

**CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
LODGERS TAX ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 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, May 27, 2025 at 1:30 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 Clerk

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve the agenda. Member MacKenzie seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 24, 2025

Vice Chairman Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes. Member Harrington seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Windy Barnes: I have an application for the Veterans Memorial Wall for the billboard we didn't get in for to add to the agenda but ill take it to the clerk's office to get added for the next meeting.

Destiny Mitchell: The commission can put something on the agenda and approve before the agenda. Is lodgers' tax not allowed to do that? For example, in this instance jack could make a motion that you look at this application and add it to the agenda. Are you not allowed to do that in this kind of a setting?

Member DeMarino: You are always allowed. We are an advisory board, however, is kind of circumvents the process. Which is not necessarily a kosher to most advisory board members.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: But legally open meetings act doesn't it have to be on the agenda?

Member DeMarino: She is talking about putting it on the City Commission agenda.

Destiny Mitchell: No, I'm talking about putting it on your agenda.

Deputy Martinez: You can't because it's not included in the packet. You have to have the publication because it is an action item.

Member DeMarino: You can't because the whole spirit is transparency and you don't sneak things into an agenda without the public knowing.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Discussion/Update: Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Report- National Park Journal Advertising.

Gina Kelley: This was for the National Park Journal, it was pretty expensive. It got us some play, but it wasn't what I had hoped. I have sense talked to the provider and said I will not be doing a print ad next year because that was \$4,500. This was print, digital, and online. They had really good results from when they posted the Facebook post, but it linked back to their page not ours. Which didn't do us much good. I might come back to them next year with a different idea just for digital. I'm just not going to spend that money again.

b. Discussion/Update: Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Report- Hot Springs Brochure.

Gina Kelley: This is the brochure. They just got printed. We will be sending them out we probably have enough to last a year. We got 15,000 actually so that should last us for the year.

c. Discussion/Update: Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Report- Website Hosting and Maintenance.

Gina Kelley: I provided the google analytics for that it's in your packet.

d. Discussion/Action: Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Application- Website Hosting and Maintenance

Gina Kelley: This is for the same thing we did last year. It's the same amount of money, \$600 will be for the year for hosting and maintenance.

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve a total of \$600 to the Geronimo Trail Scenic ByWay for Website Hosting and Maintenance. Member MacKenzie seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

e. Discussion/Action: MainStreet Tor C Application- Desert Ultra 2025

Becca Eza MainStreet Director: This will be our fifth annual event this year. We moved from the end of October to November 8th, which also happens to be second Saturday Art Hop. It will be a nice time to show case town to people that come in for it. A couple of months ago you approved funding for Ultra Magazine. Today I'm presenting the rest of what we are asking for the event this fall. We have a few different things that we are asking for this year. We increased the Facebook promotion from \$200 to \$500 because it seems like an easy way to get it out to a broader audience. We are coming to you earlier this to ask for this money so we can start broadcasting it nationally on Facebook and then in the fall we

will promote regionally for people that sign up at the last minute. Race flyers are something new that we have added. We have been seeing from a lot of other races they have really nice, printed flyers. We are hoping to get some out to running stores, outfitters and some other races where they put them in swag bags.

Member Mackenzie: That seems like a low amount is that going to cover doing that?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: It doesn't much to print flyers.

Becca Eza MainStreet Director: Yes, printing flyers isn't too much. We don't want to go overboard with it either this year. We want to see how it goes to start out with. The Ultra Running Magazine we had an agreement with them to have 3 ads in 3 of their issues and we asked for funding for the first 2 because of the fiscal year this one would be for the final ad in the August and September issue. The race photography that amount increased slightly because our photographers are charging more due to rising cost. Something new that we are asking for this year is funding to advertise on the military bases. This will be on bowling monitors. It is a lot less expensive at Holloman than at Fort Bliss to advertise but I looked to pick out something. There are a lot of ways you can do it, but we figured bowling monitors are likely to be more active. Advertising for 3 months at Holloman on bowling monitors plus movie theater previews and 1 month of bowling monitors at Fort Bliss. That will be very easy to track because when people sign up for the race, we get basic demographics on where they are from, age and hometown. If you approve us for that funding this year, we will take a look and see how more people we get from the bases and determine if that's worth while going forward.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Just to let everyone know when she says the bowling alley monitors. You're talking about bowling alleys that have 60 or 70 monitors and every one of those bowling lanes has a monitor above it.

