



# Meeting Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Location | Zoom

Date | March 8, 2022

Present: Dee Patterson, Steven Cadematori, Whitney DalBalcon, and Scott Armstrong

Guests in Attendance: Nate Zirklen, Megan Lott, Terry Wildy, Greg Dudgeon

Absent: James Ball, and Tiana Anderson

Minutes Recorded by Meilee Anderson

Meeting called to order at 10:13 AM

## Regional Roundup

Dee –The holidays produced strong occupancy at Crystal Mountain Hotels. Pre-season summer bookings are on pace with previous years. The Alpine Inn restaurant is able to operate daily with indoor and outdoor dining. Easter Brunch and egg hunt scheduled for April 17. Crystal Mountain Hotels will close for the season April 17 to reopen the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of June for the summer season. Alpine Inn will host the Mount Rainier Wine Festival again this year on July 9. Endurance events, Ragnar and the White River 50 Miler scheduled this summer.

Steven – The new Casting Iron (in the former Kelly's Mercantile Restaurant) opened and offers ax throwing. Casting Iron plans to open a restaurant and bar later this year. A new brewery, Griffin Brewing opened in downtown Enumclaw.

Whitney – Wild Drive Tours and Keeper Adventure Tours both operate on a year-round basis. The annual special event “Slugfest” rescheduled to July 30-31. Work continues on the new electric tram station, anticipated to the public this summer.

Scott – Renovations on a third rental unit are complete. The campground will open this May. Real estate prices in the Ashford area rising significantly along with an increase in break-ins.

WSDOT – Too early to predict when Chinook Pass will open however, the goal for SR410 Chinook Pass to reopen is Memorial Day weekend. Road opening and closing dates remain dependent on weather and staffing levels. US12 White Pass is open.

Terry – Construction on Stevens Canyon Road expected to begin this spring. Date TBD. Both lanes will close during construction work Monday-Thursday. Both lanes anticipated to open Friday-Sunday.

Winter storms damaged the bridge along the Grove of Patriarchs trail at Ohanapecosh. The bridge is the only safe crossing point for visitors. The Grove of the Patriarchs will remain closed until further notice. The Ohanapecosh campground and Silver Falls trail will operate.

MRNP visitors center to reopen to the public. Visitor access in the Henry Jackson visitor center at Paradise limited to the main level. Though indoor mask mandates lifted at the state and local level, MRNP follows federal guidance. Masks still required when entering MRNP buildings.

Public comment sought for Fryingpan Creek Bridge project.

## Financial Report

P&L and balance sheet presented. In January VR had \$33,000 in reserves. The City of Enumclaw funding returned to historic levels of \$10,000 for the year. Overall projected revenue estimated at \$504,000 for 2022. Expenses forecasted at \$495,000.

Conducted in 2015, the last financial review cost of \$3,125. Discussion took place in favor of conducting another financial review. As a quorum was not met official voting was tabled.

## Old Business

Dee reminded the board to continue to invite stakeholders from the region to participate in the VR program and to consider serving on the board.

## New Business

Meilee reported the Seattle Times published a two-page article on winter travel in the Ashford area. Method hand soap released an exclusive line of National Park themed soaps. The Mount Rainier soap features an image of the mountain with wildflower meadow and bears. The soap will be available for purchase in Target stores nationwide.

Major initiatives – Hemlock Productions is under contract to film the virtual tours of partner lodging properties. A signup sheet was circulated amongst lodging partners. Filming to begin this spring and conclude before 12/15/22.

Two new itineraries, a pet friendly itinerary and Chinook Scenic Byway itinerary are in development this year. New ad campaign “No Wrong Way to Rainier” reviewed along with media buy.

The annual stakeholder meeting is March 8, 2022 at 1:00 PM.

Pierce County LTAC forecasts the release of the 2023 grant application for June, with a tentative due date in July and awards announcement in August 2022.

Discussion took place regarding the public announcement by Crystal Mountain Resort regarding \$100 million dollar in infrastructure and service advancements over the next five years.

Future Board Meetings scheduled for Tuesdays from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM via Zoom on May 10, September 13, and November 8.

Meeting adjourned 12:00 PM