

**CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
LODGERS TAX ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2025**

REGULAR MEETING

Regular meeting of the Lodgers Tax Advisory Board of the City of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico to be held in the City Commission Chambers, 405 W. Third, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, on Monday, January 27, 2025 at 12:00 pm.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Foerstner.

ROLL CALL:

Jake Foerstner, Chairman
Gina Kelley, Vice-Chairman
Linda DeMarino, Member
Victoria Harrington, Member
Jessica MacKenzie, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Katy Martinez, Deputy City Clerk

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of changing MainStreet application "Redefine" Marketing to Discussion/Update. Vice-Chairman Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Regular Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2025

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve the minutes. Member Harrington seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (3-minute rule applies)

Destiny Mitchell: I know Angela is out. We sent in an application for you guys in December from Pride and one in January for the Sheriff's Posse. I don't know why they are not on the agenda. The Pride event is in June and the Sheriff's Posse is during Fiesta I know your next meeting is not till March My question is could you have a special meeting maybe in February to discuss these 2 applications or do you think there will be enough time in March for us to be able to present them.

Chairman Foerstner: There will be enough time to present them in March. Are you worried about having enough time to fund it?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: It wouldn't get put in front of the city commission till April.

Chairman Foerstner: We moved to the bi-monthly, so we didn't have this. We were doing the special meeting and it was a lot.

Member DeMarino: When you say they sent us applications.

Destiny Mitchell: They we emailed.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: That's probably why.

Destiny Mitchell: I helped them out with it, and I have always emailed them.

Deputy Clerk Martinez: Chairman, Board members I just want to clarify that the clerk's office just recently took over the lodger's tax and we are still trying to figure out the process. We are unaware of these other applications.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I get it. It probably went to Tammy.

Chairman Foerstner: Given that do are you guys ok with having a special meeting?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I'm ok with it I understand. My only concern is with the Pride is that it's in June and don't we have to have everything paid for by the end of May?

Destiny Mitchell: Yes, the main thing was t-shirts that they can give away. They can pay in advance. I don't remember it all exactly. But they are things that could be expended before the deadline.

Member DeMarino: Since we are not doing it now, you just might want to suggest to them that t-shirts be a small portion of what they are doing and not the biggest portion because the whole purpose of lodgers tax is to put heads in beds and t-shirts past out to people who are mostly here are not going to bring more people to that event in the future so just keep that in mind.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Discussion/Update: MainStreet- Desert Ultra Report. Becca Eza

Becca Eza: Good afternoon I forgot to attach these pictures, but these are pictures of the selfie station. I do have the final report that I am going to send to you guys, but it was well received. Before I get started, I was not able to be at the event because of a family emergency. I was still part of all the planning and the pre and post putting together. Specific questions about the event I can get back to you on. I did get a full report from the other planners that were there. It went really well we didn't have quit as many registrants as we hoped for but I have a couple ideas for how we can improve that for next year. We did have a good mix of people mostly from out of town, most of them do bring family with them as well. Next year I want to add in a question on our closing survey on how many family members are coming and how many nights they are staying to get that specific data. We do ask them how much money they spend while they are in town. So, we have some data on that. Overall, it was a successful event especially because we didn't know I wasn't going to be there until last minute. We had a lot of community volunteers, and they took in roles and helped.

Member DeMarino: I would like to thank you for doing a good job ahead of time in organizing that because if you were one of those people who waited till the last minute it would have been a mess, but it was really easy for people to step in and take over so kudos to you.

Becca Eza: For the event there is the same 4 of us that and we write down specifically what we do because there are things that we do to prepare for this event that we don't tell others about necessarily. A couple things I want to mention to you guys as far as this year. We have moved the event to November, it would be November 8th also second Saturday art hop. The first year we did this it was on the day of trick or treat downtown we had a lot of great feedback from runners that said, "wow this is a happening community this is awesome". So having it on second Saturday art hop we are excited about that. A couple of things I want to include with our marketing 3 specific things, one and I don't know how with the May deadline with the lodger's tax funding, but I would really like to advertise this out more. We did advertise off our website. Runners will do destination races. We can get people from across the country that will plan a trip and to come out here and do this. But we need to be marketing to them in the spring as they can plan their race calendar. I am thinking of how we can get that part of our marketing early.

Member DeMarino: if you're putting it in a magazine and they print out that magazine and the magazine goes for over the course of time as long as it's printed, we can see it, there is a tear sheet I don't see there being a problem. There is going to be times if there hasn't been already that the event is going to be after the advertising as far as fiscal years. I don't see this as being a problem.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: You can do application just for that.

