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MINUTES

Regular Meeting of Tuesday, March 28, 2017 – 10:00am

Lee Vining Community Center: 296 Mattly Ave. Lee Vining, CA 93541

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:08 AM by Commissioner Little.
2. Introductions and announcements:
Commissioners: Andrew Jones, Michael Vanderhurst, Geoff McQuilkin, Jimmy Little
Absent: Steve Morrison, Jennifer Roeser, Chris Long
Staff: Alicia Vennos, Liz Grans, Jeff Simpson
Other: Adrienne Thatcher (Humbolt-Toiyabe National Forest), April Sall (Bodie Hills Foundation)
3. Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission:
Ms. Thatcher, Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest, reported that the Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area is at 200-250% of average snowpack and is seeing a significant increase in visitation this winter, tracked by permits. Most visitors are from Mammoth Lakes/Mono County and nearby-Nevada zip codes, but this year there were visitors from Connecticut, Alaska, New York, Washington, Colorado, etc. Regarding the letter of support for the off-highway vehicle grant for continued education, the grant funding will sustain current staffing levels for the Bridgeport Avalanche Center, maintenance of the BAC website, and avalanche safety classes, free to the public.
4. Approval of the Minutes from the January 31, 2017 meeting.
MOTION MADE BY VANDERHURST, SECONDED BY JONES TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 31, 2017 REGULAR MEETING. APPROVED 4-0, NO ABSTENTIONS.
5. Commissioner Reports:
Commissioner McQuilkin: Mono Lake's water level has risen 12" since January 1, 2017. Based on the March snow survey, the lake is expected to rise 4 feet in total by late fall, once the snow begins to melt. The Mono Lake Committee (MLC), after a successful fundraising campaign, is moving forward with installing the solar-powered electric fence to prevent coyotes and other predators from crossing the still-exposed land bridge to the islands where the gulls are nesting. MLC Information Center & Bookstore visitation is down slightly due this winter due to more challenging driving conditions, and with South Tufa road not accessible during the heavier snow months. There is also a new bed and breakfast business in Lee Vining.
Commissioner Jones: Caltrans has started plowing Highway 158 and clearing some avalanche snow and debris; road should be open before fishing opener.
Commissioner Vanderhurst: Mammoth Lakes Tourism, Mammoth Lakes Chamber and Mono County Tourism are making a huge push for registration for the upcoming Visit California Global Ready China event taking place March 29th at the Sierra Center Mall. Mammoth Lakes experienced a very successful Elevation Week; participation was up 30% with 2,800 people attending.
Commissioner Little: The Burger Barn restaurant in Bridgeport has re-opened for the summer season. There is a new home decor business, Sagebrush & Co., opening on Main Street. Would like to address the best way to promote the area when the passes will not be open as early as recent years, as well as why there has been a shortage of interested candidates for some open full-time, year-round positions in the Bridgeport area.
6. Monthly Financial/Budget Report: Ms. Vennos gave a brief report on mid-year budget review.

7. Economic Development and Tourism Report.
Staff showed the final production of the small business testimonial video series. The new Techreation Mammoth co-working space is open in the Sierra Center Mall. Mr. Simpson reported on Main Street activity in N. County, including the opening of a new Western art gallery in Walker, the sale of the Bridgeport General Store, and others. Staff reported that the County is applying for a \$25M grant for the construction of a new jail facility in Bridgeport.
8. Letter of Support: Shady Rest Fat Bike Grooming Project
ACTION: Review and approve draft letter of support.
MOTION MADE BY VANDERHURST, SECONDED BY MCQUILKIN, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT WITH DISCUSSED EDITS. APPROVED 4-0, NO ABSTENTIONS.
9. Letter of Support: Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Off-Highway Vehicle Grant to continue Bridgeport avalanche education and safety program.
ACTION: Review and approve draft letter of support.
MOTION MADE BY MCQUILKIN, SECONDED BY VANDERHURST, TO APPROVE THE DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT WITH DISCUSSED EDITS. APPROVED 4-0, NO ABSTENTIONS.
10. Letter of Support: Letter to Central Federal Lands Highway Division supporting the Yosemite Area Regional Transit System (YARTS) application for grant Federal Lands Access Program grant funding to provide free service to Yosemite National Park on all National Park Service free gate days during the 17/18 fiscal year.
ACTION: Review and approve draft letter of support.
Due to a timing issue regarding public comment deadline, this item was rescinded.
11. International Tourism Marketing Strategy.
Discussion regarding expanding marketing efforts internationally that ranged from complementing Mammoth Lakes Tourism's efforts – possibly participation in sales missions with Visit California in fast-growth, emerging international markets. Another option might be to expand domestic markets and/or to participate in US Travel's IPW industry trade show.
12. Fisheries Commission Report: Tabled until next meeting.
13. Film Commission Update. Overall, the number of inquiries and film permits issued are up over last winter.
14. Project Status Update: A brief report on marketing projects was provided, including the new Eastern Sierra Fishing Map which is very popular at the travel/fishing tradeshows.
 - a. Collateral
 - b. Public Relations
 - c. Advertising/Social Media/E-Newsletter
 - d. Website
 - e. Tradeshows & Conferences
15. Call for agenda items for next regular meeting. Cannabis update, delayed Tioga Pass opening, tourism & economic development strategic planning.
16. Adjourn the meeting and reconvene in regular session on Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at the Bridgeport Health Annex Meeting Room Bridgeport Health Department Annex at 199 Twin Lakes Rd. Bridgeport, CA 93517.