Becca Eza MainStreet Director: My understanding the ones that aren't being used are then cycling through 10 seconds of ads at a time.

Member Mackenzie: Do you have an ad prepared or who is designing it?

Becca Eza MainStreet Director: No that is part of the graphic design which Mo is probably going to do. It will be the same specs for both the bowling alley ads and the movie theater previews.

Member DeMarino: Is it just one image that you can out up there?

Becca Eza MainStreet Director: I think so. I think it is just one ad.

Member DeMarino: That one ad is it only going to focus on the Desert Ultra or you going to incorporate any other things.

Becca Eza MainStreet Director: A lot of our ads have a picture of a hot tub in it as well to show case that its part of what people can experience when they come. Typically, our ads will have a couple pictures of running in the trails and then have a hot springs image on there.

Member DeMarino: I really like that you are doing it on the same weekend as Second Saturday Art Hop.

Member DeMarino: I want to disclose that this is an application by MainStreet T or C. Gina, and I are on the board how we will benefit in no way.

Member Mackenzie made a motion to approve a total of \$6,965 to the MainStreet T or C for the T or C Desert Ultra. Member DeMarino seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

f. Discussion/Action: MainStreet T or C and T or C Fiesta Application- Fiesta Reboot

Destiny Mitchell: I will have our final report on Fiesta and all the wonderful things that worked advertising wise at your July meeting. The Fiesta Committee had discussed possibly doing something year-round for Fiesta 75th including fundraisers happening in the Fall and Winter as opposed to trying to fundraise a couple of months before the event. The committee came up with the idea of doing kind of like a reboot or a relaunch in August. The City Commissioners had originally agreed to put on the game show they did not. The first one, Fiesta, did but they would like to continue to do another one in August and a possible one at the end of the year with better advertising, so we have more contestants and people. We don't want to do a lot of printed stuff, but we want to get our basics flyers and posters out there. We have a lot of success with our digital ads this year for Fiesta. Our radio advertisement was amazing. Our radio ads are the only reason why we got a carnival this year. Somebody heard it on the radio at the beginning of April and said I want to bring my carnival there. About 2 to 3 weeks before Fiesta I had people calling me from Phoenix, Tucson, Mesa, El Paso, and Albuquerque saying they saw our ads on Facebook which I don't know how that happened because we did not advertise on Facebook. I think when we went with the digital ads with El Paso Times and Albuquerque Journal, that kind of stuff they incorporated into their social media. It was something I wasn't expecting but it really did make a difference, I think, to our advertising. For this part I was thinking if we could get that digital advertising blasting out through the summer in the next 3 months, we could possibly get more people from out of town. Although I am kind of thinking this is going to be more of a local thing, we would like to get it advertised on social media. We would like to bring back Adams Radio, I don't know if you guys saw them during Fiesta. They were fantastic. They were doing their camper give away. They have a quarterly sales thing that they do. They were amazed by their live broadcast they got interviews with a lot of people including Steve Stucker. They are great people to work with, they have a great team; great reach, they have different stations that they broadcast on. We were talking with the city manager Gary Whitehead who wants to bring back these kinds of street fests. He wants to do them on a quarterly basis. He wants to work with MainStreet, Chambers and so forth. He invasions the closing off of McAdoo and Healing Water Plaza area and having a band, a stage and tents. Having a street-block party. This is a promotional thing its brand new in the works, nothing has been laid down but I was thinking that this kind of mini-Fiesta could be a trail run for it where we could see how it works. This year's Fiesta vendors and food trucks was out of this world it was amazing, I think. Victoria you where there how did you do on sales.

