



Town Hall - 551 Hot Springs Boulevard  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

## MINUTES

Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board Meeting  
August 6, 2025 @ 4:00 PM

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A regular meeting of the Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board was called to order on August 6, 2025, at 4:00 PM in the Town Hall - 551 Hot Springs Boulevard.

**BOARD PRESENT:** Board Member Johnson, Board Member Lucero, Board Member Dufour, Shane Prince, Board Member Marchand, Board Member Ranson, and Board Member Scull

**BOARD ABSENT:** Council Member Williams and Sarah Mashue

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT** – There was no public comment.

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. Approval of the July 2nd Meeting Minutes**

Shane Prince moved to approve consent agenda, Board Member Marchand seconded.

**Carried.**

**IV. REPORTS TO BOARD**

**1. Chair Report**

Board Chair Lucero thanked everyone for being at the meeting. We have one hour for the Board meeting tonight because the joint Town and County Work Session will begin at 5pm to discuss 2026 budget priorities.

**2. Director Report**

Director said last week, the Colorado Tourism Office released the 2024 visitor spend data. Archuleta County saw a 4.8% increase in visitor spending. 2024 statewide visitor spend was up 0.5% over 2023. The state has been working with Dean Runyan for 20 years to produce this report. Director said she will be on an RV Explorers pod cast next week. Director said we have now received all of the outstanding lodging tax collections. The report is updated and the finance team credited the payments to the month they were due. The piece of that puzzle that we don't have clarity on is vacation rentals, because Airbnb and Vrbo pay tax when the booking takes place. So unless they're staying that same month they book it's not recognized for that month. About 30% of our town's lodging tax collections come from vacation rentals. June numbers were not reflected in the Blue Room reports because they sent the report before we got the June numbers. For Town collections, June totaled \$93,967 and reflected a 19.4% increase over 2024, or \$15,265. Year to date collections show a 14.3% increase, or \$54,448.85. Q1 County collections reflect a 15.8% increase, or \$18,344. Combined Q1, reflected an 11.65% increase, or \$35,988. Q2 for Town collections shows an increase of 19.57%, or \$36,805. For placer data we will be able to pull June data in a few weeks. The folder is updated through May 2025. We don't have sales tax for June yet. Sales tax comes out about 2 months later. May sales tax was up about 3%.

**3. Chamber of Commerce Report**

Chamber of Commerce Representative Austin Marchand said the new Chamber of Commerce Director Sandy Douthey has started training with Mary Jo. There are several Chamber events coming up. Grillin'

& Distillin' is on 8/23/25 and they still need more grillers. ColorFest has moved to Yamaguchi Park. The Wednesday Wine Walk had a great turn out with about 118 people vs the first one had about 75. The next Wine Walk is hosted by Rotary on 8/27/25. The Chamber is getting a lot of people contacting them about the housing at the Enclave by Walmart. There is a business happy hour at Cross Fit on 8/22/25.

#### **4. Board of Realtors Report**

Board of Realtors and Tourism Board member Amy Johnson said her report is looking at single family homes up to a million dollars for May, June and July 2024 vs 2025. In 2024 the median sale price was \$700,000 for a single family home and this year it is \$614,500. Pricing has softened a bit in the market. The median price per square foot last year was \$366, now it is \$360. The number of active listings in 2024 was 175, right now we have 222 up almost 27%. The sold listings are holding steady. We had 77 last year and 78 this year. We have recently flipped to being more of a buyer's market with 9 months of supply. The Board of Realtors meets bimonthly and are very active in scholarships and escrow where brokers can choose to make donations out of their closings. High school students upon graduation get paid for all A's and B's so the checks can be significant up to \$1,800 for their high school career. They are working on ramping up this program and increasing participation by more brokers. The board also supports Bucks for Bikes, Pagosa Outreach Connection and Veterans Fly fishing.

#### **5. Lodging Association Report**

Jesse Hensle with The Springs Resort said the Lodging Association currently has 13 members with more in the process of joining. The full member list is not yet public. Pacing for August and September bookings is down, which aligns with a recent Colorado Sun article reporting a 2% year-over-year decrease in statewide visitation and a 10% decrease in short-term rentals (STRs). Jesse said the good news is that previous dips in May and June were successfully recovered with short-term bookings. The focus is on finding ways to use marketing to quickly impact these numbers. Jesse Hensle said the Lodging Association and the Tourism Boards main goal is to drive overall visitation to Pagosa Springs, not just to lodging or STRs specifically. The Lodging Association believes that mobile data, like that from placer.ai, is a valuable tool for tracking visitation. He noted a strong correlation between placer.ai occupancy data and tax collections. Moving forward, the group wants to develop a plan using multiple metrics to measure tourism effectiveness, advocating for marketing transparency and focusing on effective strategies. The Lodging Association wants to partner with the tourism board on an ad for the 2026 Colorado Tourism Visitor Guide, which has a deadline in October and a cost of approximately \$16,000. They hope to be included in the discussion to provide input on the ad and how Pagosa Springs is promoted. Jesse thanked the community for their support, which led to The Springs Resort being named the #1 Hot Springs and the #1 Best Spa Resort in the U.S. by USA Today. He hopes this recognition will bring significant marketing value to the entire Pagosa Springs community.

