



Town Hall 551 Hot Springs Blvd
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

MINUTES
Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board Meeting
April 8, 2026 @ 3:00 PM

A regular meeting of the Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board was called to order on April 8, 2026 at 3:00 PM in the Town Hall 551 Hot Springs Blvd.

BOARD PRESENT: Shane Prince, Shane Lucero, Austin Marchand, John Ranson, Amy Johnson, Stuart Scull, Jesse Hensle, Rosanna Dufour

BOARD ABSENT: Gary Williams

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

I.

ROLL CALL

II.

DISCLOSURES AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

III.

Board Member Hensle said he will recuse himself from voting on event funding for Hot Springs Fest and Pagosa Paddle because the Springs Resort is his employer and they are also a sponsor for Pagosa Paddle. Board Member Marchand is on the Chamber Board and will recuse himself from voting on event funding for the Chamber of Commerce events. He is also a past sponsor for 84 Ranch Ag Fest so he will recuse himself from that vote as well. Board Member Dufour has a conflict of interest because she is on the Main Street board and will recuse herself from all event funding discussion and voting for this round. There will be further discussion on COI later in the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

IV.

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

V.

1. Approval of the March 11th Meeting Minutes

Board Member Lucero moved to approve the March 11, 2026 meeting minutes, Board Member Johnson seconded.

REPORTS TO BOARD

VI.

1. Financial Report

April Hessman, Finance Director said the Board packet included financials through the end of March. Everyone has

remitted taxes for the first quarter for the town's lodgers. They have not received the County's yet.

2. Chair Report

No Chair Report.

3. Director Report

Director said staff updated the How to Work with Us overview. It is now called How to Partner with Visit Pagosa Springs. We added a page with information for businesses to sign up for emergency alerts through the town and county. We have added an Industry Partners footer to the website where this information can be found. We have also added a footer for press and media based on recommendation from the PR team. For Lodging tax, what is showing in revenue is just what has been received. We are still missing quite a few payments for January and February and a couple in December. Sales tax is also lagging a bit and that is why there is not a new Blue Room report. Director will send reports to the board when that information is received.

4. Chamber of Commerce Report

Board Member Marchand asked how the historical amount funded is calculated on the event funding spreadsheet. For the Chamber of Commerce it showed \$88,000 but they were legacy events. They have not gotten funding for those as a board. They would like to see it broken down by event. Director said it is the aggregate of all Chamber events on the spreadsheet. The historical amount is updated yearly and is a rolling number. The amount has been verified with the finance team. It is not broken down by event but she can get the breakdown report with the 17 years of history.

5. Board of Realtors Report

Board Member Johnson said these stats are for March for single-family homes in Pagosa. The average sold price was \$765,472. That's down 11.6% year-over-year. There were 24 homes sold in March. That's up from last year, there were 21 last year. Average price per square foot was \$356. Last year, it was \$398. There were 62 new listings in March, compared to 47 last year, so we definitely have more on the market. In March, there were 154 total active listings, and our supply is sitting at about 6.5 months.

6. Lodgers Association Report

Board Member Hensle said they launched their first Lodgers Demand Survey with 8 of 15 locations responding. The group represents 87% of all lodging rooms. When asked about occupancy in March versus last year, 87.5% of the respondents said that it was below last year. When asked about length of stay in March versus previous year, 62% of the respondents said it was shorter. When asked about current month pacing, 100% responded they were pacing behind last year. When asked about pacing for the next 8 weeks, 100% said they were behind pacing from last year, with 62.5% saying that they were well behind pacing from last year. When asked about 3 months looking forward, 100% said that the business is currently much weaker or slightly weaker than it was year over year. When asked about a booking window, 50% said that currently their guests were coming within a 7-day window. When asked about confidence over the next 90 days, 100% were concerned or very concerned with booking pace for the summer. Key takeaway is that not a single respondent reported occupancy, pacing, or forward-looking bookings equal to or above last year. Every metric was negative. Mr Hensle said they sent an email out yesterday to their entire database of 250,000 people, with a response that quickly came back saying "We are looking to book rooms from April 20th to April 23rd. I heard you had severe flooding last year. Are all of your pools and premises fixed yet, or are they in working order yet?". So we're still combating this flood, a perception that's been going, so doing what we can to combat that will be important. This year is being termed the summer of the staycation so we should be thinking about that as we're adapting our marketing, and putting our ads out for summertime, and what we can impact. The lodgers would also like to say thank you for adding in the March metadata. It's nice to see some reporting on our media impact. Notably, the click-through rates are great. What can we do more with that? Are we spending enough to pace sufficiently to move summer demand when we're already seeing that we're behind? Looking at the metadata, the spend is not equal to the budgets, so that causes some concerns for us. Director said the spend is just for the month of March. The budget is for the campaign itself. Mr Hensle said what is absent from the Lodgers Association's view is no cumulative spend dashboard in the packet rather than the google drive, no stated performance goals against campaigns, and no conversion data from this meta-report that connects to 18,500 link clicks to any consumer or visitation in the area. He said the Lodgers have four recommendations: #1 - Can we review the Q1 campaign performance so that we can inform summer marketing decisions? The board currently has no visibility into media performance. It would be nice to see staff present at the May meeting a full Q1 review covering what campaigns drove the most qualified traffic, and the specific recommendations for Q2 based on that performance. #2 - Present recommendations based on that data to lean into the staycation trend. The larger survey confirms what the national travel research is showing. Travelers are making last-minute decisions. Staff should bring to the May meeting concrete Q2 strategy recommendations that reflect this shift, including how the budget should be redeployed to short-term booking lead times that we're experiencing, and to maximize our impact in Denver and Albuquerque drive markets. #3 - Create a monthly media dashboard as a standing board packet item. It should track 1. Performance against pacing of planned spend so that we don't have the discrepancies noted here.

