Members agreed to form a subcommittee including Ms. Tieman, Ms. Cobb and Ms. Baillie.

Support for National Park Designation for Chiricahua National Monument: Mr. Gent updated that the process is moving ahead very well, and that letters of support have been received, sent or will be forthcoming from the Mayor and City Council, SEAHA, the Chamber of Commerce, CCTC, County Board of Supervisors and SEAGO. Mr. Gent also updated he hopes to meet with Representative McSally soon.

Meeting Date and Time: Mr. Gent opened discussion about changing to a better meeting time to help make a quorum for meetings. Members agreed 8 a.m. would be a better time.

Ms. Cobb made a motion to change the Tourism Commission Regular Meeting time to 8 a.m., on the third Thursday of each month, to an outside location, pending Council approval.

Mr. Gent seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous.

Members agreed that if approved, the change would take effect for the August meeting.

Members discussed and agreed to cancel meetings in advance if there was not adequate response to meet a quorum.

Mr. Gent made a motion that if there was not a quorum attending by the Thursday before the next meeting, the meeting will be cancelled the next day, Friday.

Ms. Baillie seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous.

Revisit composition of Tourism Commission to ensure that the right people, institutions and stakeholders are represented: Members discussed what areas of representation are needed and should be included on the commission, and agreed it would be beneficial to seek a representative from restaurants and/or attractions. Members also agreed that interested people, and representatives from various sectors, could serve as associate commissioners.

Commissioner Applications: Members reviewed that there are two vacancies, four applications received, and that three of the applicants are from the hotel sector. Members discussed applications received from Mr. Patel, Ms. Tawney and Ms. Alexandar, and that Ms. Sunhilt's application is for associate commissioner due to zip code.

Ms. Baillie made a motion to recommend Mr. Patel for the Tourism Commission vacancy.

Ms. Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous.

Ms. Albritton made a motion to recommend Ms. Alexander for the Tourism Commission vacancy.

Mr. Gent seconded the motion.

The motion did not carry: 3 in favor, 2 opposed.

Ms. Cobb requested that associate commissioner positions be added to the next meeting agenda.

Ms. Tieman agreed to assume the chairperson duties, and requested electing a chair and vice chair be on the next meeting agenda.

Ms. Huisking agreed to request that Mr. Vivek's recommendation be put on the June 25 or July Council meeting agenda.

Tourism Partners Meeting: Members agreed that the upcoming SEAHA Invitational would be sufficient.

Commissioners Fam Trip: Ms. Albritton updated that the last trip was successful. Members agreed the next trip will be to Kartchner Caverns and to pick a date at the next meeting.

Requests of Commission: Mr. Gent advised that the next Star Party at Kartchner Caverns will be on International Astronomy Day, October 17, that he is continuing to work with Cananea astronomers on an exchange program, and that Council approved a digital sign ordinance that will set an example for other cities to follow and that will encourage other astronomers to locate in Sierra Vista.

Members reviewed items for the next meeting agenda.

Next Regular Meeting: July 16, 2015

Adjournment: 3:35 p.m. Ms. Albritton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Gent seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous.


Mary Tieman, Chairperson