Member Harrington: I felt like I did good because I was in a good location but I felt bad for the people behind me. I would have a bunch of people and I would look behind me and they were just staring at me and they had no one. If you are walking down the street you have to go all the way to the end and if you have kids, you bolt forward because the kids don't care about the stuff behind or you had to go all the way back down behind them. That was the only thing I thought with that set up, maybe have it to where it is a little more open so that you are not in front of people.

Destiny Mitchell: We actually discussed that on our vendor survey.

Member Harrington: They only other feedback I had was a lot of people that where there for the music said that all they heard was generators because all the food trucks where right by the music. People will walk to food so maybe flip flop them and up the vendors by the alcohol and the food on the other side. People will walk to the food and they will stumble to us and spend their money.

Destiny Mitchell: That's a great idea. We are in negotiation with the City to upgrade all of the electrical downtown because that was my problem I had 10 food trucks that needed the 220 plug and I only had 4 220 plugs. I thought there was more and there aren't so we had to do some last-minute scrabbling and move 3 or 4 food trucks where the poles were. Hopefully that will get strained out next year and the vending I like the whole idea of opening it up and or moving so there are not double rows. I think if we

could get 4 really good food trucks and 15 to 20 decent vendors, we could do a mini-Fiesta. We could raise some funds and generate support. We could do Friday night we do the game show, Saturday morning instead a parade we do a junk boat parade. We have some ideas. Basically, what we are doing is last minute come in and ask for anything that you guys would be willing to give us for this event. I think we were allotted \$56,000 for the 75th Fiesta Anniversary and we expended \$52,000 I believe. We spent just about all of it. It was last minute a band pulled out. This is what are looking at and also trying to gear up and generate more support and volunteers for the future.

Member Harrington: For the dates I would not do September, everyone is going to be at the lake. It's the last hooray out there.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Its Labor Day weekend, isn't it?

Destiny Mitchell: Labor Day weekend is actually August 31st and September 1st.

Member Harrington: I think most people will go on the September just because its typically in September.

Destiny Mitchell: I was looking at August 22 through the 23 the weekend before Labor Day that way people haven't spent all their money on Labor Day weekend and they still have some to flow. I know we don't want to do it Labor Day weekend. September 5th and 6th is Art Hop. I would love to team it up with that as well. As an option I put 12th and 13th of September because I didn't know if there was something going on for Second Saturday Art Hop. I didn't want to compete. Those are the dates we are open and flexible and I am welcome to your feedback.

Member DeMarino: Is this a 1-time thing?

Destiny Mitchell: This one is a trail run.

Member DeMarino: Is it 1 night?

Destiny Mitchell: No, we would like it to be Friday night and all-day Saturday. The game show on Friday night and the street dance on Saturday night. Kind of like we did for Fiesta but instead of trying to book stuff on Sunday just have the street dance go till 10 or 11 on Saturday night but it starts on Friday night.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Art Hop is on the 13th.

Destiny Mitchell: Ok. It's a weird month so that's why I included the 12th and the 13th because that's the Art Hop night. This is a trail run if this works out pretty well, I would like to do it again late November, early December. Maybe team it up with the holiday sing along, old fashion Christmas. One thing I noticed was having Fiesta, Rodeo the Film Festival that weekend I know it was a lot but a lot of people came for a lot of different things and I think that really gets our name out there. We have talked about this before how when cross promote and you have events that complement each other. I'm all about anything we can do with Fiesta. Starting a whole new thing is hard but if you can partner and pig back with other things that are already happening, we are willing to do that.

Member DeMarino: Basically, what I see is your looking for \$6,200 because one of those is a tent.

Destiny Mitchell: The tent that was a Rolf Hechler and Gary Whitehead idea. They want a commercial tent. They tent that we have are not commercial.

