

TAPP Strategy Retreat
ICELab at Western
2-5pm, Wednesday June 5
8:30-11:30am, Thursday June 6



Wednesday June 5, 2019

Directors in Attendance: Kurt Giesselman, Tyler Newman, Gary Pierson, Jennifer Barvitski, Morgan Bast, Kelly Osness, Wynn Williams

Staff: Laurel Runcie, Daniel Kreykes, Jeff Moffett, Andrew Sandstrom, John Norton, David Assad, Darcie Perkins

On Phone: None

Public: None

Roll Call

2:10 PM

We have a quorum. Kurt Giesselman calls the meeting to order.

No public present

Introduction

John and Kurt explain that our old structure of meetings was monthly. TAPP now has quarterly meetings, two special meetings, a two-day strategy retreat, and a finance retreat. Last year was the first strategy retreat. From that meeting TAPP decided to delve into trail running. This is something that TAPP is just beginning to execute. It is hard to get too far into the weeds on the tourism piece when the new strategy is just starting to get implemented from last year's retreat. The board has not however gone deep into the strategy of TAPP's added responsibilities of Economic Development and Western. For this year's retreat the agenda will delve into these aspects of TAPP's mission.

Economic Development with John Norton. What we have been doing. What are the barriers? New strategies?

TAPP has been on this effort for about a year and half. We can break ED into two pieces; organic growth of the existing valley businesses, and acquisition or bringing in new businesses and investors.

Organic Growth

Of the valley's organic companies, many of the successful ones have left. Jackson's Honest, Irrigation guy from ICELab accelerators, Methane/bricks all are not here in Gunnison County. Of the businesses with lots of potential; First Ascent Coffee chose to stay here after their accelerator program. There are a number of larger businesses, particularly those that export, that have not yet seen our help with programming from the ICELab. These could be some opportunities. How can TAPP and the ICELab grow these companies organically? David and Darcie are digging into future programming that will help these local businesses. It seems the current Accelerator model needs to be tweaked to best fit the needs of local businesses.

Acquisition

In the category of acquisition, we have worked with some of the companies. Waunita Hot Springs looks as if it will be purchased and turned into a greenhouse farm that is heated by the hot springs. They expect to produce at least 1 million pounds of lettuce annually, or about 1.5% share of the lettuce in CO. The extra power from the hot springs could go back to provide geothermal power to GCEA. ICELab helped to connect them with the right people in the valley: the USFS, the County, etc. We should know by the end of June if this major investment will happen.

Last year, TAPP helped to acquire BLISTER. BLISTER has 7 locals that are now working for them as reviewers in some capacity. Eleven could be another one considered as acquisition in that they became interested in the valley and have heavily invested here. It is important that we understand what the attraction was that brought them here so we can leverage this with future opportunities. Geyser and Hustle are both going through the Catapult Accelerator program at ICELab. Both companies are interested in moving to CO; they are talking about possibly relocating here. We did spend some local monies on the catapult program. In the future, we hope not to. We hope that we can get a couple of relocations so this local money was used to bring someone here. Both Geysers and Hustle are looking to the other communities and are finding incentives. Even if we don't land these companies, it will give us ammo to go to OEDIT and possibly get funding for the Catapult program because these companies are moving to CO.

While there is an opportunity zone here in Gunnison, there are other opportunity zones in Montrose, Delta, and Grand Junction. The Opportunity zone is a federal tax program that gives a tax break to businesses that develop in an economically depressed area. Enterprise zones are another potential opportunity, but we would need to get a coordinated effort with the County to make that happen. Our competitors on the western slope have a list of incentives for relocation. That is something that we do not have. The work that David and Darcie have done to benchmark this is good so that we know what we are up against.

REDI grant update from Laurel Runcie

The REDI grant that the old ICELab and the county acquired last year is nearing completion and John and Cathie hired Delaney Keating to project manage it. Included in that is an ED video series and a business assessment. We also built an ED website. The video series is still in production. One of the things that the marketing and branding committee is working on is to have fewer than the 5 websites that we currently run. We worked on this with the County, the ICELab, and the City. The site is mostly targeting outside businesses, but there are sections for local businesses as well. The categories are Live, Work, Learn. The videos are due by end of June and we will share those around once they are complete.

