

**LODGER'S TAX ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO**

REGULAR MEETING

ACTION MINUTES

THURSDAY APRIL 30, 2015

TIME & PLACE: The Lodger's Tax Advisory Board of the City of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, met in regular Session in full conformity with the law and ordinances of said Board, at the Commission Chambers, 400 West 3rd Street of said City on Thursday April 30, 2015 at 4:00pm

PRESIDING OFFICER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Julie Durham, and Christina Bruch acted as secretary.

ATTENDANCE: Upon Calling of the roll, the following members were reported present:

Julie Durham, Chairperson
Cydney Wilkes, Vice-Chair
Janice Gray, Member
Hans Townsend, Member (came late at 4:13)

QUORUM: There being a quorum present, the Board proceeded with the business at hand.

Board Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Vice-Chair Cydney Wilkes motioned to accept the agenda.

Seconded by member Janice Gray.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES March 9,

2015: Member Janice Gray Motioned to accept the minutes of March 9, 2015.

Vice-Chair Cydney Wilkes Seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES MARCH 26,

2015: Member Janice Gray noted that there were a few grammatical errors on the minutes with the spelling of her last name. She motioned that the minutes be accepted with grammatical errors corrected.

Vice-Chair Cydney Wilkes seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES APRIL 13,

2015: Member Janice Gray noted that her name was spelled wrong on the first couple of pages of the minutes. She also noted that a name needed to be capitalized.

Vice-Chair Cydney Wilkes Motioned to accept the minutes with the grammatical errors changed.

Member Janice Gray seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION/ACTION: FYE 15/16

ALLOCATIONS: Chairperson Julie Durham went over the order of the applications that they will be going over during the meeting. She mentioned that they were given \$46,000 to allocate this year.

Chairperson Julie Durham questioned the use of the evaluation form. She feels it is non-compliant with the new guidelines. She stated that they don't want to use them until they can go over them and change them.

Manager Juan Fuentes stated that they were provided with this information to base their recommendation off of. He stated that the information should be useful to them. He thinks that they should use the information regardless of the form.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that she is concerned that they would be providing this form to the Chamber without having the Board look the form over first. She stated that since the Board was not given this form to approve or disapprove and since the Commission did not either, and it is not in compliance with the guidelines and requested that they not be provided to them.

City Manager Juan Fuentes stated that they can make these notations on their recommendations, but he believes this information should still be provided.

Member Janice Gray asked why chairperson Julie Durham thought they were not in compliance.

Chairperson Julie Durham read the part of the form that states the organization must provide proof of non-profit status and stated that in the new guidelines they are trying to make things not as burdensome and easier, and she believes that going over past information is not reasonable. She said that since they have applied before, they should not have to provide the same proof and documents as before. She said that they shouldn't have to prove it every year; she would assume that they are still non-profit. She stated that in the guidelines, they are only required to submit proof of non-profit once.

Member Janice Gray stated that she disagrees with some of the things chairperson Julie Durham says because she is not reading the guidelines the same way she is. She stated that it says proof needs to be submitted with the initial grant application and she feels that should be year to year. She also stated that they have had problems in the past where someone has become delinquent and was dropped from the Federal registry which then would be going against the guidelines.

Chairperson Julie Durham noted Janice Gray's comments.

Member Hans Townsend stated that he thinks the initial grant application is referring to the annual one.

Member Hans Townsend recused himself and spoke on behalf of the Public and president of the Chamber of Commerce. He stated that the problem he has with the form is that it is not updated and can never be updated because the 4th quarter is after the next allocation. He stated that they cannot judge whether they used all the money because the current year is not over before they distribute more money.

The board recognized Linda Sparks stated that is why the form says "to date".

Hans Townsend stated that he's not arguing about what it says; he's stating that they are asking the commissioners to make a decision based on this assessment that's not up to date.

City Manager Juan Fuentes stated that it says to date and the

form is strictly informational. He said that the questions on the form will be also asked by the commission. He stated that the same information that is being presented is what they anticipate to be asked by the commission. He stated that he understands the direction that Julie wants to go in but, they are not in line with the Commission and they have to anticipate what the staff will be asking.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they realize this is some confusion in this matter and they will look at it on a later date.

Hans Townsend stated that they are in this meeting now to answer the questions that the Board has, but when it goes to the City Commission, there is no one there to answer the questions. He stated that the Commissioners just made a decision based on what they felt without talking to the representatives. He stated that none of the applicants were invited to the City Commission meeting last year.

