

CITY OF MONTE VISTA
CITY COUNCIL
Verbatim Minutes
MEETING MINUTES
January 21, 2021 - 6:00 P.M.
City Council Chambers – 95 W. 1st Avenue

Citizen Commission Presentations – Monte Vista Chamber Tourism – Request for Lodging Tax Distribution

Mayor Becker – Chamber tourism request for logging tax distribution, Ken please be sure and sing in.

Ken Hamko – First thank you counselors, mayor, and Mr. Forrest to us to present again the marketing plan for the City of Monte Vista's tourism. As you know, we presented prior presentation and we were asked to come up with some more details and a little bit more of a plan. I would say at this point that it was a great idea to go and come back another day because we have worked diligently and very hard as a committee and a group to put together, I hope a pretty solid plan on marketing tourism for Monte Vista specifically, so it was a good idea. You have the presentation on your computers, the full presentation, but we're going to abbreviate it otherwise we'll be here until tomorrow. I will mention that the entire presentation is like a living document, like in the marketing plan it will change as well as deletions.

Ken Hamko presented to Council the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce 2021 Tourism Marketing Plan and the request for \$8520.00 from the lodging tax money for marketing. Mr. Hamko went over their goals why invest in strategic tourism marketing. Adam Lock explained the website information and how the domain works. Councilor Lock pointed out the requirements that the Rio Grande Tourism has for disbursement of funds.

Councilor Foster – What is your key word set for your SEO?

Adam Lock – We are not that far into it yet. We met with the owner of the website, I was very impressed with the knowledge and understanding of the site, she is willing to give us some free help too in the conversion this will take us light years ahead of where we are right now.

Councilor Foster – What is that domain of the curve while you're taking over?

Ken Hamko – Asked Adam Lock, are we at liberty to say.

Adam Lock – I think at this point we can. The old urg guide that was actually a printed publication in 1.2 urg guide.com, but we won't keep that we have already purchased the domain name under our cost at visit montevista.com. We reach out as the chain of our own net and we'll be converting that over. Now we'll leave the other urls in place simply

as routing so people who have been going through the url guide for five or ten years any links from other sites will still work, they'll simply end up at visit montevista.com from this point forward. As far as key words that all has to be explored counselor, there's a lot to do in the background to make this work right.

Councilor Johnson – You have probably covered this, but I don't know if I picked up on any specific ideas other than the general improvement of the town, specific ideas for stopping traffic through town.

Ken Hamko – I think the overall picture would be there's more things to do, so as they look before they get here on what's going on and what can be done and what can be done in surrounding areas you get them to stop.

Councilor Lock – So you would use other names and things like visit Colorado, San Luis Valley you know all these different combinations so that anytime someone went to google and typed in San Luis Valley your website is going to pop up in the top one or two that's part of the search.

Ken Hamko – That is part of the search engine optimization.

Adam Lock – As people are traveling through young children in the car are hey what's up ahead, their on their phones looking. This is what we want is for a lot of this to pop up and we want the things that are here and available for them to do to pop up. This will be part of the marketing as we go along.

Ken Hamko – Again on the full reports there is so much more information on the direction we're going in and some statistics so you can take a look at the demographics and age demographics and things that we looked at as we targeted what we wanted to target.

Councilor Johnson – My concern is getting everything exposed and stirred up and people flooding into town and no any place to put their recreational vehicle.

Ken Hamko – That's up to you councilor

Councilor Lock – There actually are a few places in Monte Vista that can have an RV parked in them and maybe we should ask this committee to make that par of you know if you're coming through in an RV turn here and here's where you can park and there you can walk anywhere you want to go. So that is reasonably easy to overcome.

Councilor Johnson – Yeah that's still something we need to accomplish officially but that is at a later time. I would like to work with you on that.

Adam Lock – As issues brought up by both Councilor Johnson and Councilor Lock we need to stay in touch with the city on this, there are things that we can do in our marketing plan or things we need to add such as an RV park and the development of an RV park. So let's continue to work together on this. All that information is current and up to date.

Councilor Johnson – There is a slight definition difference there the park is a good idea but parking is a lot simpler and a lot more accessible, they are two completely different things, just want to make that clear.

Councilor Johnson – What is the balance that we have of the tourism money?
Finance Director, Jennifer Signs - \$11,500

Councilor Johnson – You're asking for \$8520

Ken Hamko – Correct

Councilor Lock – I am looking at riograndecounty.com and what it takes to receive the tourism money. Number one is advertisements should be placed, and this is the part that surprised me because I always thought it was supposed to go outside the valley. Advertisements should be placed outside the Rio Grande County and are used as a tool to attract tourism to the area. They can include but not limited to magazines, favorite radio or television stations, web and email based media. I think it is interesting that I've been under the understanding and I think a lot of people have been under the understanding that the lodging money was supposed to be used for advertising outside the valley. So that is the direction that you took, so you actually overshot what Rio Grande County is asking for. I just wanted to throw that out there.