ICELab update from Darcie Perkins and David Assad. What's working, what's not? What does 2nd half of 2019 look like?

Coworking Space

Darcie has taken the lead on the coworking space. ICELab is a part of Proximity, a worldwide network of coworking spaces. It actually started in Montrose and has spread worldwide. The income that has been generated was submitted to TAPP for the first time this month. We have changed some of the member programs to better fit needs. We are also getting some non-payers into compliance. We are working on putting a special package together for students. There are thousands of students on campus. We moved the conference room to a more private space. This not only makes the conference room better, it also opens up some more popular dedicated desk spaces in the old conference room. Kurt has heartburn about TAPP taking monies in from the ICELab. If 100% of the accounts run through TAPP we have a liability there. David and Darcie will reach out to the TAPP board to work this issue out. The auditor could work with us and Kurt also has a contact. Kurt wants to separate TAPP from ICELab for these risks.

Expenses

We will not pay rent. Coming into this, we didn't have a good budget from Western as it went under a much larger umbrella and was not itemized out for ICELab in particular. Other expenses include;

- Staff Retainers
- Storylab computers program licensing.
- Cleaning is another expense. Western was cleaning, but it has not been happening anymore. Gary is looking into getting a work study piece together for cleaning.
- Copier lease.
- Internet via Internet CO. We will pay a flat monthly fee that includes 100% of the technical support.
- Proximity Networks fee is another one.

Café News

We are still working with Coffee Lab and Third Bowl on taking over the space. Third Bowl has backed down from being physically there, but rather wants to sell the ice cream to Coffee Lab

and have them run it. RMBL is voting on the process and should know this week. This should happen at least for the first day of school. Pushing for a week or two before. The alcohol will be going away except for special events. They are also talking about staying open later, until 9PM so that students have a place to come later for coffee and ice cream. Coffee Lab will need help promoting to Western.

SBDC update

The SBDC satellite office will now be housed at the Gunnison Chamber. Darcie will be an ex-officio board member for the chamber so she can stay attuned to what is happening. The main office will be moved to Montrose. For larger events we will host them at the ICELab. As this new structure at SBDC develops, Darcie will stay up to date on changes so that ICELab can complement the services offered by SBDC.

There will be one-off people that come in and ICELab will be advisory for how they can best find resources whether that means setting them up with ICELab mentors or SBDC. As the “new” SBDC develops, we will better understand how ICELab can fill in the gaps.

Accelerators/Incubators

We will continue to run accelerator/incubator programs that will grow local businesses organically. There was an issue with the programming structure for some of the local businesses. There was a LOT of time commitment without a detailed schedule, this scared some great potential businesses away. Moving forward we will be updating these programs so that it better fits the needs of serious businesses. We are currently happy with our partnership with Fluent as they help to develop the curriculum. We will continue to develop and build on the existing curriculum. We are trying to help the companies that we can grow in a big way. The export model has the most growth potential.

How are we helping the restaurants and retailers that are currently in town? We can't grow their business five times; they are limited by their space, etc. The tourism promotion we do help these businesses to be more successful. If someone says they are losing money on their restaurant, that is an SBDC thing. If someone came to us and said that restaurants are an issue, there is not good quality food and there isn't a good product here, then we would have a problem. At that point, we would have a conversation about how we could help there. Say there is a big-name chef that is trying to come to the Valley to open a restaurant that has potential to bring new people here, we could help that. How can we provide the clarity on what we can and will do vs sending them to other resources? It is a tough spot because SBDC is changing its structure. We need to find the place that we can fit in best and help out.

We had a request from the County Commissioners that ICELab look at getting entrepreneurial parents trained on opening new early childhood care programs. Region 10 is already doing this and we can provide the space and help to organize this. This way we can focus on our greater mission.

