

TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM  
WEDNESDAY April 14, 2021  
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON April 14, 2021, 201 S. CORTEZ STREET, PRESCOTT, ARIZONA. Via Zoom Meeting and in person option in the City Council Chambers.

A. Call to Order: Chair Margo Christensen called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

B. Roll Call:

TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Present:

Margo Christensen, Chair  
Matt Brassard, Vice Chair  
Linda Nichols-Secretary  
Debra Rocha  
Robert Coombs  
Jim Dawson  
Cindy Gresser  
Charlie Mormino  
Steve Bracety  
Councilman Tenney

Absent/Excused:

Peter Gebauer

STAFF

John Heiney, Community Outreach Manager  
Ann Steward, Tourism and Economic Initiatives Manager  
Heather Herman, Front Burner Media

C. Committee Member Introductions. Comments shared via minutes.

Deb Rocha - Granite Mountain Interagency Hotshot Learning and Tribute Center (GMIHC)- The Center reopened on March 5, 2021 after being closed since 12/27/2020. To date, there have been approximately 946 visitors. The GMIHC virtual run is scheduled for June 19-25, 2021. Sign up is projected to go live on 4/19/21, details to follow. The 2021 8<sup>th</sup> year remembrance shirt has been designed, ordered and will be available in June

Robert Coombs – Manager, Visitor Information Center - Visitor Information Center is handling an average of 65-70 visitors per day Prescott Chamber is planning our First Live, On Site Event this month.... Networking @ Night, Thursday, April 15th @ 5pm, Held at Prescott Resort & Conference Center. RSVP at [www.prescott.org](http://www.prescott.org)<<http://www.prescott.org>>. Thank you Prescott Resort and Conference Center for hosting.

Chair Margo Christensen – Ponderosa Hotel Management Services – Visitation rebounding at a very fast pace.

**D. Approval of March 10, 2021 Minutes - MOTION TO APPROVE CONTINGENT UPON SUGGESTED REVISIONS MARCH 10, 2021 MINUTES BY Jim Dawson SUBJECT TO STAFF EDITS, SECOND BY Charlie Mormino. MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.**

**E. TOURISM MARKETING AUTHORITY UPDATES.** Chair Margo Christensen shared that the bill did not go through. Arizona Lodging and Tourism Authority pulled it because of some last minute language that was trying to be added. If committee members want more details they can see Chair Margo Christensen.

John Heiney commented that the thought is it will be brought forward again next year.

Chair Margo Christensen shared that the language that was proposed was that a TMA could be enabled but hotel properties could opt out of participating which could cause discourse between owners in a geographic area and would be unfair and therefore why AzLTA pulled their support.

John Heiney commented that in our case where we are not a membership organization, and we support the entire destination as a whole, this would cause unevenness amongst the properties.

## **I. Staff Reports**

1. STR (Smith Travel Research) and Bed Tax – Reports were emailed. John Heiney commented that it is strange to see the increases now compared to this year at this time, being up 200+% and some hotel individual reports are showing up 1000+%.

We will take time on a future agenda to explain how to read the reports.

2. Community Outreach Manager Report. City has been busy. Council voted yesterday to buy a building for a new City Hall. He asked Councilman Tenney to share.

Councilman Tenney shared that the committee who has been assisting the city with moving to a new city hall supports this purchase and the move. Building is about 30,000 square feet with some current tenants who the city will work with based on their needs. We will enter escrow today; public comments are being taken. Idea is to sell current city hall land and other facilities where other departments are currently based.

Cindy Gresser asked what would happen to the time capsule.

Councilman Tenney commented it was a great question and it will be taken care of, there have been questions about this already.

Jim Dawson commented that he thinks this property has high economic value and if the city would also be considering bids from developers as well as consideration for certain use. Councilman Tenney said yes.

John Heiney commented that staff will develop a Request for Proposal for purchase. This process had taken place a couple years ago when FOPU (Facility Optimization and Property Usage) committee started when they looked for a purchaser of the site, but also someone to do "x." There was only one bidder at that time, however the market has changed a lot since that time. The process will start again.

Councilman Tenney is enthusiastic about this move, he also feels the other council members are too. There was a question about parking. The building checks all the boxes.

John Heiney also shared that council also approved the economic sales and marketing plan that will be executed by Heart and Soul Marketing. It did not come to TAC because this fee will come out of the general fund. Stakeholder interviews will begin soon.

3. Sales & Marketing Report. Heather Herman mentioned that she recently had a conference call with Smith Travel Research regarding help with outreach to some of our hoteliers, their travel will start soon as well so they can have some face to face meetings for outreach as well. She also wanted to remind everyone that registration for AZGCOT has opened, it will be August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> in Scottsdale. A scholarship program has opened as well. AOT will host the Adventure Elevate, domestic and international travel trade and media event, she has reached out and asked about partnership and sponsorship information. Continue to work on Sales & Marketing plan for upcoming year.

Ann Steward reported that the influencer AZ Foodie will be here this weekend and the Visit Parks influencer will be here end of the month, this is the piece that gets translated into several languages. Presentation that Heather and Ann will give at the City Council Study Session got moved to May 11<sup>th</sup>, which will also move out Tourism Team Up, so we will have to think about a new date, as well as figuring out what we want to do or mention about National Travel and Tourism Week.

4. Recreation Services. Joe Baynes reported that last weekend was very busy there was a pickle ball, hockey, and soccer tournament as well as a mountain bike race. Splash pad will open on May 14<sup>th</sup>. Greenways Trail plans are coming along.

Chair Margo Christensen commented that the teams (Yavapai Soccer Cup Tournament) that have been in the hotels lately have exhibited different and more favorable behaviors compared to last year.

Steve Bracety supported Margo's comments as well.

5. Airport Update. Emailed to committee.

6. 2021 Upcoming Meetings

- a) Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> – City Council Study Session
- b) TAC Regular Meeting - May 12, 2021

- c) Grand Circle June 5-7, 2021/ Chair Margo Christensen explained that Grand Circle Association is a Regional Marketing Association that is a circle of mainly southwestern attractions, destinations, suppliers, etc.
- d) Committee discussed skipping June, July or August meeting. Meeting schedule will be on next agenda.

Ann Steward wanted to comment on item above regarding the economic development marketing Plan, while they will be using tourism assets to benefit this marketing plan to keep in mind that the plan is for business attraction and economic development, so yes tourism is being used, but the main focus is economic development marketing, tourism marketing is not being redone.

J. Future Agenda Items. STR report explanation and tutorial. Best Practices Approach for Christmas City Season. Arizona's Christmas City planners request. Charlie Mormino also asked about possibly coordinating a survey/question (anonymously) to local F & B operators to find out if the Restaurant Revitalization Fund helped any of our operators, to what extent, and what the impact was. Ann Steward and Heather Hermen said definitely and that when the time comes they will reach out to Charlie for help with coordination.

K. Adjournment. There being no further business to discuss, the Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ann Steward

Ann Steward

12 @  
5/12/2021

Date

Margo Christensen

Margo Christensen, Chair

5/13/2021

Date