

**GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 10, 2018**

The May 10, 2018 Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee (STORC) meeting was conducted in the Gunnison County Blackstock Government Center, 2nd floor meeting room, located at 221 N. Wisconsin #D, Gunnison, CO 81230.

Committee Members Present:

Voting Members:

Jonathan Houck, Gunnison County Commissioner
Erica Mueller, Crested Butte Mountain Resort
Ben Breslauer, GOATS
Matthew McCombs, USFS District Ranger
Dave Ochs, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association
Tim Kugler, Gunnison Trails
Kristi Murphy, Bureau of Land Management
Navid Navidi, Gunnison community member and business owner
Scott Borden, Graduate Faculty at WSCU

Others in Audience:

Chris Haver
Ian Billick

Staff Members Present:

Cathie Pagano, Director of Community and Economic Development

CALL TO ORDER: Messner called the May 10, 2018 meeting of the Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee to order at 2:00 P.M.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: Messner confirmed that a quorum was present.

PUBLIC NOTICE CONFIRMED: Messner verified that proper legal public notice had occurred.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 12, 2018 MEETING MINUTES: Moved: by Kevin Alexander and seconded by Noel Durant to accept the April 12, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Member updates

Scott Borden announced that there will be a new MBA program at WSCU starting in the fall of 2018. They are hoping that ten students will sign up for the semester. It is a two year program. It is more for professional development, somebody who has a bachelor degree and three years of experience, for people who are looking for a job in the industry or already have one.

Kristi Murphy was at a recreation meeting where DOC came and talked to them and they were very excited about the STOR Committee and she believes that if they continue working together they may get funding down the road.

Houck explained that that all the counties met with the Forest Service last week for comments on GMUG. There is an interesting challenge on how the Forest Service is going to manage the GMUG when all three of the forests are operated in three different ways, with the Forest Service having their own umbrella plan. How are they going to manage each area with the forests being drastically different?

McCombs explained that the Forest Service is leaning on the counties in particular to help figure out solutions to deal with those issues. They are trying to deal with those issues through an Adaptive Management approach. Figure out desired conditions for certain ecosystems and areas and then not really putting a lot of parameters but hoping the public will trust the Forest Service to use discretion appropriately on how to achieve those desired conditions so they can move forward and change their path without a substantial amount of additional analysis or public engagement, utilizing processes to change the path a little bit. They recognize that the counties are not all the same. The second piece is the geographic area piece, where they see where the natural boundaries are to make divisions and plan accordingly to both community values and uniqueness. They can be much more effective if the public puts their trust in them, which will hopefully take care of the conflicts they have had.

Pagano went over the key strategic results that the group decided were on the top of the priority list. The group had split off in the last meetings to focus on the key strategic results that were on top of the list for prioritization.

Goal One: Ensure the Valley's tourism sector of the economy is resilient, vibrant, and supports our community values.

Mueller explained that their focus was looking at current offerings for each season and opportunities for the future and ensuring that what they offer is complimenting the needs and also taking into account their resources. They talked about developing a spreadsheet that identifies each of the activities, winter and summer offerings and then look at the date ranges, who, what, where, and why of each activity.

Haver explained that they compiled a list of activities and tried to think of all the activities that go on around the area or could go on and then create a list of questions to evaluate each activity. By taking the questions and addressing each of the activities they can come up with a rating for each activity that corresponds to each answer to the question and how big of an environmental impact they may have, rating each, and that some questions might be more important than others and they have created an algorithm that will give a weighted scale number to each activity and determine which one ranks higher and give them a good starting point and then evaluate each activity by itself. Mueller explained that the rankings help them drive marketing initiatives to help drive Gunnison Valley.

Further discussion followed on the goal and how to determine more activities to add and more questions to look at. Haver hopes it's a good starting point and ranking each of the questions from being important to not important. He explained that you would first look at the questions, rank them and then answer each in regards to the activity. Kuegler suggested adding how it ranks with the community values/sustainability message.

Goal Two: Foster a resident and visitor culture that demonstrates respect for our community, culture and environmental stewardship.

No one from the group was here today. Ochs requested to be added to the group. Pagano suggested they wait until the next meeting to go over the goal, when the members are there to explain. Ochs suggested to add winter messaging.

Goal Three: Support collaboration between federal land agencies, local government and user groups to improve management of recreation and natural resources.

They didn't have any groups put together for this goal but that they will have discussions about it in the future. The County Commissioners and County Community Development have set aside some money for the budget for smaller projects. The same, in regards to the advocacy group, a lot of that starts with the

roles of the County Commissioners and this group will support efforts in the future but they can look at it more if needed.

Goal Four: Be proactive in management of private and public natural and recreation assets to minimize degradation and enhance quality.