Member DeMarino: Right, they have the poles that go along the ground and people are tripping over those. I get all that. For the event itself it's like \$6,200 I think we need to look at it in that context.

Destiny Mitchell: I'm ok with the whole tent coming out thing. That was a last-minute throw in of it's something that needs to happen it doesn't have to happen for this event and it doesn't have to be given to Fiesta.

Member MacKenzie: You say the majority if your printing cost will be primarily for local distribution.

Destiny Mitchell: Yes, that is a full disclosure. We are printing out early this year we went to chambers of commerce and visitor's centers all across New Mexico. I dropped off a hole case in Kingmen Arizona. It's a lot of work and I don't think it brought the return that we needed. That is why instead of asking for massive amount of printed stuff that I don't have the ability to distribute I'm looking for things that we can put up in our shop windows. So, when people come through on the weekends heading out to the lake, they can see a 20x40 poster that says Fiesta Reboot this weekend and be that draw.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I don't know why you're calling it a Fiesta Reboot.

Destiny Mitchell: I don't know what to call it. We thought about Mini Fiesta, Fiesta 2.0, Fiesta in August or Fall Fiesta.

Member DeMarino: Fall Fiesta sounds great.

Member Harrington: Is it going to be on one street?

Destiny Mitchell: We know it can't go on Main or Date Street.

Member Harrington: If you call it a street party people will come out.

Destiny Mitchell: We were thinking a McAdoo or Sims. All the vendors where on Sims for Fiesta and that was ok except, we had the city hall offices and the bank open so if we move everything to McAdoo, we can shut that street down anytime it's a city street and we can put whatever we want on it. I'm thinking we can do that and Healing Waters Plaza you have this great location that is out of the way.

Member Harrington: Krab Kingz is going to be here the 13th because that is my 5-year anniversary and we are doing a party that day as well. They are the one food truck that advertise a lot. They always cross promote everything that is going on in town they cross promote without even being asked to.

Destiny Mitchell: That is definitely something to take into consideration.

Member Harrington: Morning Stars Anniversary is that week also so I can see if they want to join.

Destiny Mitchell: That would be good. You are right there we have the other side of the Healing Waters Plaza which is directly on the back of your business. People have requested the Famous JJ place that had the gyro and the Snack Smoke Shack that has the Philly sandwiches. We had a great selection I know we can get the food. I'm pretty sure we can get the merchants. We can find the bands and again not asking for a reimbursement for that Fiesta would cover that. Being able to put something on but do it professionally and do it correctly and not just put out flyers the week before on Facebook. We learned the hard way that does not help.

Member DeMarino: Is this a Fundraiser or is this an event? If it's both, how do you expect to make money for Fiesta?

Destiny Mitchell: I would say it is more of a promotional event as opposed to necessarily a fundraiser. I know that we will be making some money on it selling vendor spots and food truck spots. I see it as more of a breaking even promotional thing as opposed to gathering a whole bunch of money out of it. We were thinking about relaunching that 75 for 75 for that. We also had to put in a second order for T-Shirts for people wanting to buy them. We gave away all the lodgers tax shirts and they were such a

great design we had people tell us they would pay us \$25 for one. We are going to do a reprint from our budget and sell them.

Member DeMarino: I think we need more things of course.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I would shoot for the mid-September date. The nice thing about that is we all know that everybody in New Mexico has events all throughout October so it will probably be easier to get the food trucks.

Member Harrington: if you do that and I will tell Krab Kingz to move to that street. We were just doing it so there would be a food option but if there are food options, I would tell them to move over there.

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve a total of \$10,500 to the MainStreet T or C and Fiesta T or C for T or c Annual Fiesta 75 years reboot. Member MacKenzie seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

g. Discussion/Update: Sierra County Arts Council Report- Ongoing Marketing to Promote Sierra County and T or C as an Arts Destination.