Cumulative budget versus last year to today. 2. Campaign performance metrics, like benchmarks, click-through rates, and CPC. 3. One metric tied to visitors coming to Pagosa Springs. This dashboard should cover all funds being spent on external advertising. Google Drive is not a reporting metric or reporting place. Lastly, to help combat this flood story that keeps going, we could direct BPR to prioritize storytelling that addresses flood perception in our key markets. Negative coverage on the flooding area around Pagosa Springs is an active barrier to our bookings. Director said a lack of snow has certainly been a factor in all the western U.S. Director was on a webinar this afternoon with the Colorado Association of Destinations, and Tim Wolf, the Executive Director of CTO and combined Colorado and Utah. They said occupancy was down 23% in January in Colorado and Utah, and 19% in February. Director is going to the Denver Travel and Adventure Show this weekend to talk to roughly 11,000 consumers and make sure everyone knows that Pagosa is still here, regardless of the flood coverage.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII.

NEW BUSINESS

VIII.

1. County-Wide Parks & Recreation Presentation

Darren Lewis, Parks and Rec Director, Amanda Gadowski, Rec Supervisor, and Bob Milford with Pagosa Area Recreation Coalition were present to give the board an update on the future of Parks and Rec. Mr Lewis said they are looking to create a sustainable revenue stream that we can leverage for grants that can help recreation on a county-wide basis. The Town currently has a \$2 million budget to provide recreation for everyone in the county for parks, sports, and trails for locals and tourists. They have spoken at a recent Town/County work session looking for collaboration between the town and county. The county doesn't have a Parks and Rec dept but there are recreational needs in the county they would like to help work on. The county has a conservation trust fund that they receive about \$175,000 yearly that can only be spent on parks and recreation. The town receives about \$20,000 yearly in conservation trust funding. That comes from the lottery from the state and is based off population. The county gives the town \$60,000 of their fund to help offset the town's recreation budget. Mr Lewis said they would like to see the county and the town each contribute for example about \$50,000. For the town to come up with the difference, they could possibly increase the lodging tax by 0.25% or reallocate lodging tax. Nothing has been discussed and there have been no decision made by town council but it is something they are interested in. Bob Milford said PARC started about 1.5 years ago. They have a draft strategic recreation conservation plan for the area, Archuleta County, part of Hinsdale County and Mineral County. They contracted with the Town, have been holding meetings, talking about issues with the task force of about 45-50 members and a leadership committee of all different land agencies. They are in the process of finalizing the plan. GOCO and CPW dedicated \$50 million to these regional partnership initiatives over the next 5 years we can apply to receive some funds for big projects. PARC also wants to create a recreation website for the area so information is easy to find. Possible ideas to create a revenue stream would be using a portion of lodging tax, sales tax increase, other counties have fees for parking at trail heads. They are using the PARC survey and visitor sentiment survey data for the task force priorities and strategic plan. Board Chair Prince said his concern is the idea of putting county funds towards promoting federal lands. Federal land's funding is set forth by the federal government. Mr Milford said if we didn't have the "clear the trails" campaign half of the trails in Pagosa would be closed. People who are recreating here don't concern themselves with the boundaries. It's important that we work together and spend the money efficiently to get things done to have good experiences and protect our natural resources and wildlife. Board Member Lucero asked if the funds would be used to purchase more property on Reservoir Hill. Mr Milford said that is certainly on their list of projects. They will send the PARC strategic plan to the tourism board to give input. County Commissioner John Ranson said the county is already looking at \$450-500 million coming to voters which is a lot of money to pass. He recommended PARC bring their people to the community forums to present ideas. Board Member Lucero asked if this GOCO grant will compete with the GOCO grant for the multipurpose pavilion? Mr Milford said this is a separate set of money just for the regional partnership initiative.