#### **6. Other Board Member Updates**

County Commissioner Rep John Ranson said they picked up the keys today for the new temporary County offices at the Wyndham and are hoping to be open at the end of Aug. The County Fair last week went well overall. They are preparing for budget now. They are going to work on a survey regarding lodging tax for next year. They decided not to take it to the voters this year because they need more time to get the word out. They just received the RFP for the Admin building and it will be coming out soon.

Board Chair Lucero said he finds it interesting that the Lodging Association ask for transparency but they are not willing to share the names of their members. We know who the members of the Realtors Association are and they members of the Chamber of Commerce.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Consideration of Construction Transportation Funding Request**

The Tourism Board has \$64,800 in the 2025 budget for construction transportation. While there was no specific plan for the funds, the idea was to have funds available as needs were identified once construction began. The Director has been meeting with Andrew Mylroie, Transportation Coordinator, for Mountain Express Transit. Director and Andy worked together to create new MET bus stop signs to make the bus stops stand out a little more. The signs are in the process of being installed. Additionally, Director has been meeting with Jason Cox regarding his new Pagosa Zip Trips, a pedal cab concept. Town Council approved Pagosa Zip Trips to operate during their July 15th meeting. A recent discussion with Jason, Andy and the Director focused on leveraging the MET to get people downtown and considering the Pagosa Zip Trips as last mile service around the core downtown area. Pagosa Zip Trips plans to operate as a free service during the fall 2025 season. To expand use of the MET, the group discussed having a transit app developed. Andy has met with Durango's transit team and connected with transit app developer, VIA. He is awaiting pricing from VIA, as it is based on number of buses operating. A transit app is a mobile application designed to help passengers plan, track, and pay for public transportation. It connects riders with real-time bus schedules, maps, service alerts, and ticketing systems. Included in the packet for review is a request from Pagosa Zip Trips for \$10,707 to cover operating expenses for it to be a free service in 2025. Pagosa Zip Trips is not requesting capital expenses to start the business (i.e. Pedal Cabs). Director would also like the Tourism Board to consider funding the development of the transit app. Expanded transportation will benefit tourism long after the construction project is completed.

Jason Cox and Mike Candelaria were present at the meeting. Jason Cox said they are ordering the pedicab this week. They decided to order a new one with motorcycle tires and it can haul 4-6 passengers. They should have the vehicle by mid to late September and will run it through the fall to test the market. They will not charge for rides this fall. He said his friend in Pueblo who has a similar company also goes to senior citizen homes and give the residents rides for entertainment. They originally planned to patrol and hit up the large parking areas downtown that were made for the construction project but they aren't seeing much occupancy in those lots. They are also figuring out details for the dispatch option. So this request is to help cover the cost of drivers, employees, insurance fees. This could end up being a last mile solution for the core downtown and they would ideally like to run some uptown as well. It will also be used for events. They are buying one pedicab this year and hopefully adding another 1-2 next year.

Andy Mylroie, Transportation Coordinator for Mountain Express Transit was also present at the meeting. Director said Andy met with an app developer VIA. We are hoping the quote was on the high end. We intend to connect the pedicab into the transit app and have a robust transportation app for the community. We are aiming for the app and pedicab costs to be around \$54,000. Some transit apps have yearly fees so we will need to factor that into the future budgets. The remaining \$10,000 was requested by Town Council for Tourism to help pay for upgrades at the new skyrocket trail at the new property behind Tractor Supply.

Board Chair Lucero said he has a concern that since this is taxpayer money it might look like we are supporting a business. Mike Candelaria said that it is not their intent to make money off of this business. They are doing this to help the community. He said for every dollar you put into public transit \$4-7 are put back into the community. They feel it will help more people move around down town and enjoy the riverwalk and coffee shops and easily hop from one business to the next. It will benefit all of the

businesses. They are not going to charge for rides this year. They will have other revenue streams and will be advertising.

Board Member Johnson moved to approve funding Pagosa Zip Trips for \$10,707 to cover operating expenses for it to be a free service in 2025 and to consider funding the development of the transit app, Board Member Marchand seconded.