The incubator program also needs rethinking. It was not well attended. We are reworking the structure and the messaging that is going out there. SBDC is already doing most of the pieces

that the Incubator covers. We will continue to help to facilitate and house any programming that the SBDC is offering.

Current Programming

The current accelerators are going now. Catapult Outdoor Recreation Accelerator has sponsors who are providing funds and in-kind services. Geyser, Hustle and Gearo are cohort one in this program. The three founders presented to Boulder Startup week in their 8th week of the 12-week program. It was a good event and the video of the event is on the ICELab youtube channel. Everything about the event was good except that the theater was empty. The partners were not happy with the turnout. A big part of the draw for these companies was being a part of a big startup week. For this reason, we need to continue this portion of the program. In the future we will work with our partners to get better attendance.

Is there still some damage control with partners to get them on board with another round? We think that we saved this first one and they will give us another chance. Who are other partners and sponsors we can bring in? There was talk of the North Face or another big retailer like REI? There could be some heartache with Moosejaw who is a current sponsor and competitor with REI. The teams are at Western Slope startup week right now. Their program ends with tickets to Outdoor Retailer. They will then have a booth at the November Innovator Outdoor Retailer Show. Active Interest Media has stepped in and helped to get these companies ready for the show. Could we host a general "startup week" like Western Slope Startup week? David will be attending Western Slope Startup Week just after this meeting. He will report back on potential for the future.

The regional accelerator program has 4 businesses in it. One of them is looking to locate here and currently lives on the front rang. All the others are local. Good Life Girls offers outdoor adventure programming for girls ages 7-14. Love Bites is a health food bar. A potential rye whiskey distiller is in the program. Gunnison Community Capital group is a venture capitalist. A couple of the businesses have really listened and have adapted their model to grow. The advertising for this regional program came out late and there was very little recruitment. In the future, actively going after companies with large growth potential will help to fill out the program. Moving forward there need to be cuts of those participants that aren't engaged. This needs to be communicated in the recruitment and application process.

Follow up:

- Consolidation of other incentive offers
- John will follow up with One Valley Leadership Council on potential incentives planning via the Sonoran Institute.
- Go to OEDIT on potential funding for Catapult
- Set a goal for % of companies from Catapult that will relocate and develop a strategy to achieve this.
- Search for other funding mechanisms
- Redesign the Accelerator/Incubator programs to best fit the needs of local companies.

Meeting adjourned 5:15PM

Thursday June 6th, 2019

Directors in Attendance: Kurt Giesselman, Tyler Newman, Gary Pierson, Jennifer Barvitski, Morgan Bast, Kelly Osnes, Wynn Williams

Staff: Laurel Runcie, Daniel Kreykes, Jeff Moffett, Andrew Sandstrom, John Norton, Darcie Perkins

On Phone: Morgan Bast

Public: Greg Salisbury

Roll Call

8:02 AM

We have a quorum. Kurt Giesselman calls the meeting to order.

Grant Cycle questions from Wynn Williams

Wynn thinks that we should consider changing up the way the grant cycle is done. There is a LOT of work that goes into this and there ends up being inevitable anger in the community. It is something that we need to continue, but how can we make it better? Kurt thinks, there are a few pieces that we could do to decrease the staff work time. We could do a single grant cycle instead of two. Make it so those that apply aren't able to do it again for x number of years. Laurel countered the second point...After the first summer grant cycle we developed a metric of cost per visitor. The Alley Loop was one of the best returns and it isn't necessarily a new or different event. There are some events that we have funded every year and have showed a great return. Wynn suggested taking them out of the grant cycle and bringing them under our umbrella as a line item in our budget. Another issue that we had was that we had some stewardship applications that don't fit into our rubric. We don't want to become a line item on people's budget. If we fund something every year, are we really helping an event grow? Or would it be big with or without our help? Mt. Crested Butte set a precedent on really publishing and getting their grant cycle out there and they still have the same people apply every year. Another option could be that if someone applies and get funding 3 years in a row, they can't the next year. We could put a \$ limit on the ask from applicants. We could do a single fall, winter, and spring cycle. This is something that commissioners have asked us to do and they wanted us to formalize the process. Kurt likes the transparency and fairness of the process. The staff time required to the impact we are making is disproportionately high. How do we reduce the staff load with comparison to staff time? Staff will map out the options and then we will revisit at the July meeting.

