



**Lodgers Tax Strategic Planning Meeting**  
El Morro Events Center, February 12, 2019, 11:00am

**Meeting called to order at 11:20am**

Committee Members Present: Yogash Kumar, Anna Connell, Jeremy Boucher

Staff in attendance: Jennifer Lazarz

Not present: Steven Harper, Cindy Tanner

Discussion overseen/led by: Bill Lee, Chamber of Commerce

**Expectations: What is Tourism?**

- Tourism is comprised of individuals and families- travelers coming from at least 75 miles outside of Gallup
- Events that are unique to our area that create quality of life but also appeal to drawing tourists from outside the area
- Economic Development and driver- hospitality and tourism is 20 percent of the workforce in McKinley County (statistic from NM Hospitality Association)

**What does Lodgers Tax Comprise:** Lodgers tax allocation is 60% events, facilities, and attractions, 40% is marketing/advertising/promotion

**What is positive and making a difference?**

- Gallup is on the map- we are getting noticed
- Transparent and responsible allocation of funds- we needed a CVB/DMO to supervise the funding for the best interests
- Our focus on events has been good for a quality of life
- Tourism is bringing the community together
- The tourism efforts have been expanding overall knowledge about what is going on and there is more interaction between event promoters themselves
- Social media plan
- Perception shift due to strategic focus in marketing
- Relationship building- state, regional, national, international
- Educating elected officials on importance of all hospitality pieces working hand-in-hand
  - Beer wine licenses for restaurants, tap room, microbrewery
- Education on outside marketing has brought more visitors from outside and given event organizers improved results
- Altering the perception of "change"- it's not a bad word
- No longer feel good marketing- it is now data driven
- Strong public private partnership (City/Chamber, City/Hospitality Industry)

**What is Absent or Missing that we would like to see worked on?**

- Investment from the private sector in the tourism industry
- Need tangible tourism businesses
- Digital Concierge- Monitors in the hotel lobbies to get the information out that is wirelessly synced
- Updating information kiosks/updating what we have
- Tipping point- not reached yet where we can expand, retain, and create start-up business
- Data pipeline to organizations who foster business development
- Succession planning- plan for department growth

- For succession planning purposes: Jennifer needs to write a department description and breakdown of exactly what is happening and what she does/what needs to happen for department growth
- Investment in tourism infrastructure- aesthetics- Proactive not reactive

Break out conversation: What is tourism infrastructure?

- Rex Museum
- Red Rock Park
- We the people park/playground of dreams
- Park loop that is supposed to light up
- Curb appeal- green spaces that are visible, beautification efforts
- On-off ramps/entrances into Gallup
- Route 66 through Gallup
- Alley ways

Looking at the Zoning- What it is zoned for defines what makes it tourism infrastructure

*Committee agreed that they need a separate meeting to define what around Gallup should be considered 'tourism infrastructure' and then set up ideas/goals for projects that lodger's tax could put funding into. **The meeting is scheduled for February 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm at the El Morro Events Center.***

**What is preventing us from getting there?**

- Intentional consistent strategic planning amongst stakeholders
- "Talked about it means did it"
- Applicants to lodger's tax should be brought in to talk about
- Community buy-in for what tourism is about
- Lack of human resource
- Sports tourism- the issue is a lack of paid event promoters and organizers, the cost of the fields themselves- needs to be treated like convention sales

**What are our goals?**

Goal	Who	Timeline to first report
Staff Department Growth	Committee, Jennifer does prep work piece for the committee	ASAP no later than March 12 city council
Digital Concierge	Jennifer/Yogash	Hi-tech show in June 17-20 in Minneapolis
Explore Availability of Digital Travel Publications	Jennifer/Yogash	May
Tourism Infrastructure List	Committee and Jennifer	February 26
Community Buy-in/Business Development/Data pipeline	Bill and Jennifer	On-going
Strategic Planning session	Committee, Jennifer, Bill	January 2020
Sports Tourism Study	Jennifer	March 2019

Jeremy- motion to approve minutes, Anna- seconded. All in favor.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:45pm