Christien Auten: We didn't have the Field Guide when I submitted the report but I have it now so I brought it for you guys to see. That is the biggest item we had and of course our email server that we use and our website maintenance for Ruwana and the website domain renewal.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Do you have the analytics?

Christine Auten: I attached them to the application.

Member DeMarino: The logo there is a design guideline packet that indicated there should be white space all around. Do you guys have the design guidelines?

Christine Auten: I don't.

Member DeMarino: I will send it to you.

Christine Auten: ok, thank you for pointing that out.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Do you know what your stats are on the constant contact?

Christine Auten: I don't have those stats but I can get them to you. It's not great, I'll be honest our open rate isn't great. It's one of the things that we are addressing with some redesign. Rebecca has been using an old format and it looks the same for every email. We are going to try and introduce some graphics and pictures. We are trying to help with our opening rates it's probably like 3% and the click-through is 1% so it's not great, I'll be honest about that. That's one of those things that we definitely need to look at. I put that in our things we would like to change.

h. Discussion/Action: Sierra County Arts Council Application- Ongoing Marketing to Promote Sierra County and T or C as an Arts Destination.

Christine Auten: This is for the full year. We lumped it into one because it's not really projects based its more of just our on-going marketing. The things in here I know would be question would be the 3-year renewal for our website hosting. When it was originally signed up for there were options you could do

the 3-year, 1 year or you can do monthly. The 3 year is cheaper so who ever set it up chose that option and its coming due in February. I realized that goes outside of our fiscal year.

Member DeMarino: So, it would be \$100 for a year?

Christine Auten: I believe so. If we can't do the extra \$200, should I try and change that registration to yearly instead of every 3 years.

Chairman Foerstner: How did they use to pay for it?

Christine Auten: I don't know.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: They use to come to us. I would say just change it so your year starts with the fiscal year.

Christine Auten: You will see down further in the list there is a complete website re-design which will address that issue.

Member DeMarino: Its really only March, April, May, and June so it's only 4 months if it renews in February.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: But that would mean July, August, September, October, November, December, January and February. This is for this fiscal year.

Member DeMarino: I get that but where they already paid this fiscal year? When does it end?

Vice-Chairman Kelley: February 20th.

Member DeMarino: So, they are already paid through next February.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: Is that True?

Christine Auten: Yes.

Member DeMarino: Its 4 months so it wouldn't be the full \$100. Its part of a bigger application so you can put it in there everything is something. But I think that's all we can do.

Member Harrington: Who do you have taken the photos for the guide?

Christien Auten: They are pictures that had been taken at other events throughout the years.

Member Harrington: Looking at these pictures they are not good.

Member DeMarino: Do you want to add a photographer to this ask?

Christine Auten: That would be awesome. We don't really know of one.

Member DeMarino: I can refer some to you. It seems like photographers run \$800 to \$900 a day.

Christien Auten: It's really expensive to hire a photographer.

Member Mackenzie: So, you want to add 2 days of photography?

Member DeMarino: Only 1 day. If they do one art hop and during the day go to different galleries they should have plenty of pictures.

Christine Auten: The printing is not accurate either we chose blue and it looks purple.

Member DeMarino: Another suggestion is in the past we have used hot springs cool art instead of small-town big art. That way you can tie in the hot springs. You don't have to its just a thought.

Christine Auten: With that ad you get the business listing and 2 calendar event listing. I'm taking the suggestion for our social media because we do need to reach further with our social media ads just posting something for local followers is not going to do it. The big thing is the website redesign because it was 6 years ago when the website was last designed and it had different people add and subtract things over the years and they have made it difficult to load. We do need to relook at everything and again that is under Ruwana suggestion as well.

Member DeMarino made a motion to approve adjusted amount of \$9825 and an additional amount of \$900 for photography for a total of \$10725 to the Sierra County Arts Council for Ongoing Marketing to Promote Sierra County and T or C as an Arts Destination. Member MacKenzie seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

i. Discussion/Update: Sierra County Arts Council Report- Artist of Sierra Country Studio Tour.