Member Janice Gray stated that any member of the public is invited to the City Commission meetings.

Hans Townsend stated that last year it was not decided at the City Commission meeting, so therefore no one could attend.

Hans Townsend went on to explain the application for the Chamber of Commerce. He talked about all the locations in Albuquerque that his visitors guide will be placed.

Member Janice Gray asked about the increase that the Chamber of Commerce is asking for and if it's basically to extend where the visitors guide goes to.

Hans Townsend said that they are hoping to help with that and that it's not going to be cheap. He stated that they aren't actually asking for an increase, they are asking for less than they did last year. He stated that it will cost them \$500 a month to keep all these visitors guides distributed to different places.

Member Janice Gray asked what the distribution cost of \$6,000 is for.

Hans Townsend stated that it will not be mailed. He stated that he was having some problems to get it distributed with the other brochures that the City has. He pointed out that there is a new feature in their brochure for visitors to receive discounts at local businesses.

Hans Townsend rejoined the board members.

Chairperson Julie Durham mentioned to Juan Fuentes that she wouldn't be upset about the evaluation form being presented to the City Commission if bullet point one and six were deleted.

City Manager Juan Fuentes stated that he feels the information on this form is important and they are not going to change it.

Chairperson Julie Durham then requested that the form not be used.

The Board members went on with reviewing the applications.

No one was present to represent The Friends of Elephant Butte Lake State Park.

Julie Durham mentioned that even though this group in in Elephant Butte, they do bring people into the City with their events.

Member Janice Gray agreed with Chairperson Julie Durham.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they will consider their application to allocate funds to.

They moved on to Geronimo Springs Museum's application

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they are requesting \$15,000 and she recognized Marylyn Pope to speak on behalf of the organization.

Marylyn explained her application and spoke briefly about contributing to the Centennial celebration next year and about the events they expect to hold this year. She also mentioned that they have banquet rooms and servers available for events. She also mentioned that they are the only museum to have a display at the spaceport.

Member Janice Gray asked if they expect to spend all the money they were allocated last year.

Marylyn stated that the organization was having trouble at the beginning of the year when they had to pay up front and get reimbursed later, but they are working on catching that up now. She also stated that they have several things to put bills on for very soon. She said that they didn't get to do some things the way they had hoped and were left with extra money. She stated that

they wanted to make a preliminary poster to advertise for the Centennial celebration with the extra money.

The next application was for the Women's Club requesting \$850.

Linda De Marino spoke on behalf of the Women's Club since MainStreet is sponsoring their application. She stated that the Women's Club has not applied for Lodger's Tax before, but since they are being charged for the use of the Civic Center, they are asking for money to cover the fee and some for advertising. She also stated that the organization is working on getting their 501C3.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked City Manager Juan Fuentes if that was a good enough explanation or if they needed to be eliminated since this does not qualify for Lodger's Tax guidelines.

City Manager Juan Fuentes stated that would have to be a recommendation from the board, since groups have qualified like this before.

Linda De Marino stated that the Arts Council was a fiscal agent for Mainstreet in the past.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they will consider their application as being eligible.

Member Janice Gray noted that they would need to promote the Civic center somehow in their advertising.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked the board members if the rental fee of the Civic Center would be considered eligible under the guidelines.

Member Hans Townsend stated that he does not think they should be considered.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked if this has been done in the past.

Linda De Marino stated that it has been done but the money came out of a different fund.

Member Hans Townsend stated that he doesn't see that they should be paying for the Civic Center since it is an old established event and its part of this town.

Linda De Marino stated that the Women's Club is going to go to the City Commission a request that the fee be waived and if it

does, they will return the money they were given for the rental fee.

Member Hans Townsend stated that most of their advertising is done in town anyway. He also stated that they are making rules that they can't keep if they keep making exceptions.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they are just guidelines and none of them are written as law. She stated that they can make recommendations on all this and the City Commission is the ones that ultimately make the decision.

Member Hans Townsend stated that he thinks this should be something that is set every year so that the Women's Club doesn't have to pay for the Civic Center.

Member Janice Gray commented that this pageant next year will also be for Miss Centennial. She also mentioned that their application only states advertisements and doesn't specify that it's only local papers.

Linda De Marino stated that at the last meeting Julie Durham stated that the Hatch Sentinel would qualify as out of county advertising.

Member Janice Gray stated that they should include their advertisement with the Fiesta's because they advertise further out than Hatch.