Becca Eza: Ok that is what I was wondering if it is ok if I do 2 separate applications.

Chairman Foerster: Yes.

Member DeMarino: Lots of them do 2 separate applications.

Becca Eza: I will come back to you guys for that.

Member DeMarino: Perfect.

Becca Eza: The second thing is advertising in the military bases. Young people who are active looking for things to do. I think that next year we will ask for funding to do direct marketing there. The third thing I got to figure out how to do this, but we had some feedback on sending flyers to some of these racers in Denver and Boulder it's a day's drive even with our Facebook marketing I don't know if we have targeted those areas. That's another very active group that's not far away.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Those event organizers if you sent them stuff would you, they put it out?

Becca Eza: I think so I know that other places do that.

Member DeMarino: I mean you guys can put theirs out for the following year.

Becca Eza: Right. I thought send out flyers let them, and they can put them in swag bags. Those are the things I would like to include next year and set a goal of having 30 to 40 more runners.

Member DeMarino: I wonder if there is a possibility if we were doing a small sponsorship from the Desert Ultra of those Ultra Marathons then we would get in their printed material, on their websites and then we would probably be more likely for them to allow us to pass out stuff.

Vice- Chairman Kelley: That is true. That is a good idea. I'm sure it wouldn't cost much.

Member Mackenzie: Well then maybe they can sponsor ours too.

Member Harrington: Are you guys reusing the selfie station

Becca Eza: Yes. Defiantly. Change the year.

Member Harrington: Where is it at now? It's so cool.

Becca Eza: I am not sure where it's being stored. It did get used on Thanksgiving at the Brewery. They put it up as the backdrop for the potluck. It's probably in storage.

Member Harrington: I think this is important since things are so social. That everyone will want to post their picture and going to see that.

Becca: Yeah. From what I heard from John there were a lot of pictures.

Chairman: Do you have off the top of your head how the turnout was this year compared to last year.

Becca: Last year we had like 80 something so it was slightly lower. It's still within that same range 70-90.

Chairman: Lodger's Tax spent last year vs this years.

Becca: About the same. The only difference was the selfie station. Everything else was the same thing that we asked for last year. We did ask for more money for photographers because we hired professional photographers. They did fantastic photos which are pre developed on their website as well that we could use in any marketing that we might have or anything that we have going on. They did take some great images. Otherwise, I think everything was pretty similar. Next year I would expect it to be similar with maybe an addition of the military base.

Vice Chairman Kelley: You're not going to need to buy another selfie station you can target that.

Becca Eza: Yes.

Vice Chairman Kelley: I can give you all the people to talk to for the military bases.

Chairman Foerstner: Is this all you need 195 total is not much. I mean it goes a long way, but you can spend double that and see triple the results. You would have to do it all over the country. You're not just targeting local, are you?

Becca Eza: We did think El Paso and those I don't know that those are going to the Denver area.

Chairman Foerster: Try putting it out further and spend a little more. It is a lot of bang for your buck on social media. That would be my recommendation.

Member DeMarino: I see on the request for reimbursement for the sentinel at \$353 but I notice that there is a \$5 late fee on here. I'm not really sure lodgers' tax should pay for late fees.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: No, we shouldn't.

Becca Eza: That was a mail issue they sent the bill to the wrong.

Member DeMarino: We get it. I'm just requesting that be taken off there. Its only \$5 but.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: It's the principal.

Member DeMarino: Right can't make a habit of it.

Vice-Chairman DeMarino: Great report super thorough.

b. Discussion/Update: MainStreet Application – "Redefine" Marketing Campaign. Becca Eza

Becca Eza: Redefine Marketing Campaign is our November meeting you guys gave funding for MainStreet. We are putting out digital ads, print ads, High end magazines

and digital billboards going out across the region. Some of those have already gone out on to print. The billboard has been submitted and they are going to be up. The one in Albuquerque will be up in February.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: The one in Las Cruces will be up in March and El Paso in April.

Chairman Foerstner: Do you have pictures.

Vice Chairman Kelley: I can show them to you. The digital billboards we have about 8 rotating images. It's really good work. I'll show you.

Member DeMarino: The website is up and she's working on that. Also, some of the filming and photography for the commercial has been done. There's still some more just because of the time of the year. We really need to get some spring photographs and filling so that is in progress as well.

Becca Eza: Its moving along well everything is in progress and out. Depending on how things go in the spring we may approach you guys for a bit more funding to be able to continue some more ads through the summer and fall. We will be reassessing that after May.