Kuegler explained that they looked at a map to see what there is. They identified the news that comes up in the CB News. They looked at the Peanut Lake and Slate River Area. They were narrowing down to a specific place where they can implement a few strategies to see if they work. Navidi had suggested that they focus more on a particular area. They looked at figuring out what's allowed and what's not allowed; funding to add toilets and decided what they need for each area. Aligning all of the strategic plans from all the different departments with this group is hard when they all have their own.

Pagano explained that there is a confluence of a lot of departments, converging entities and issues. Ochs explained that there are some things that have already happened, sanitary facilities, and that they could see how it goes and then look at it next year. Ochs explained there will be a permanent toilet at Musician's Camp, just past Oh Be Joyful. Murphy gave an update of where all the permanent toilets will be. McCombs explained they are looking at getting a permanent composter at West Maroon. Pagano wanted to know if there was a need for other toilets. Further discussion followed on possible locations.

McCombs wanted to know how they envisioned the management and maintenance implementation plan for recreation infrastructure and how it dovetails with Murphy's Range Management Plan and his Forest Plan. Kuegler explained they had a County Master Trail plan that looks at new trail construction and would love to see the County plan updated. The County has their own ideas and then it doesn't match up with the other plans. Pagano explained that that's why they are all in the room together, to figure out if it works, how it can work and where it doesn't work.

McCombs suggested that they develop a master approach with some level of alignment with the other plans, that way it doesn't create headaches for them when they go to implement it. He stated they could do a needs assessment that spells out the specific infrastructure improvements that would meet existing demand. Once the needs assessment is they agree that it is the appropriate place to establish it, how they will fund it and maintain it. The other entities could agree to it as long as it is overarching the umbrella of the existing management policy. It would be more important to know what they want and if they could establish what the community wants and then align it with Forest, regional and national policy they would be in good shape. McCombs thinks it's more of a needs assessment laying out a multiyear implementation plan. Pagano clarified that he is suggesting they do it on a bigger scale, McCombs agreed.

McCombs explained that it will be extremely important over the next ten years to renew infrastructure to meet the growing demand and still preserve the community's vision of what the future should look like as far as quality of life. He will look to this group to provide that information and help drive them collaboratively towards good decisions with limited resources.

Pagano explained that the group seems to want to see the achievement and action. There is a desire to do something on a smaller scale that the group can demonstrate results for in the near term. Then they could look at long term goals that they spend time to put together.

Navidi wanted to know how long they have to get that to McCombs. McCombs explained that it would be in effect for potentially 10 years. The Forest Service will be working on the forest plan for two years and would be taking on the processes at that time and that in the meantime the assessment component could be put together and they would already have the collaborate work done. Further discussion followed on how they can get there. Murphy suggested that they write down what they are trying to accomplish and then have a five or ten year plan, were they are looking ahead and working towards a plan each year.

Pagano suggested that they decide as the whole group whether it would be good to go further with the pilot project at Slate River and if it's the best way to move forward. Consideration of the larger long-term process

and setting themselves up to do it in alignment with federal agencies. What are they setting themselves up for down the road?

Navidi thinks they need to be looking at other projects and working on multiple ones at the same time. He state that they want to make tourism sustainable in the eyes of the people who live here. What are we willing to give up or allow and it should be based on the people in the community. If they let it go like it is they will diminish the experience and people will eventually go away.

Houck agrees that things are changing, people will leave but others will come back and that's a balance the communities are trying to achieve. Murphy believes they won't change the population growth but how do they work around that and protect the areas? Navidi knows they can't stop the growth but at some point you're just spinning your wheels by developing more things but when the times are bad the businesses aren't doing well and that they need to learn from it. Ochs stated that they need to capitalize on the experience and infrastructure and how to have amazing experiences that they haven't found yet.

RMBL presentation

Billick gave a presentation on the proposed visitor's center at Snodgrass Trailhead area. Three things for the group to think about; whether there would be support, does it align with the County's efforts, and get feedback on the design. It is a collaborative effort with CBMR. They have a property they will allow RMBL to use to offer seasonal workforce housing, research and administrative use and see this as an opportunity to interact with the public. Billick handed out a packet with information about the area. It is right at the winter trailhead to Gothic. The big questions was how to manage the people and look at it from a landscape prospective. They would like to see public increase of use be in Mt. Crested Butte. They can provide a really nice facility people will want to interact within and bring the use down to Mt. Crested Butte instead of Gothic to take away some of that pressure. They see it as an opportunity to interact with the public. The intent is to have a place to interact with the public about the science and what's going on in within the area. Mueller explained as a partner they are very excited about it.

Pagano wanted to know if they will be asking for grants, Billick said it would be great if they could get a letter of recommendation from the STOR Committee. The group will decide how it fits in their priorities. They want to sync their efforts with the County's efforts. At the next meeting they will talk about the project.

Adjourned at 4:00 pm

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant