

**GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 22, 2020**

The October 22, 2020 Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee (STORC) meeting was conducted by Zoom virtual online meeting.

Committee Members Present:

Voting Members:

Jonathan Houck, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners
Dave Ochs, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association
John Norton, Gunnison Crested Butte Tourism Association
Scott Borden, WCU
Tim Kugler, Gunnison Trails
Chris Parmeter, CPW
Kristi Murphy, BLM
Joellen Fonken, Gunnison Nordic
Kimberly Shappert, At-Large Community Member
Matt Reed, High Country Conservation Advocates
Matt McCombs, U.S. Forest Service

Others in Audience:

Dwayne Lehnertz, Mt. Crested Butte Town Council
Brian Lieberman, Crested Butte Land Trust
Hedda Peterson
Melanie Yemma, Town of Crested Butte

Staff:

Cathie Pagano, Community Development Director
Joe Lavorini, Gunnison County Stewardship Coordinator-National Forest Foundation

CALL TO ORDER: Pagano called the October 22, 2020 meeting to order at 2:04 PM.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 MEETING MINUTES: Moved: by Kugler and seconded by Shappert to approve the September 24, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Lavorini reported that Kolodziej was unable to make it so Dwayne Lehnertz showed in his place. Lavorini reminded the members that the next meeting has been changed to November 19, 2020 due to the holidays. Lavorini reported the Slate River working group met this past week to discuss the condition of the herons this year and the recreational river use. They will give an update in a future meeting.

STOR COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLANNING

Pagano went over how she put together the draft strategic plan. She looked at the work that came before the STOR committee was formed, along with the work that the Committee has worked together to complete and try to meld them into a strategic plan. She believes that it is better to look at the next two to four years, instead of the next ten to twenty years. If they look at long term, the amount of time it takes is significant and things change quickly. Recommends that they keep the big picture plans in their mind but

that they also figure out what actions they need to do in two to five year increments so they can actually accomplish it.

McCombs stated that he agrees that taking the balance between strategic and immediate needs is a good idea. Thinks a three year plan is good. Believes bite size pieces of achievable metrics that they can work together could be the secret to their success and that the smaller time frames would be what they should look at.

Murphy stated that she believes it should be in five year increments, instead of three. There are unintended consequences of something that you are going to do, so you have to be able to work on them. Believes that just sitting around talking about it and not taking action is them saying they aren't going to take action and the consequences of that is great. McCombs stated that he went with three years because of how much the STOR Committee has already completed in three years.

Murphy stated that she doesn't believe the trend will continue of high visitation once the COVID restrictions are lifted.

Parmeter stated that the term limit could be shorter as long as the things they do make sense in the big picture. They need to have some idea of what the big picture is so they will make sense in the future.

Ochs stated that he agrees with Parmeter. He appreciates the fact that the greatest accomplishments have been met as they come up. Good at looking in advance and making sure that they make sense for the big picture.

Kugler asked that they talk about the money that is coming from the Great American Outdoors Act and what that can and cannot be used for. The big part of the long-term planning was the resources being asked of the agencies when it comes to doing a full NEPA process and part of the long term plan was that if they have a long term plan that they can hand to NEPA and that might make the process more efficient. Asked whether any of the funds from the GAOA could be used for extra staff or NEPA planning or does that just for deferred maintenance.

Murphy stated that it can only be used for deferred maintenance projects, existing infrastructure that you have on the ground not new construction. As for NEPA planning, she doesn't know if anyone has asked for NEPA for planners with the GAOA funding but she does know the BLM is hiring additional engineering staff to deal with that because it all goes through contracting. McCombs stated that the Forest Service is similar, the dollars are designed to minimize deferred maintenance in areas that are related or adjacent to that infrastructure. It didn't come with people money, that will be something that the agency will engage congress on the first of the year because it is hard to spend a quarter of a billion dollars without some additional capacity but right now it is focused on the hardware itself.

Pagano stated that she isn't trying to communicate that they don't need a long term plan and that they do everything on the fly. She would suggest that trying to solve all of the problems now for ten to twenty years out is a big challenge and thinks there are some things they need to do that are bigger long term projects. There are some short term projects that they can do in the meantime. Doesn't want to discourage looking at the big picture but wants the group to realize it is hard to figure out everything now for ten to twenty years from now. Ochs stated that he appreciates that and that CMBA is excited that they can focus and handle short term plans. It's something they can manage and look forward to in their planning and organizational opportunities.

Fonken stated that they focus on the grant application and opportunities that the County has put in, in the past. They are ready but haven't been done because they haven't been funded. Suggested that they identify those and that they be put in the five year plan because those have already been agreed on that they need to happen.

Pagano stated that she tried to include those in the draft strategic plan. The group went through the draft 2020 strategic plan.

GENERAL UPDATES FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Lavorini reported that the Gunnison County Stewardship Selection Committee met a couple of weeks ago. The committee wants to work hand in hand with the STOR Committee in terms of prioritizing funding and projects in the future and that is something they can maybe revisit in the November meeting and talk about adjusting timelines for giving out the awards of the funding.

Parmeter asked whether the soonest they could see a boat ramp in Almont would be five years. McCombs stated that if they can find the funds for the design and implementation he is happy to move out whenever they are. Forest Service do not have the money to do it right now. Happy to have it as a side project and that it could fit nicely in a Taylor River package in 2022 or 2023.

Ochs reported that the Coal Train Trail is officially finished and opened.

Pagano stated they have started Shady Island and it will be operational by next Spring.

McCombs stated that fire restrictions will be back on this Friday at midnight.

ADJOURN: The October 22, 2020 meeting of the Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee adjourned at 4:04 PM.

Prepared by Rebecca Ricord, Community Development Administrative Assistant III