Chairman Foerstner: Thank you, Becca.

c. Discussion/Action: Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway – Interactive Digital 3D Trail Map. Gina Kelley

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Especially this time of the year every day at the visitor center everybody asks for trails. Since we do not have a good trail map Kim Skinner and I had a meeting with Chris Newton from Go New Mexico. They build websites for trails. We do not want a whole new website for trails but what they can do is build us pages that we can embed on the website on the tourism website, on the Geronimo trail website, and anybody else who wants these maps.

Chairman Foerstner: Is that strictly hiking or will it contain off road?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Its hiking, off roading, biking the whole thing. What we can do is collect information from all the different trails around because this would include everything in the county. We are asking for T or C Lodger's tax because everyone would have to stay here. It cost \$6500.00 and it's responsive, it's interactive and we can also download PDFs. I think there's a need for it because, like I said every day at the visitor's center, we get to hear people ask for trail information. If we could have something to refer them to that is interactive while they can use while they are out walking, it could be a good thing to have for people.

Chairman Foerstner: The map information are they getting it from tourist or where are they getting from?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Here is their map that they have of the Dinoland Trail on of the many out in Utah. That's from their website. It's DinolandTrails.com. What we do is we feed them the information. It will have the level of difficulty, elevation all of those things. It can be topographical it can be detailed as far as parking areas and all that. It's a map that they build for us. We provide the information. It's going to be a lot of work for me.

Chairman Foerstner: I know there are apps that have all that.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Yes, there are apps.

Chairman Foerstner: I can't remember the name of the one I use.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Someone was in the other day showing me OnX.

Chairman Foerstner: I use Gaya.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: This is just something that we thought we would do. Another way that we can start doing some more market for outdoor recreation. That's one thing we get a lot of people asking us to do here in town. Some people said that we should be spending more time and effort away from the hot springs and doing more recreational. Of course, hot springs are our bread and butter, but recreation gets them further out. But again, if they are going to stay, they are going to stay here for the most part.

Member Mackenzie: Do the maps update or do you have to pay a maintenance fee annually or do you just have to have it re-done every couple years.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: We would just redo it every couple years. Chris works really well with us, and he said basically just send me updates and I'll just update them for you.

Member Mackenzie: Who is he?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Chris Newton from GO New Mexico

Chairman Foerstner: The trails he would include are the ones you have to send him, or he is going to do research to find them.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: No, I'll be the one to send him all the information.

Chairman Foerstner: Where do you get the trails information then?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Well, I can pull them right offline from the forest service, BLM, BOR.

Chairman Foerstner: Couldn't we just put that on the website? I'm just confused on why we need it. If we already have them on those websites.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I guess we could. I thought it would be good to be in one place

Chairman Foerstner: So, he is going to take all the different websites and put them on the site.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I am going to collect all the information and then he will build it out. But if you rather, do it that way, I am okay with it.

Chairman Foerstner: I am not familiar with where you are pulling the maps from, so I just know I use those apps and everybody shares what they went on and leave notes and pictures. It's really good they leave notes saying, "hey don't go on this one this river is washed out or whatever". So those are kind of good.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Okay, well maybe that is a better way to go then we don't have to spend any money on then.

Chairman Foerstner: Might be I don't want to put the close on this. I'm just saying that's what I use because the app is like constantly live, and all the users are updating it. Those apps are good I know people have to download the app though. There is a liability in putting it in website also because if you don't maintain it, you have tourist getting trapped. Remember those ladies that disappeared Riverbend was the last place they were at.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: If you want, we can table this and reconsider.

Chairman Foerstner: I am just bringing up options and other things. I definitely like interactive, and those apps are good because people all share trails.

Member DeMarino: I'm thinking we should table it and then take the opportunity during that time to go on their website and see what it looks like and how it works as compared to hitting different buttons on BLM or BOR and seeing if it's worth it to go with him or if we could hire someone locally to create a page and maintain a page.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Personally, I would prefer a printed map I could hand people because that what I get.

Member Harrington: I have a question, since it is interactive is there is a way to save a spot, you really like or drop a pin?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I do not know the answer to that.

Member Harrington: I know that is why I like the OnX app. I pin my favorite spots then I am able to go back.

Chairman Foerstner: Yes, tourist can share all of users do that.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Ok that's good not that I don't want to do the work but. Is it OnX.

Chairman Foerstner: I use Gaia.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Thank you, guys. It was just something that we thought about just because of the demand we have.

