REGULAR MEETING
Moab Area Travel Council Advisory Board (TCAB)

Held at Grand County, Utah Commission Chambers
125 E Center
Moab, Utah 84532

12/10/24 Travel Council Advisory Board

MINUTES

December 10, 2024 | 3:00pm

****Time stamps (HH:MM:SS) correspond to the video****

Members in Attendance: Sharon Kienzle, Ben Fredregill, Ashley Korenblat, Rebecca Monceaux, Lori McFarland

Members in Attendance Remotely: Brian Hunnings, Alex Borichevsky, Mary McGann

Non-members in Attendance: Ali Harford, Ben Alter, Mick Soleta

Welcome
00:00:25
Citizens to -be- heard
00:00:50, none at this time
Introductions
Conflicts of interest, disclosures, ex-parte communication
Presentations, if any

Discussion and Action Items:

Board Member Reports (00:01:10)

a. Rebecca reported that her hotel was "flat from last year and looking to be flat in December, also."
b. Sharon reported that visitation to the Moab Information Center (MIC) was "way up." She reiterated the MIC's seasonal hours.
c. Ashley reported that she was attending on behalf of the Moab Area Chamber of Commerce, noting that the chamber will soon be looking for a new executive director.
d. Alex reported that his business was down due to the season, noting that the weather may increase winter visitation to Moab. He discussed his restaurant's seasonal hours and "locals brunch" service.
e. Lori discussed her retainment of employees year-round and shared news regarding the recent court decision surrounding corporate beneficial ownership.
f. Brian reported that Red Cliffs Lodge has been "very slow, but by design" and discussed current renovations and transfer to Marriott. He also reported that, having accepted a new role that would take him out of the Moab area, he would be stepping down from the TCAB following its January 2025 meeting.

g. Mary updated the board on the Grand County Commission's progress on passing a 2025 budget, complimenting the TCAB's robust budget process.

Director's Report (00:12:15)

a. Ben F. discussed his team's recent efforts, including the construction of a reporting structure. He also discussed his office's work to balance its 2025 budget request. He reported on what he learned from the Grand County Active Trails and Transportation (GCATT) team and local visitors during a recent tour in the Sand Flats Recreation Area. He voiced his support for the chamber's recent events and search for a new executive director. Ashley discussed the economics of different recreation user groups, noting that all groups have a subset of visitors who stay in overnight rentals and cook their own meals while visiting Moab. She and Ben F. discussed the importance of understanding and quantifying visitor trends, with Ben F. noting the strategy that many destination marketing organizations (DMO's) are taking.

Interview Applicants For The Following Board Vacancies: Two (2) voting members (00:22:40)

a. Brian introduced the round of interviews by discussing the nature of the board and volunteer roles. He thanked each candidate for applying. Brian to interview the three candidates in attendance:
   i. Sharon Kienzle (00:24:50)
   ii. Cole Bangert (00:29:25)
   iii. Loren Rothman (00:33:45)
b. Brian thanked all three candidates for interviewing and briefly noted the expected timeline in which a decision could be expected.

Discussion: Promotion Of Career Training Services For Local Teenagers (00:40:25)

a. Brian invited Alex to introduce the discussion topic. Alex shared details from his recent conversation with Kate Finley, Director of the Grand County High School Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, suggesting the board consider actions or programming to bring community members, specifically local youth, "into the fold" so that "local kids" would grow up and "not hate tourism." He voiced support for offering incentives, opportunities, and training for local youth to work in Moab's tourism industries. He noted that local youth seem somewhat "disenfranchised" and advocated for their representation and involvement in the local tourism industry. He noted that he'd like to explore how transient room tax (TRT) funds might be used to support these efforts.
b. Brian suggested that hotel and hospitality internships deserved renewed promotion and recruitment efforts. He asked Ben F. if spending for this programming was included in the Economic Development Department's (EDD) 2025 budget, to which Ben F. replied that though this funding had been discussed, any expenditure would come from TRT dollars earmarked for mitigation purposes rather than from the EDD's budget.
c. Lori referenced a previous Travel Council program in which county staff worked with local youth twice a month to build skills in "guest-facing" activities that were in demand from local tourism employers. Concepts taught included answering the phone, proper

work attire, and other basic skills that employers identified as often deficient in job candidates. She discussed how similar technical skills-building programs could help the community as a whole.

d. Ashley noted that similar conversations were occurring at the chamber, the Beacon Afterschool Program, Utah State University (USU) Moab, and elsewhere. She suggested that these partners should consider coming together, rather than remain "siloed," and suggested that the chamber could host such a workshop.
e. Sharon discussed how Canyonlands Natural History Association's (CNHA) internship program allows students to work across every aspect of CNHA operations. She noted that student incentives included a scholarship that CNHA contributed to based on the intern's length of service.
f. Lori suggested that the board identify what the high school's CTE program needs, rather than just "throw money at it." Brian discussed the challenges with attempting to hire high school students while remaining within their work hours requirements. He voiced support for Ashley's proposed workshop. Ashley reiterated that part of the board's focus on local teens' success should be showing them that "there is a future here" should they wish to remain local and become employed post-graduation.

Consideration of future agenda items
Special Event Grant Workshop (00:54:55)

a. Brian invited Ben A. to introduce this item. Ben A. updated the board on the grant program's process, noting that the county commission had approved the grants as recommended by the TCAB and that first checks had gone out. He briefly reiterated the grant award disbursement and reporting process. He noted that commission discussion provided insights on how the program could be improved and, as a result, the EDD would work with both the commission and the TCAB to refine the program's mission and process in the new year.
b. Lori inquired on the metrics of success used in the event grant program. Ben A. discussed the reporting requirements of grantees, noting some of the questions that quantified events' impacts, but concluding that a "metric for success" had never been given to grantees to measure against. He also discussed how the EDD might augment grantee reports with its own economic data as part of the re-envisioned grant program. Lori, Ben A. and Ben F. discussed the data tools that the EDD is beginning to make use of, and Lori and Ben F. discussed how the process for special events could be made simpler and more inviting. Ashley noted the challenges posed by event permitting processes and discussed how a diversity of events, rather than simply an event's draw, should be measured within the scope of success. Ben A. discussed the transition of the special event permitting process within Grand County operations. Mary discussed the changes in the event permit application process, noting that previous staff members' support of the events process has created a streamlined result.
c. Sharon inquired on if the event grant program would return to its original mission of supporting new events, rather than awarding grants to the same, established applicants repeatedly. Ashley noted that the timeline of the current event grant program challenges

event holders, especially for less established events. The board discussed these topics as well as possible implications of the TRT audit relating to event grant funding.

Consideration Of Future Agenda Items (01:15:30)

a. Brian invited members to suggest future meeting agenda items, noting that board candidate interviews would continue at the January 2025 meeting of the TCAB and that the board would follow up with Ashley regarding a student success workshop.
b. Lori expressed her thanks for recent receipt of marketing materials approved by the TCAB and county commission and set to be placed in early 2025. She requested that the EDD and TCAB ensure that the materials do not promote flights that are no longer in service and other expired services. She also requested that board members receive meeting agendas and materials more than 24 hours in advance to allow ample time for preparation.
c. Brian discussed the board’s future action to elect new board officers. He also discussed a recent survey circulated by the Utah Tourism Industry Association (UTIA) regarding TRT policy, inviting members to reach out to him for more information and encouraging them to become involved in the discussion.

At 01:19:40, Brian adjourned the meeting.