Ken Hamko – Yes it is possible that the website, Facebook, twitter and Instagram and all that will be available.

Councilor Johnson – So where is this going I was just about to make a motion but it's not the chamber or is it?

Ken Hamko – Yes, we are a committee of the chamber of commerce; it will go to the chamber and be distributed from there for the items that we talked about.

Councilor Johnson – I want to move to approve the requested \$8520 from our tourism funds available to the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce.

Councilor Lock – I second that.

Mayor Becker – It has been moved and seconded to approve \$8520 from the Rio Grande County Tourism money to the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce. Is there any more discussion?

Councilor Foster – I would just like to comment the committee for their work and putting together a very nice presentation. I am glad to see some action moving. Everybody can pick apart and say they would like something done differently or better but you know that's what happens everybody has their own critique and stuff like that and this is a direction and it is a motion and I commend your work.

Councilor Lock – I know that you had to summarize it or we would have had to brought our sleeping bags because we see it in our packet but I really wish that the town could see what you all have done. I would like for you all to see if you can find a way to make that happen.

City Clerk, Unita Vance – It is on the City of Monte Vista's website, the whole presentation in under Council packets.

Councilor Lock – Well there we are. It looks like you have a promoting job to do because it is already on my website

Mayor Pro Tem Sigala – Are there other organizations out there that we would be able to give money to?

City Manager, Forrest Neuerburg – Not that I remember ever asking for it.

Finance Director, Jennifer Signs – It is very specific as to what it can be used for.

Councilor Lock – What, the marketing plan?

City Manager, Forrest Neuerburg – No the funds from tourism. There are other organizations that could use it in their promotions, like stampede because a lot of outside advertising, the Ag conference, all those do draw from outside so it's possible but they've never asked. If I go back to the original intent, the majority of funds actually at one point were contracted to the chamber about \$16,000 or so was originally. It's very strange how the funds arrived in the city but I'm not going there, it would take an hour, but anyway the city got funds from the county and the first discussion we had was with the chamber of commerce and they had a pretty aggressive event-marketing plan at the time. If anyone wants to see that, I've got the documents. It wasn't as broad as this one or really as all encompassing. It was a pretty narrow advertising type plan but we were going to fund it all and things just didn't quite work out. Then we were saving \$3000 to actually promote a couple of local events. The kind of strategy they're working on now for events is what the city was thinking about at the time. Our big events are kind of self-promoting, like Ag conference and stampede so they could ask there's will still be some funds left over after this.

Councilor Lock – Everybody knows that Adam and I are married but just to be clear I have not seen this before tonight. As far as the events go this is part of the living organic way that this works is that instead of stampede, ag conference and potato fest having to advertise all the things that we do this advertises it all in one spot and it boosts it every time there's something coming up. That is what they were talking about search engine optimization.

Ken Hamko – I would definitely agree with that. Part of ours you saw that we included all the events. Part of our plans is what the chamber asked for money for those events to

get the word out. Since we are part of the chamber, we will be doing that now to get the word out for these events. There are other folks out there that will request some money. I will mention that I am on the Rio Grande Tourism board and we currently have this money for 2019 actually, 2020 will probably not be distributed until March, but it is actually looking relatively good. So we will have additional funds available for marketing sometime in March or April. As of July last year, it is probably no secret but we were about \$8200 for Monte Vista. Every July half a year, it could be somewhere close to 14 to 15 thousand for the year distribution. The state does not release those numbers until a quarter after the end of the year or something like that. So there is more money coming but we want to get started.

Councilor Johnson – I would just like to add that I was with the chamber of commerce for a while and this is the most aggressive professional well thought out plan that I have probably see anywhere but certainly from the chamber and I appreciate what the chamber's been doing, they have been stepping up last couple years or so and changing things and getting things done and if this is where it is headed then I'm all for it.

Mayor Becker – Very good job. I had a discussion with a young man last night and he said that he has visited with people in Rain Brews and they have come back here several time and he's like why do you stay here, they said because we like Monte Vista, we go all over the valley but we stay here because we like it here. Also, there is a Gerber baby food commercial on that highlights the San Luis Valley.

Ken Hamko – This is something we can link to our website.

Adam Lock – This is a way to solicit content from people who have been here and what they have experienced and just continue to build upon that and that draws more people, it's much more believable than advertisements, that entices other people to come to this area and that is the major direction we're going to go with this.

Mayor Becker – We have a motion and a second on the floor, is there any further discussion? Hearing none, Nita.

City Clerk, Unita Vance – Takes roll call vote. Motion carries unanimously.