



Town Hall - 551 Hot Springs Blvd.  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

## MINUTES

Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board Meeting  
October 1, 2025 @ 4:00 PM

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A regular meeting of the Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board was called to order on October 1, 2025, at 4:00 PM in the Town Hall - 551 Hot Springs Blvd. .

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

**BOARD ABSENT:**

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. There was no public comment.

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of the September 3rd Meeting Minutes

Council Member Williams moved to approve the September 3rd Meeting Minutes, Board Member Marchand seconded.

**Carried.**

**IV. REPORTS TO BOARD**

1. Chair Report

Board Chair Lucero thanked the board for being at the meeting.

2. Director Report

Director said Pagosa is slated for a drone show as mentioned by Tim Wolfe, date TBD. Director is investigating a passport program and ticketing platform. She has a meeting with Bandwango at Gov Con. Director will report back to the Board about the meeting next month. Director and Mary Jo Coulehan provided training to all of Town staff on September 10th and about 50 Wyndham staff members were trained on September 16th and 18th. Riff Raff staff, Board of Realtors and many front line restaurant staff will be trained in 3 different sessions on November 3rd. We are using 2025 to roll out and test the training and will expand the Partnership Program next year. One role of a new staff member would be help grow this program. Director is trying to pull together a group of businesses that have been through the program to help determine ways to grow and best incentives for participation. The goal is to expand this program and make it beneficial for businesses, employees and visitors.

Director asked if there were any questions about the Director Report. Board Member DuFour asked about the permanent people moving signs that were purchased by Tourism for Downtown construction. Director answered it is out of her hands. They have been sitting on someone's desk since May. The laminated signs have worked out well since they have had to be moved several times. Board Member DuFour said it is not a responsible use of funds. Director said she will follow up and have a conversation

with others.

### **3. Chamber of Commerce Report**

Chamber of Commerce Representative Austin Marchand said he will have construction survey results for Aug/Sept at the next meeting. They are planning a Holiday Shopping event the three Fridays before Christmas and a promotion for all Downtown businesses on Small Business Saturday. Colorfest was successful. Mary Jo is out for surgery so Sandy, the new Chamber Director will be the point of contact from here on out.

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

Board of Realtors Representative Amy Johnson said these stats are for 3 Bedroom single family homes in Pagosa. Last year's median price was \$742,495, that has dropped to \$634,500 in Sept 2025. So we are seeing a bit of softening in price. The sales of 3 Bed single family homes is flat with 22 homes sold in Sept 2024 and Sept 2025. We have more inventory this year with 109 active properties in Sept 2025 vs 84 in 2024. Average days on market is 93 days. We have 8 months supply, up from 6 months last year. The Realtor Association is doing their adopt a highway event on Friday to clean up trash for a 2 mile stretch east of Day Lumber. They will also be attending the Tourism Ambassador training on 11/3/25.

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

Lodgers Association Representative Sarah Mashue said in June the Lodgers Association expressed slower pacing and lower bookings and they want to thank the Tourism Dept for being responsive and promoting marketing to help close that gap. They are grateful to see responsiveness to concerns and looking forward to the Tourism Dept adding more staff. County Commissioner Rep Ranson said he would like to see a quarterly meeting between the Tourism Board and the Lodgers Association since both organizations are a big benefit to the community. Board Chair Lucero said that would have to be an agenda item for the Board to vote on at a later time. Lodgers Rep Mashue said she would support that idea because she is a member of the Lodging Association but she does not sit on the Lodging Association Board and the time commitment comes with value. John Ranson said the Commissioners have had discussions and are trying to find funds for the Lodgers Association. Board Chair Lucero asked if they have member dues. Sarah Mashue said they do not have dues.

## **V. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Discussion with Tim Wolfe, Executive Director, Colorado Tourism Office**