Member DeMarino made a motion to table to the Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway for the Interactive 3D Trail Map. Member MacKenzie seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

d. Discussion/Action: Sierra County Arts Council- Website Updates and Maintenance. Christine Auten

Christine Auten presented the Sierra County Arts Council application for website updates and maintenance.

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve the amended amount of \$564.62 to Sierra County Arts Council for the Website Updates and Maintenance. Member Harrington seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- e. Discussion/Action: Sierra County Rock and Gem Society- T or C Rock and Gem Show. Megan Holden

Megan Holden presented the Sierra County Rock and Gem Society application for T or C Rock and Gem Show.

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve a total of \$3450.00 with the understanding that the tables will be owned by the city to the Sierra County Rock and Gem Society for the T or C Rock and Gem Show. Member MacKenzie seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- f. Discussion/Action: Selection of 6 Lodging facilities for the City Lodgers Tax Audit. Deputy City Clerk Martinez

Deputy Clerk Martinez: The city is required to do an Annual Audit of 3 lodging establishments. In the past, the city staff has chosen the entities that would be audited. This year our Auditors have requested for the lodger tax board make those selections. Since the audit was not performed last year, they are requiring six lodging establishments and these are included in your packets. It has to be different once and to bring everything up to compliance. The purpose of the audit is to determine the lodging establishments are maintaining adequate records of occupancy taxes collected determinant of the city as required by law. Establishments are in your packet.

Chairman Jake Foerstner: So, it cannot be the three you did Holiday Inn, Comfort Inn, and Sierra RV Park,

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I was going to cut up pieces of paper and put them in a bowl then I forgot.

Member Mackenzie: I think we could probably count how many there are and then use the phone to randomly select because I do not know if there is a fair way of doing this.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Good idea.

Chairman Jake Foerstner: Well, I would like to mention, a while back we got numbers on what was coming in and the one thing that surprised me was the Armendariz/ Latter Ranch the number that were on that report were extremely low compared to what they get per night.

Member Harrington: What page are you on because I do not see that?

Chairman Foerstner: Oh, sorry I was on my county boards.

Deputy Clerk Martinez: Is the 29 subtract the 3?

Member Mackenzie: That are closed?

Deputy Clerk Martinez: You would take out Ceilo Vista RV Park, Holiday Inn and Comfort Inn.

Member DeMarino: 26 total

Member Harrington: How many are we selecting?

Deputy Clerk Martinez: 6

Vice-Chairman Foerstner: What involved in the audit?

Deputy Clerk Martinez: My apologies, I'm not sure this is the first year our office has dealt with this.

Vice-Chairman Foerstner: The actually audit itself what do they ask the properties to do? Just provide reports?

Member MacKenzie: This is confusing me.

Member Harrington: I used random.org and member MacKenzie used the random number generator, so I got 3 and she got 3.

Member MacKenzie: We did random numbers went down the list and we got Black Stone, Glamp Camp, Fire Water, Travel Lodge, Riverside Retreat Hot Springs Llc and Chris Sisney.

Member MacKenzie made a motion to approve the Selection of the following 6 Lodging facilities Black Stone, Glamp Camp, Fire Water, Travel Lodge, Riverside Retreat Hot Springs Llc and Chris Sisney for the City Lodgers Tax audit. Member DeMarino seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Special meeting in February.

Member DeMarino: Yes, if we are going to schedule a special meeting in February.

Chairman Foerstner: We need to make sure those are received. If we receive them, I'm ok with it.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Katy, do you have them?

Deputy Clerk Martinez: I don't at the moment. I will email Destiny once we are done here to let her know the date and let her know to have them in prior to that date.

Member DeMarino: Can't we do the 3rd?

Deputy Clerk Martinez: I have to have fifteen days.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: So that will be the 10th or the 17th.

Member Harrington: The 17th will be President's Day.

Deputy Clerk Martinez: We will be closed on the 17th for President's Day

Chairman Foerstner: Can't do the 10th

Deputy Clerk Martínez: So, the 24th?

Member Mackenzie: So, we are doing February 24 and March 24th.

Board Scheduled a special meeting on February 24, 2025, and a regular meeting on March 24, 2025.

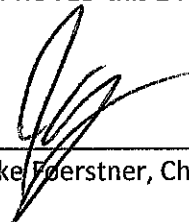
6. COMMENTS FROM STAFF

There were no comments from the staff at this time.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Foerstner adjourned the meeting at 12:49pm.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 24th day of February 2025.



Jake Foerstner, Chairman