2. 2026 Event Funding - Round 2

Board Chair Prince said previously the board had criteria for event funding but for 2026 they opted to have no criteria. Director said the process will be the same as Round 1 in January. She will have each board member give a dollar amount by event. Each member can't exceed the dollar amount of \$63,483 total. The total amount will be averaged by the number of members voting for that particular event. Board Chair Prince said we have some board members who feel if they are up for event funding they should completely recuse themselves from all event funding discussion and voting. Some board members feel they should just recuse themselves for a particular event if they have a conflict of interest. Board Members Lucero and Dufour agreed they felt the most ethical approach was to completely recuse themselves because you could skew the funding for other events to benefit your event. Board Member Hensle said there should be criteria for this in the Town Code of Ethics. David Harris, Town Manager said this really is a decision for the board to proceed forward on, and

you need to decide what is considered a conflict. One option, is that individuals can recuse themselves from the entire process or the individual items, but it does come down to their own conscience and how you want to proceed unless the board would like to take a formal statement. Mr Harris said if you find yourself in a situation where 3/4 of you can't vote because you are conflicted out, you're not going to have quorum. In the interest of moving this forward you should state your conflict and whether or not you are staying for the vote, and do it on an individual basis. After discussion amongst the board, it was decided that it would be an individual decision. Board Member Dufour said due to the perception of a conflict of interest, she will recuse herself from voting on any of the events on the docket this evening. Board Member Hensle said he will be recusing himself from Hot Springs Fest, Mountain Light Music Festival, and Pagosa Paddle. Board Member Marchand will recuse himself from the Chamber of Commerce events and the 84 Ranch Ag Fest. Board member Scull will recuse himself from Mountain Light Music Festival.

Matt Cottle was in attendance for the Pagosa Springs Summer Concert Series. They are requesting \$20,000 in funding. Mr Cottle said last year they had over 8,500 attendees, 70% were local, average age was about 35, approximate income \$65-70K. They had attendees from NM, AZ, TX, CA, OK, FL, NY and even Europe. They had over 900K views on Facebook, 65K on Instagram, over 18K visits to the website, and a combined reach of almost a million people in views and reach and interactions. It profits about \$2,000. Ticket prices will be \$10-15.

Reggae in the Park is requesting \$10,000. There was not a representative for this event in attendance.

Brian Wattier was in attendance for 84 Ranch Ag Fest. They are requesting \$30,000 in funding. The date of the event is still TBD. Brian said he purchased land about 3 years ago with the goal of creating a regenerative ranch for the community and his kids. This event is for a non-profit he launched called Regenerative Youth of 84.

He started an after school program and school field trips to his ranch to teach the youth about where their food comes from, growing food, life skills. That's the purpose of his nonprofit and why he's trying to raise money with this event. He is bringing agritourism to the area and will be opening up guest cabins on his ranch in June, and has been developing his ranch specifically for events. He has gotten over \$200,000 in grants to build fencing systems, new ways of automation with livestock, and plans to be a leader in the community and the country with all this. In the last year and a half he has gained over 70,000 followers and has had between 600 and a million views. Agritourism is one of the fastest growing forms of tourism, as well as experiential stays. Last year he planned the event in 10 days and had about 250 attendees. This year he would like to see 500-600 attendees. He would like to work with the board to set a date that fits best for Pagosa. It could be a 2 day event. A lot of the money would go toward marketing efforts and bringing solid entertainment.

Brent Phillips was in attendance for Mountain Light Music Festival. They are requesting \$10,000 in funding. Brent said they are a higher-end boutique chamber music festival. They have been in Pagosa since 2015. Board member Marchand said they have a total revenue of \$108,284. He asked why they feel they need the additional \$10,000 for their event. Brent said they are requesting 2% of their budget because he still needs to cover interim costs for Kia Grande, Springs Resort and guest artists and travel. The Springs Resorts is a sponsor. They are providing them with a few nights of rooms for guests. They're providing them a venue in kind, and will collect 20% of the ticket revenue. With Keyah Grande and Liberty Theatre they are paying venue fees.