**Carried.**

## **2. Visitor Sentiment Survey**

Director would like the Tourism Board's input on pursuing a Visitor Sentiment Survey. We had elements of visitor sentiment as part of the Destination Master Plan, adopted in 2019. However, a lot has changed in the last 6 years. A visitor sentiment study provides destinations with insight into how travelers perceive and emotionally respond to their experiences. This goes beyond typical satisfaction scores or economic data, uncovering what visitors truly value or dislike about a place. For destinations, it becomes a strategic tool to identify both strengths and areas needing improvement, such as infrastructure, customer service, or branding alignment. It helps ensure that a destination's messaging reflects the actual visitor experience or, conversely, that the experience evolves to fulfill the brand promise. From an operational standpoint, sentiment data guides resource allocation and improvement efforts. Destinations can use it to prioritize enhancements that will most affect visitor satisfaction and loyalty. It also allows them to track sentiment over time, especially during peak seasons or after major events, to measure impact and adjust strategies as needed. This continuous feedback loop helps improve the visitor experience in real-time and supports ongoing destination management. For marketing, sentiment analysis helps tailor campaigns to match the emotional drivers of travelers, increasing resonance and conversion. It also provides compelling evidence to stakeholders—like local businesses and public agencies—of tourism's value and areas for collaboration. Director reached out to Market to Mission, Dave Santucci for an estimate, included in the packet. If approved, Director would find funds in the 2025 budget and begin his effort soon.

Director said we'll target existing visitors and people who may have chosen another destination. We want to understand what they enjoyed about Pagosa, what their experience was like, what they did not like, why they chose another destination if they did not choose Pagosa. They might help identify strengths and weaknesses of us as a tourism destination. The price for the survey through Mission to Market is \$9,750. The avenue to get the survey out will likely be email and there will be an enter to win cash incentive to do the survey. We will survey visitors at the visitor center and businesses can promote the survey. We will also have the survey on our welcome page. We can target our leads from colorado.com. Board Member DuFour said it might be better to do the survey during an average time rather than doing it now with the construction project going. Director said she sees this as something we will do on an annual basis and maybe even seasonal surveys.

Shane Prince moved to approve Mission2Market to conduct a Visitor Sentiment Survey in 2025, Board Member Johnson seconded.

**Carried.**

## **3. 2026 CTO Marketing Grant**

The Colorado Tourism Office offers an annual Marketing Grant program. The CTO's Marketing Grant Program provides funding to not-for-profit organizations in the State of Colorado for the purpose of promoting the state or a region as a tourism destination. For every \$1 the organization allocates to the program, the Colorado Tourism Office will provide \$2 in matching funds. The Colorado Tourism Office will award grants up to \$49,000. Funds will be awarded to organizations whose objective is to promote

the state or the defined region, targeting audiences outside of Colorado. For FY 2026 grant, applications that include 250/150 promotions will receive bonus points. Since fall 2015, Pagosa Springs has partnered with Ouray, Glenwood Springs, Steamboat Springs and Chaffee County to create and promote the Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop. The partnership has been awarded funds from the Colorado Tourism Office each year from 2016 - 2024. The Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board (through the Town) served as the fiscal agent for the Hot Springs Loop between 2015 and 2020. Steamboat Springs served as the fiscal agent between 2021 and 2024. We continue to work with the Hot Springs Loop and continue to receive a lot more impact than our annual \$2,500 contribution. The Loop did not pursue a grant in 2025, however, all participating destinations provided \$2,500 towards continued promotions via email, social media and media opportunities. In 2024 and 2025, Visit Pagosa partnered with Visit Alamosa for a grant to target high value international audiences. The grants were both awarded the full amount, resulting in a \$60,000 project budget in 2024 and \$75,000 in 2025. Visit Pagosa and Visit Alamosa recently met to discuss the future of the partnership. We have determined investing in advertising efforts reaching international audiences is not ideal given the current political climate. While the implementation of the FY 2025 grant is underway, the deadline to apply for FY 2026 grant funding is August 28th. We are interested in applying for the grant once again in 2026, however with a focus on domestic advertising focused on historical offerings, targeting shared markets of both destinations. The grant favors collaborations and in 2026, inclusion of 250/150 efforts will be rewarded. Visit Pagosa and Visit Alamosa staff are currently evaluating various opportunities to include in the 2026 grant application. The match of \$12,250 for FY 2026 would be budgeted in the 2026 marketing line item of the lodging tax budget. At this time, staff is requesting approval of a letter of support for the grant application. With approval of each board, staff will meet to draft marketing plan for this opportunity to include in the grant application. We will be notified in early November if the application is accepted. This is an extremely competitive grant. One additional change for 2026, if your organization has been awarded a Tourism Marketing Grant for the past 3 consecutive years, you are required to "sit out" a year and will be ineligible to apply. If the application is successful for 2026, Visit Pagosa will not be able to apply for the grant in FY 2027.

Board Member Dufour moved to approve submitting an application for The Colorado Tourism Office 2026 Marketing Grant program, Shane Prince seconded.

**Carried.**

- VI. OLD BUSINESS**
- VII. BOARD IDEAS AND COMMENTS**
- VIII. NEXT TOURISM BOARD MEETING SEPTEMBER 3RD AT 4:00 PM**
- IX. ADJOURNMENT**