Linda De Marino spoke on behalf of MainStreet. It was mentioned that they are requesting \$15,000. Linda De Marino stated that they are going to have some money left over from the previous year because they received an unexpected discount. She talked about what they are going to spend their money on this year, which included banners, and brackets, and some special events they are planning. She asked that they be considered for a larger amount of money than what they were allotted last year.

Member Hans Townsend asked why they need to spend more money on brackets when there are already brackets on some of the light poles that can be used.

Linda De Marino stated that she is trying to get enough brackets so that there is enough for every light pole. She also stated that some of the brackets are too small and not all of them are double sided.

Bobby Allen questioned why they need to have banners on every

light pole, he thinks that every other one will be sufficient and they can spend the money wiser.

Linda De Marino stated that they are just trying to get brackets on all the light poles so that they can hang banners where they want and not have a shortage of brackets and only on the right side of the street.

Member Hans Townsend stated that he doesn't understand why they need to buy more brackets if Griffin and Associates already bought some. He thinks the money is not getting spent sensibly.

Chairperson Julie Durham moved on to the New Mexico Old Time Fiddlers Association application. No one was present to speak on behalf of the organization. Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they are requesting \$5,575.00.

Member Janice Gray commented that they are planning on an additional summer event.

Chairperson Julie Durham moved on to the Sierra County Arts Council application. No one was present to speak on behalf of the organization. Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they are requesting \$3,078.00.

Member Janice Gray questioned why they have not turned in any quarterly reports in the last year.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that was unfortunately her fault because she told them that they didn't need to do any reporting when they had the meeting talking about not doing the reports. She apologized for the error.

Member Janice Gray asked if there was anyone else that could speak for the Council.

Chairperson Julie Durham said no and that she was just on the advisory board and does not represent the board.

Member Janice Gray asked if there was any of the money spent.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they do have a big stack of invoices that need to be turned in.

Chairperson Julie Durham moved on to the Fiesta board.

Mickey Sallee spoke on behalf of the organization. She stated that they did not use all the funds from last year. She also stated that

they have some trouble getting all their invoices turned in on a timely manner.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked if she thought they would be able to turn in all their invoices by the end of May this year.

Mickey Sallee stated that she did not think they could. She also stated that they got an extension last year and they still missed out on an invoice. She stated that they are working hard this year to get all the invoices in on time.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked the City staff if they feel that they could make any kind of accommodations for them.

City Manager Juan Fuentes stated that they just need to ask for the two week extension.

Member Janice Gray asked if they expected to spend the whole amount of money they were allocated last year and whether they have their Federal IRS Non-Profit form.

Mickey Sallee stated that they expect to spend more than what was allocated to them and that the form from the Secretary of State says that they are in good standing with the Federal and State.

Member Hans Townsend stated that it would be nice if the Fiesta Board and Women's club worked together when it came time for Miss Fiesta for advertising.

Mickey Sallee stated that they wouldn't mind doing that and that this year the Women's Club wasn't going to do Miss Fiesta and last year the Fiesta Board paid for their Civic Center fee. She stated that she didn't want to take away from money that they get from Lodger's Tax since they don't get a lot to begin with.

Member Hans Townsend stated that he feels they should all work together because it is all part of the same event.

Chairperson Julie Durham moved on to the Bountiful Alliance application. She stated that they are requesting \$6,000.

Colleen Davis spoke of behalf of the Organization. She stated that they probably asked for more than they need because she was overwhelmed when she did her research. She wants to expand their customer base from El Paso. She mentioned that they are trying to make some events that go along with some other events in town so that they can get people to stay the night here.

Member Janice Gray clarified that they are trying to schedule events to make people stay the night.

Colleen Davis stated that they are making events to encourage families to come and stay as opposed to just a single person. She stated that they do get a lot of tourists and Foreigners to Farmers Market.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that she encourages this organization to do that because she thinks that El Paso is an underserved market for bringing people here.

Colleen Davis stated that they are also receiving free radio advertising from UTEP in El Paso.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that is a very good point for the other organizations to utilize.

Member Hans Townsend asked about where the money went when they liquidated their kitchen.

Colleen Davis stated that it mostly went to rent and they are planning on using it for scholarships for cooking classes and other cooking opportunities.

Chairperson Julie Durham moved on to the Veterans Memorial Park application. She stated that they are requesting \$11,000.

Bobby Allen and Windy Barnes spoke on behalf of the organization. Bobby Allen stated that they operate this park for the City and they just donate everything they get to the City.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked about how many people sign their log books.