Doug Carlson was in attendance for Pickle In Pagosa Pickleball Tournament. He said they are requesting \$1,500 in funding which is about 15% of their expenses. This will be their 4th year holding a tournament. They typically bring in 200-250 players, about half are visitors. 60% of their income is covered by registration sales. Last year they made about \$12,000 and the year before about \$8,000. They are donating that money as part of the \$25,000 donation to get windscreens installed.

Mary Cocke was in attendance for Hot Springs Fest. They are requesting \$4,000. Mary said the festival includes activities and soaking at all three hot springs properties. Last year they added a couple of new free community events to the festival: a wellness artisan market and the annual robe parade and after party.

Ali Whitman was in attendance for School of Movement's Wonderland performance. They are requesting \$5,000. They have been doing productions for 10 years and have increased to three productions per year. Their report shows 30% of attendees are from out of town. They advertise as a burlesque show but they are very PG in their presentation. The \$5k ask is about 25% of their production budget.

Joan Ward with Pagosa Pride was in attendance. They are requesting \$1,500. Joan said they have one presenter who's going to be staying two nights. Many of the folks who come from out of town are from Durango, Bayfield, Ignacio, Farmington. They are trying to work towards having a multi-day event where it would encourage people to stay overnight. This year, they have added the Liberty theater movie on Thursday night as a fundraiser and are working on other ideas for Friday or Sunday to encourage people to stay over.

Lindsey Kurt-Mason was in attendance for the 2026 Pagosa Paddle. They are requesting \$4,000. Board Member Lucero asked about the timing equipment that the board funded in a previous year. Mr Kurt-Mason said they did not receive money

for timing equipment and they paid for a professional timer last year. They were considering purchasing timing equipment the year before last but decided not to and instead hire a timing person. If there is a lack of water in the river they will have to cancel the event. They are working with the Springs Resort, Healing Waters, and Pagosa Lodge. 60% of their competitors are from out of town.

Kathie Disner with The Pagosa Springs Artist Studio Tour was in attendance. They are requesting \$1,200. Kathie said this is the 4th year for this event and they do have lodging partner agreements with The Springs Resort, Pagosa Lodge, and Pagosa Springs RV Park.

Susan Fischer with Life at Chimney Rock was in attendance. They are requesting \$4,275. Susan said it is a 2 day event they have held for 15-20 years. They do not have lodging partnerships because their Native American dance groups prefer to find their own lodging. About 70% of their visitors are from out of town.

Jacque Aragon with Mountain Chile Cha Cha was in attendance. They are requesting \$12,500. Jacque said their bands from northern New Mexico have a big following. They stay at vacation rentals all over Pagosa and they work with local lodgers through general promotion to encourage more overnight stays to make a weekend out of the event. This will be their 20th year holding the event with year over year growth. Last year they had 3,500-4,000 attendees.

Dave Ballina with Big Picture Classic was in attendance. Dave said they are asking for an additional \$5,000 to replace the baskets on the Cloman Park disc golf course. They cost \$12,000 to replace, but the county gave them \$5,000. The tournament went from a B tier to an A tier tournament, which changed from 2 days to 3 days, and they also got picked up on the Pro Qualifying Tour. Out of 500 courses that were applied, 20 were picked. Because of the improvements they made on the course, they were one of those courses picked. Out of the 160 players around 90-95% are coming from out of town and they expect there to be 300-400 people in town for the tournament. They do have lodging agreements with a few hotels in town.

Kat McFadden with Main Street Art walk was in attendance. They are requesting \$5,000. This is a new event taking place the last Fridays of June and July. Kat said the Art Walk is a curated event that makes downtown a whole walkable experience and includes the entire downtown. It's going to highlight artists, promote in-store shopping and visitor traffic. Their funding request is to primarily support regional advertising.

Angela Maxey and Sandy Douthey were in attendance for Chamber of Commerce for the 17th Annual Car Show. They are requesting \$15,000. Board Member Lucero mentioned that the ask is for 75% of the budget. Sandy Douthey said it is a large ask and they were encouraged to ask for more instead of less. It covers a lot of the local lodging. They need about 32 rooms for their participants. They have about 15% coming from New Mexico and 81% coming from all over Colorado, others from TX and MT so they are definitely bringing in lodging for this. They are expanding this year with more awards and prizes, more spend on marketing, food and beverage, and entertainment keeps going up. Board Member Lucero said he noticed payroll and administration are going to be paid for from the funding. Isn't that something that should already be put into the Chamber's budget? Sandy Douthey said we have put all of that into the budget. Angela Maxey said it covers her cost and payroll for the event because it is all overtime for staff. She works part-time and her responsibilities are these three events. The funds would also cover costs for the trophy builder and the person helping with the cornhole tournament, fees, and postage. They have had to market four times more than in previous years for the model car show, cornhole tournament, and pinup girl contest. They are marketing with Facebook boosts, print, ads, radio. It is a free event for attendees so they do not have ticket sales. There is an entry fee for the cars. Board Chair Prince asked how much was spent on lodging in previous years. Sandy said it looks like most of the rooms have been donated in the past. Angela said she has hit up all of the lodgers and they have been gracious by donating rooms. They do have to pay for them sometimes. Board Member Hensle said the car show and colorfest resonate high in creating impact for stays with over 50% of lodgers saying they had stays as a result of the car show. Board Member Johnson asked for attendance numbers. Angela said she didn't have that information since it is a free event. They had some decrease in participants when the event was moved to Yamaguchi but they are expecting a huge increase in participants for this year.