Christine Auten: We went through the whole visitor sign ins to show. We had more out of town pins then we thought we would. The number are small from each town but it still for our first year it shows that we reached out. We really credit our social media for that. Our graphic designer was really good so she was able to do quite a bit of stuff that was very engaging. We learned we didn't have enough people and we need to be able to pay some more designers to get us better work. We also needed more volunteers especially for follow up and clean up. As you guys now any physical sign in sheet that you have to be logged in and we have 27 of them. It's a daunting task trying to decipher hand writing. It took us a while but we got it done.

j. Discussion/Action: Sierra County Arts Council Application- Artist of Sierra County Studio Tour.

Christine Auten: We are asking about the same amount that we were awarded last year. Last year we asked for some signage that we can reuse. We had a lot of things last year that we are going to reuse. So, we don't need to ask for them again. One of the things on here is something that we wanted to do last year but didn't have the designer and manpower to do and that's the tour stop passbook. That is the main new thing on here and also some extra money for designers.

Member MacKenzie: Can you tell us about the passport book.

Christien Auten: It's as passport a lot of events us them that have lots of stops. So, each studio would be a tour stop, and they would have a stamp that would stamp the books with. When they collect a certain amount of tour stops, they will get a flight of beer at the brewery or gets a couple of glasses of wine at the Love Shack something like that. The idea is that would sell ads in the back of the passbook.

Vice-Chairman Kelley What you mean sell ads for it?

Christine Auten: Sell ads to pay for the incentives not the book itself.

Member DeMarino: You can't bring in 2 sources of income for the same thing.

Christine Auten: We can take that out. That was just thing to pay for the incentives.

Member DeMarino: How many booklets?

Christine Auten: We have 250 on here. It wouldn't cover everyone that came but they are expensive so I didn't want to push too much money on to that. We just wanted to have every tour stop and possibly a

listing of restaurants or galleries in the back for people to carry around with them. Last year all we had was the map and it just had the tour stops on it. This year we are hoping in addition to that to have this extra kind of collector's idea with it.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: I don't see it on here I might be missing it but what's the date of the event?

Christine Auten: Its November 1st and 2nd.

Member DeMarino; Who is Chaychi creations?

Christine Auten: That is Reana Sevnanan and Ali Reza. Reana is a really good designer she did all of our social media.

Member DeMarino: What are pop-up banners?

Christine Auten: They are the vinyl banners that you can carry around and pop them up so you can move them around and use them in different places. Our plan is doing them evergreen meaning we can use them again.

Member DeMarino: As much as I love little passports booklets, I just don't see it putting heads in beds the booklet itself. It's a cute addition to the thing but they are not distributed ahead of time, they are not going to bring anyone to the event.

Vice-Chairman Kelley: That way they can sell advertising for it.

Member DeMarino: You guys can sell advertising for it.

Christine Auten: That's good feedback thank you.

Member DeMarino: Are there calendar listings that you need to pay for?

Christine Auten: Yes, we will get a calendar listing. We didn't have one last year it was one of the things that fell through the cracks because we didn't have the personal. In the report that I turned in a month after the event I have pictures of where we posted posters in Santa Fe, Toas and all-around New Mexico. We had people going out and traveling we would give them a box and have them distribute it.

Member DeMarino: Is there a reason why you don't do it on a Second Saturday Art Hop?

Christine Auten: To keep it separate. There are other events at night with it we do mixers and meet ups. The galleries also reported higher traffic. It gives them an extra weekend of high traffic.

Member DeMarino: I get that but there is no way of telling what it would have been if you would have done it the other way.

Christine Auten: We just prefer to keep it separate.

Member MacKenzie made a motion to approve the adjusted amount of \$5,710 removing the Passport books to the Sierra County Arts Council for the Artis of Sierra County Studio Tour. Member Harrington seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

There were no comments from the board at this time.

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.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 23th day of JUNE 2025.



Jake Foerstner, Chairman