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MINUTES

Regular Meeting of Tuesday, October 30, 2018 – 10:00am

Antelope Valley Community Center, 442 Mule Deer Rd. Walker, CA 96107

(Teleconference location: Friends of the Inyo office at 819 N. Barlow, Bishop, CA, 93514)

1. Call to order. The meeting was called to order 10:05am
2. Introductions and announcements.
Commissioners: McQuilkin, Long, Vanderhurst, Schneider, Walsh
Staff: Vennos, Simpson, Grans
Other: John Peters (Supervisor)
3. Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission on items of interest of the public which are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. Speakers may be limited in speaking time depending upon the press of business and number of persons wishing to address the Commission.
4. Approval of the Minutes of the September 25, 2018 meeting.
A MOTION MADE BY VANDERHURST, SECONDED BY SCHNEIDER, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 25, 2018 MEETING MINUTES. APPROVED 5/0, NO ABSTENTIONS.
5. Monthly Financial/Budget Report.
Staff reported to the Commission that the CAO budget was approved as recommended on October 2, 2018. Community Grant Funding was approved, so applications will be sent out soon once revisions have been made.
6. Economic Development and Tourism Report.
Staff reported that the fall color season was very successful. The fall color page on MonoCounty.org (monocounty.org/things-to-do/fall-colors) received almost 43,000 hits, significantly higher than any other page at any point in the year. In collaboration with Visit Bishop and Visit Mammoth, Mono County hosted three Instagram influencers to feature the region's fall color experience, resulting in exposure to more than 500,000 followers. Mono County was once again a sponsor of CaliforniaFallColor.com, which generated great media coverage in major media outlets.
Ms. Vennos attended the IFTM travel industry trade show in Paris and reported that the biggest questions were about the condition of Yosemite after the Ferguson Fire as the travel professionals wanted to communicate accurate information to their clients.
 - a. *Report on progress regarding research projects including Business Retention & Expansion Survey, Economic Impact and Visitor Profile Study.*
The BR&E survey has concluded, and the executive summary was presented to the Board. Staff expressed thanks to the Mono County business community and survey participants – the surveys were long, but incredibly informative and revealing. The Economic Impact & Visitor Profile Study 1:1 intercept surveys wrap up this week. Estimated occupancy and average daily rate by month will be collected to complete the survey data. Staff attended the “Public information Officer” meeting last week. The group is working on creating a website with quick links to organizations like Great Basin Air Pollution District, Mono and Inyo County Sheriffs, CHP, NOAA, Town of Mammoth Lakes, etc. that act as the authorities for information during an emergency or event. Mono, Madera, Tuolumne, and Mariposa counties received a \$25,000 Disaster Grant from Visit California to help tourism recovery efforts. The money was used for a digital print and a social media takeover with Sunset Magazine, as well as for a Brand USA promotion.

In the last few weeks, staff attended CALED Rural Summit, SBDC government contractors, Eastern Sierra Capital Summit in Bishop. The businesses testimonial video with Insane Audio is complete.

The first Mammoth Lakes Community Housing Summit is this weekend. Mono County Economic Development is a sponsor and staff will be attending, along with other County departments.

- b. *Review the grant funding applications.* Discuss possible revisions and a system for evaluating applications. Staff reviewed the point system with the Commission, who agreed on revisions as well as adding a CEMF workshop to next regular meeting to address application's questions.
7. Dewatering of Mono County Ranchlands and Habitat. ACTION: Consider approval of a letter to Mayor Garcetti opposing the dewatering of Long Valley and Little Round Valley by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. MOTION MADE BY SCHNEIDER, SECONDED BY WALSH TO APPROVE, PENDING COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW, THE DRAFT LETTER TO MAYOR GARCETTI OPPOSING THE DEWATERING OF LONG VALLEY AND LITTLE ROUND VALLEY BY THE LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER. APPROVED 5/0, NO ABSTENTIONS.
8. Electric car charging stations. Discussion regarding options for non-Tesla car charging stations in Mono County. Commissioner McQuilkin reported there has been interest in Lee Vining from visitors to find non-Tesla charging stations, for example at the new solar pavilion.
9. Fisheries Commission Report. Update regarding the Mono County Fish & Wildlife Commission. Mr. Simpson reported that the California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife's fish stocking has been reduced due to disease at some of their hatcheries. The Mono County fish stocking budget was reinstated in the budget amendment process so the stocking program will continue with Desert Springs Trout Farm. Supervisor Peters noted that Jim Erdman and Don Emery, CADFW, will be giving a presentation at the December 5 Bridgeport town hall meeting.
10. Film Commission. Update on filming activity and productions in Mono County. Visit California is exploring film tourism and hosted a workshop event with key Bollywood producers that Ms. Vennos was invited to attend. Visit CA has also produced a film producer's guide to California, and featured Mono County as a film destination, as well as a segment on the feature film Oblivion that was shot in June Lake a few years ago.
11. Project Status Update:
 - a. Collateral: Visitor Guide advertising sales are on track. Staff is working on 8 pages of new content and updates.
 - b. Public Relations - Mono Lake was featured on page four of Backpacker Magazine.
 - c. Advertising/Social Media/E-Newsletter
 - d. Website
 - e. Tradeshows & Conferences - CALED Rural Summit and SBDC Central Valley Defense Supply Chain & Business Resource Fair report from Jeff Simpson. This item was discussed during item 6.
12. Correspondence Received
 - a. Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation
 - b. Mono County Historical Society
13. Commissioner Reports: Time permitting, Commissioners may share information and updates regarding their respective communities/districts.

VANDERHURST: Attended the Visit CA India sales mission recently. Indian travelers are generally FIT (foreign independent travelers) and visit for long stays (14-28 days), currently to gateway cities like LA, San Fran. They tend to travel in May/June or September/October, have 10-year visas (which encourage and allow for repeat visits), and are very interested in film destinations. Visit Mammoth will be dedicating marketing resources to this market. The next India sales mission is January 2020. Also reported on United and JetSuiteX service updates.

LONG: The Eastern Sierra ATV UTV Jamboree was a success. Event organizers handled several issues exceptionally well, including the nearby Boot Fire and adjusting locations due to that incident. Registration was almost back up to previous levels before the event changed dates from June to September.

SCHNEIDER: The Friends of the Inyo Backcountry Film Festival fundraising event is in the planning stages, as well as next year's stewardship events.

WALSH: The Autumn Beer Festival was very successful. The fall season has been busy, with many hotels being sold out. Two grand openings for local businesses -- Hermitage Juice Bar (raw, vegan food – open year-round, closed on Wednesdays) and T-Bar Social Club (first of three businesses at this location – coming soon will be June Pie, pizza restaurant, and next will be the multi-use facility Balanced Rock Saloon). High Sierra recreational marijuana retailer is in the midst of permitting. The June Lake Chamber voted in a new Board; the Little Loopers day care is very close to opening; final inspection is scheduled for November 9.

McQUILKIN: Fall has been a strong season in Lee Vining. Catching up from the smoky days this summer, it has been much busier than expected. Camping sprawl around the Mono Basin is becoming an issue. Noted an interesting article in the Washington Post about the pros and cons of trade war with China. In a past trade war, China redirected their tourism away from South Korea which devastated their tourism economy.

14. Call for agenda items for next regular meeting. Add a Community Event Marketing Fund “workshop” for applicants to ask questions, meet the Commission, etc. Approve a 2019 meeting schedule.

15. Adjourn the meeting and reconvene in regular session on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 – Mammoth Lakes; Board of Supervisors Room at 452 Old Mammoth Road.