Tim Wolfe gave an overview of Colorado's tourism performance, marketing effectiveness, and future initiatives, with specific data and highlights for Pagosa Springs. The CTO's mission is to empower all to thrive in Colorado's economy, with a vision to inspire the world to explore Colorado responsibly and respectfully, focusing on Economic Vitality, Destination Stewardship, and Industry Leadership. In 2024 Colorado Visitor expenditure reached a record \$28.5 billion, a 0.5% increase over 2023. Tourism generated \$1.9 billion in local and state tax revenues, providing an average of \$800 in tax relief per Colorado household. The industry supported 470,525 direct and indirect travel-related jobs. International travel represents 10% of Colorado's economy. The German market loves to do drive trips through the Pagosa Springs and 4 Corners region. Overseas arrivals to Colorado are generally pacing ahead of the U.S. total (indexed to 2019 levels). Countries like India and Mexico show notably high growth, while arrivals from the UK and Japan remain lower than the 2019 index. The 2024-25 "Magic" winter advertising campaign achieved an all-time high Return on Investment (ROI) of \$978 in visitor spending for every \$1 invested. This ROI is significantly higher than the industry average of about \$400 and is the second consecutive year the CTO has recorded the highest winter advertising ROI measured by SMARI. The campaign influenced nearly one million trips. Colorado's domestic overnight visitor market share is declining. This trend is attributed to the deflated value of a stagnant CTO budget over

time due to inflation. Pagosa Springs is leading Colorado. The STR (Smith Travel Research) report shows hotel occupancy was down in 2024 but overall rate and RevPAR was up 1.4%. In 2025 Pagosa and Alamosa have done remarkably well, up 10% which is leading the entire state in occupancy and maintaining their daily rates. However, there are only 23 properties (1,200 rooms) reporting. There are many key players who are not reporting to STR and that data would really help to see how the full community is doing. In Denver 75-80% report their STR data. Short term rental occupancy in the state of CO is down year to date and pacing is relatively flat as we look into the future. For the CTO Partnership with Pagosa Springs cooperative Winter FY25 Campaigns, a joint \$27.5K investment in paid media generated \$58.1K in media value. The campaign achieved a 9.9% engagement rate (vs 1-3% industry average) and a 1.05% Click-Through Rate (CTR). Social media efforts were also highly efficient, with a \$0.02 cost per engagement (5-7 times more efficient than industry). For the Summer FY24 Campaign, a \$22.5K paid media investment generated \$50.7K in value, achieving an 11.8% engagement rate (4 times the industry average). Also 3-5 times higher on the social media side. Pagosa Springs and Alamosa received a FY25 Tourism Marketing Grant of \$49,999 to elevate them as desirable international travel destinations to audiences in the UK and Germany. The Explore Colorado Vacation Guide has shifted to an advertorial style. This extends the shelf life of the guide and helps click through rates. AI also picks up this type of content as trusted content. Colorado does not have a state Lodger's Tax. Most other states have that tax to fund their office. Regionally, in the last couple of years some destinations have added or increased their short term rentals tax and those funds are being used for housing, daycare, etc as decided by the voters. New state legislation allows counties to raise the lodgers tax cap from 2% to 6% with local voter approval. This is projected to generate \$55 million in new community investments for 2024 and \$13.5 million for 2025. Colorado is preparing for a "Mega Decade" of major events, including the World Cup 2026, the America 250 / Colorado 150 Celebration 2026, the Summer Olympics 2028, and a potential Winter Olympics in 2034. The 250/150 commemoration will feature a Digital Passport program and a series of drone shows across the state including in Pagosa Springs.

## **2. 2026 Event Funding Discussion**

Director said in the Event Funding application we have criteria that have not always been adhered to when making decisions. This year was an exception because of the construction and concerns about losing the impact of events downtown. So the board made decisions to be able to fund more events without meeting all of the criteria. In the past we have not funded summer events in general but this year there were quite a few summer events funded. Director deals with event organizers to explain why a decision was made to fund one event and not another so she would appreciate direction from the board in order to update the 2026 event funding application. Director has considered moving the event funding process to more of a grant style in 2027 with an application and subcommittee to review applications, conduct interview process and make decisions. The Tourism Board had \$100,000 allocated towards event funding in 2025, however increased the budget to \$140,000 given construction and desire to ensure as many events could be held as possible. The draft 2026 budget currently has \$150,000 allocated towards events. Currently, staff is tasked with organizing Big Spring Clean, Holiday Lighting Contest, Old Fashioned Christmas and minimal involvement in Halloween Hootenanny. Big Spring Clean will return in 2026. The 4th of July Concert was supported with lodging tax, given lack of parade in 2025; 2026 event will highlight 250/150 celebrations and Vets for Vets will likely apply for funding in 2026; the 2025 event was part of the Summer Concert Series. The Hootenanny cost \$15,000 for a 3rd party event organizer to handle in 2025. The event organizer is handling music, food trucks and beer garden. Tourism staff will assist with decorating, kids activities and costume contest.