Bobby Allen stated that there were 30,000 to 35,000 people a year and they come in off the highway and as tourists. He stated that they bring in people from the highway with their billboards.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked if they need to make an exception about the amount of advertising that needs to be out of town for them since most of their billboards are in the county but the highway is an interstate.

Bobby Allen stated that is a very important part of their advertising and they get people from all over to come to the park. He also stated that they are in competition with Elephant Butte to

get people to come there.

Chairperson Julie Durham asked if they are only bringing in people for the day or if they are putting heads in beds.

Bobby Allen stated that they are putting heads in beds. He said that it averages about 2-3 nights to a week. He stated that they have brochures for places in town. He stated that they are shipping their brochures to the four quadrant states as well as other places and are quickly running out of them.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that she has no problem supporting their use of the billboards. She stated that the only problem they do have is that they only have \$46,000 to allocate.

Bobby Allen stated that they cut their requested amount down significantly to only cover the bare minimum costs to get people to come stay in town.

Member Hans Townsend asked how their brochures are sent out.

Bobby Allen stated that they mail out and ship the brochures themselves. He said that he believes they are covering more territory than anybody can.

Chairperson Julie Durham and the Board went through the applications and recommended the allocations as follows:

Chamber of Commerce:	\$11,500.00
Elephant Butte Lake State Park:	\$700.00
Geronimo Springs Museum:	\$9,500.00
Women's Club:	\$400.00
Mainstreet:	\$7,900.00
New Mexico Fiddlers Assoc.:	\$2,500.00
Sierra County Arts Council:	\$1,500.00
Fiesta:	\$5,000.00
The Bountiful Alliance:	\$1,000.00
<u>The Veterans Memorial Park:</u>	<u>\$6,000.00</u>
Total allocations:	\$46,000.00

Chairperson Julie Durham asked Linda Sparks about the PR firm and whether they were going to give money to them again this year. She stated that last year they originally had \$78,000.00 to allocate and they voted to spend some of it on the PR Firm. She thought they would be reviewing that on a yearly basis.

Linda Sparks stated that she was not sure about that.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that she has asked the City for information about the Lodger's Tax being paid and reports from the PR firm. She feels that the board should have access to this information. She also stated that she feels they need to use an out of state PR firm. She said that she is bringing it to Linda's attention because she feels that they shouldn't be paying for the PR firm if they do not see justification to be giving the funds to them.

Member Hans moved to recommend the allocations to the City Commission.

Vice Chair Cydney Wilkes Seconded.

Member Janice Grey abstained.

DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION:
MISSING DETAILS FROM
GUIDELINES: Tabled until next meeting.

DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION:
UNFORTUNATE USE OF FILE TYPES
IN APPLICATION E-MAIL: Tabled until next meeting.

DISCUSSION/ACTION: QUARTERLY
MEETING DATES: Tabled until next meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD: Windy Barnes asked about the guidelines and why they were still going to give an organization that is not non-profit the money that they are requesting.

Chairperson Julie Durham stated that they did address that by stating that they do have a fiscal agent with the proper documentation.

Windy Barnes stated that in the past this has happened but the organization was in the process of getting their non-profit paperwork but in this case this year, the organization is not in the process.

Chairperson Julie Durham thanked her for her comment.

Another member of the public commented about the Tourism board and how they received their money, and asked Hans if he has contacted any other publishing company because she feels that he is "screwing" the Chamber and Lodger's Tax.

Member Hans Townsend stated that the amount of money they pay is not what you would normally pay a publisher because he wants the book to be full of articles and pictures. He stated that he has contacted other companies but he stated that they are just in it for the advertising.

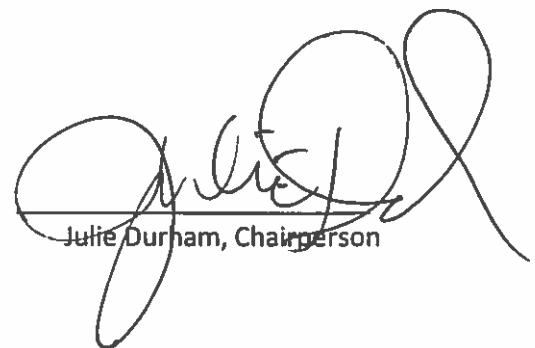
ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Board,

"Member Janice Grey moved to adjourn"

Vice Chair Cydney Wiles Seconded.

Meeting was adjourned.

APPROVAL: Passed and approved this 28th day of March, 2015, on a motion duly made by Cydney. And seconded by Janice, and carried.



Julie Durham, Chairperson