The Chamber of Commerce also requested \$15,000 for the Park 2 Park Artisan and Food Market. Angela said they have 93 vendors at this time. They expect to exceed last years number of 103. The vendors provide their own lodging. They are partnering with Shawna who is organizing the parade and the 250/150 party. The parade will come by the event and they are going to share security. Security is a big expense since they have to provide security for 4 nights because the vendors leave their merchandise overnight. They predict security will cost \$2,880.

The Chamber of Commerce also requested \$20,000 for the 40th Annual Colorfest. Angela Maxey said this is the event that Pagosa Springs is known for, with hot air balloons, the Passport to Pagosa, best-of Pagosa restaurants. They are hoping to increase from 7 to 10+ restaurants participating. They have about 32 balloon pilots that come into town to launch Sat and Sun. They provide rides for the sponsors of the event. They get a lot of local sponsors to get on the banner and program. They have 2-3 bands for Bands & Brews, a balloon glow, and the 250/150 drone show. Board Member Hensle said 77% of the lodgers that responded to inquiries about the event said that this created impact for them. It is in fall, which we've talked

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about being a season that we can grow here in this community. Angela said they have good support from the lodgers and get a lot of lodging donated but sometimes have to pay for the rooms.

The Chamber of Commerce also requested \$10,000 for the 2nd Annual Grillin' & Distillin'. Sandy said they broke even on the event last year. They would like to grow this event. Last year, they had 5 distillers, 1 backyard giller, two pro-grillers, and 5 vendors. They had 50 tickets pre-sold, and between 250 and 500 people attended. They are looking at moving the event to Yamaguchi Park this year. They provide lodging for the distillers. They will have only backyard grillers this year and categories for sides, ribs, chicken, etc. They will help the grillers with the meat costs.

Laura Hamilton with GGP was in attendance for Breakfast with Balloons. They requested \$3,500. Laura said the event is at the same time as Color Fest. They utilize the beautiful amphitheater to allow everyone to experience the ascension of the balloons in the morning with a brunch. This will be their 9th year. They sold out last year with 130 tickets. This year they hope to sell 150-200. It is 50% out of town attendees.

The remaining 2026 funds are \$63,463. Director called on each board member to state the dollar amount they want to fund each event. The total for each was divided by the number of voting board members for each event. The Pagosa Springs Summer Concert Series will be awarded \$5,214.29. Reggae in the Park will be awarded \$2,571.43. 84 Ranch Ag Festival will be awarded \$6,833.33. Mountain Light Music Festival will be awarded \$1,600. Pickle in Pagosa will be awarded \$1,000. Hot Springs Fest 2026 will be awarded \$2,333.33. School of Movement "Wonderland" will be awarded \$1,142.86. Pagosa Pride will be awarded \$285.71. Pagosa Paddle will be awarded \$1,166.67. Pagosa Springs Artists Studio Tour will be awarded \$371.43. Life at Chimney Rock will be awarded \$1,500. Mountain Chile Cha Cha will be awarded \$4,785.71. Baskets for Big Picture Classic will be awarded \$2,857.14. Main Street Art Walk will be awarded \$2,714.29. The Car Show will be awarded \$5,500. Park 2 Park Artisan & Food Market will be awarded \$2,500. Colorfest will be awarded \$5,416.67. Grillin' & Distillin' will be awarded \$1,660.50. and Breakfast with Balloons will be awarded \$1,214.29. That is a total of **\$50,667.64.**

Board Member and Commissioner Ranson moved to approve the funding amounts as stated, Board Member Lucero seconded.

The board will make a decision about when to hold another round of event funding applications with the remaining funds of \$12,795.

NEXT MEETINGS

IX.

Wednesday May 13th, 2026 at 3pm.

ADJOURNMENT

X.