The Board had discussion about the funding criteria in the 2025 application. Shane Prince said he would like to see a quarterly event funding application processes rather than every month. Shane Lucero said we may want to reconsider #1 because it might make more sense to fund an event that has proven to

be successful in bringing people to town rather than only new events that might only last one year. Rosanna DuFour said it is frightening to think some of the bigger more successful events may not continue because the funding source isn't available. Shane Lucero said the costs for holding events, especially in shoulder season, are really going up so we need to consider that as well. The big tents can be \$12-13,000. Austin Marchand said June, July, and Aug are the best months to have an event in Pagosa. Rosanna DuFour said the more criteria we have the more burden it puts on the board to make decisions that is not always going to be the best thing for our mission. Sarah Mashue said she would vote to get rid of Criteria #1 rather than see events go away that are proven to bring in tourists. Amy Johnson agreed that #1 could just go away and all the criteria need some changes. Director said it would be nice to hear from the Lodgers which events they are seeing out of town guests. Shane Lucero said we shouldn't expect lodgers to give discounts but instead support the event by sending the information out to their database. Austin Marchand said that is not fair to the lodgers to have to give a discount in order for event organizers to get money from us. Sarah Mashue said that a great agenda item for a meeting between the Board and the Lodgers would be discussing how we could connect the event organizers with the lodgers and figure out a better way to cross promote. After a lengthy discussion the Board decided to table this item until November. In the meantime Director will send out an email to Board Members to review the criteria and send in their suggested changes before the November meeting. Director also said at a recent Town Council funding meeting the council members each reviewed the applications before the meeting and came in with the dollar amount they would like to fund and then the amount given was an average of those dollar amounts. The Board Members agreed that they like that idea.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. 2026 Budget Discussion**

Director said Town Council is aiming to adopt their budget November 6th. If the Tourism Board waits to adopt their budget on Nov. 5th it will be a little late to make significant changes to bring forward to the elected officials. Director is on the agenda for the County Commissioners work session next Tuesday. The two required public input meeting regarding the budget are October 21st and November 6th. This is an accelerated budget season because usually they adopt the budget in early December. There is one modification under signage in the budget since we walked through it at the Sept meeting. The budget for signage increased from \$5,000 to \$25,000. After discussions with the Main Street Board and downtown businesses they would like to see more signage and perhaps bring back the wayfinding plan we created about 6 years ago. There will be 60 new light posts added in downtown construction areas and we are purchasing the new banners that go on them (about \$250 each). Tourism is under 3 different departments: Tourism Admin, Tourism, and Visitor Center. We do have an increase in overall marketing dollars for 2026 but some of the marketing is under Contracted Services and Software Subscriptions and separated under those different departments. The Marketing Plan will be presented by Director in the December meeting. The Visitor Sentiment Survey will launch next week by Mission to Market. We will have preliminary results in November to help inform us on the Marketing Plan. We may look into doing quarterly surveys moving forward. Director will also get Placer data together for the Marketing plan. Rosanna DuFour asked about the line item for Infrastructure for \$250,000. Director said that money was already moved for construction. Rosanna DuFour said for any usefulness or merit of this board we shouldn't be finding out about the use of lodging funds retroactively. It makes it feel like this is an ineffective body and the code is not being effectively implemented. There is no point in having a municipal code if it is not going to be followed. There are legal implications to not following a municipal code. Sarah Mashue asked what is the plan with Blue Room Research? Director said she discussed that with Town Council and they would like us to continue Blue Room for at least another year. Blue Room is listed under Tourism Admin Contracted Services for 2026. We have also added Visa Transaction Data for 2026 and it is also under Tourism Admin. Director said the board can make a motion to approve what was in the power point. Sarah Mashue said the power point wasn't a balanced budget. Director said

Town Council is not concerned with that because we have \$1.6 million in reserves. Shane Lucero asked if the board should not vote on it because they are going to do it anyway? Shane Prince said he doesn't think there has been an adequate timeline to review it. Director said we can schedule a special meeting to discuss the budget with David Harris. After discussion the Board agreed a special meeting with the Town Manager and Gary Williams should be held before they will approve the budget. Director will send out a doodle poll to schedule the special meeting for next week.

Shane Prince moved to table the approval of the 2026 budget pending a special meeting with Town Manager David Harris and Town Council Representative Gary Williams, Board Member Scull seconded.

**Carried.**

**VII. NEXT TOURISM BOARD MEETING NOVEMBER 5th AT 4:00 PM**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**