Update on TAPP branding work with Laurel Runcie. CBMR updates? Arrivalist findings. How do we get more people involved in TrailQuest?

Morgan Bast presented CBMR branding

Update on TAPP branding work

Last night, we handed out a one-page brand pillars sheet for all to read as homework. The marketing and branding subcommittee has met 4 times over the last couple months and this is what we have come up with so far. The goal is to solidify our brand positioning across our mission of Tourism, Economic Development, STOR, and Western. We hope to so consolidate websites and make our voice clear across all channels. This “new” branding is more of a refinement of what we have been doing as opposed to a new brand being launched. We will be launching this “new” brand next spring.

Kurt thought that Morgan’s comment that if you aren’t a little uncomfortable you aren’t doing it right was correct. We are trying to appeal to the right person, not just any person. The psychograph and brand pillars appeal to the emotions of the people that would love to be here. These pillars have to be something that we as the Gunnison Valley are the best at, not something that any destination can own. Untamed, Boundless, Grit, and Discovery are the pillars we are pushing around. Discovery is the one that we felt was a little soft. We liked that it encompassed the learning potential with public schools, Western, ICELab, personal growth exploring new places etc. We will continue to work on finding the right fit with discovery. Gary shared a piece from Elevation Outdoors, “Commodification Blues” that speaks well to the psychograph of the mountain towns. Grit and Boundless are adjectives; should the other be a verb? Another piece of the psychograph is can we own “coming home”? This is something that every destination is trying to own. To be more impactful, we need to understand why it feels like we are coming home. We need to make sure that our word choice crosses generational lines and isn’t too stuck in millennial or one generation. How could “stoke” be changed to be more multi-generational? We have talked about how many people bought their home on their first trip to the valley. Why is that? What is it about this place that just fits. In the 2003 branding exercise with 1000s of visitors what came out is that it is “the place that just feels right.” Misfits and undisciplined are other words that people are hung up on. What about maverick? It brings in the ranching piece with its true definition of an unbranded cow and couples it with the rogue misfit mentality.

Branding Follow up:

- Push on the why this place feels like, “coming home.”
- Move towards the people instead of the place in the psychograph.
- Work on Discovery.
- Bring this to some of the business community and get some outside input from the greater valley. We could do ranchers, north valley restaurateurs, a student focus group, the chamber boards.
- We will refine what we have and put some money behind this with a professional study. We want to see how this messaging resonates.
- Everyone from the board and staff continue to send feedback.

Arrivalist with Jeff Moffett and Laurel Runcie

This shows our true destination marketing performance. We used to have O&D data which was only capturing the folks that fly into Gunnison, a very tiny percentage of our visitors. We also

used to be able to sample skiers. Now we have a clearer picture year-round and with drive markets as well.

One interesting thing we found this winter was that the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area, O&D data showed very modest gains but Arrivalist showed huge increases. This shows that people were not necessarily flying into Gunnison but drove in or flew to Denver instead. Now we have a much better understanding of the true impact of our marketing. Had we only had our old measures, we would have thought that our marketing fell flat in MSP, but because of Arrivalist, we know that is a good potential market for us. We are taking this data to the Air Command and RTA to help drive decisions on air service.

We see the vast majority of people coming from within the state of CO. We can also see how long they are staying here. Dallas has a bigger impact with this measure because they are staying longer. This is ironic because Houston is hardly showing up but Dallas is where we don't have summer air service.

Arrivalist Data Driving Decisions

+13.4% in Q1

We saw a shift of people going directly to CBMR and staying there longer. Decrease in Gunnison downtown visitors.

Looking at marketing spends. We identified top 20 markets visiting 2018 Outerbike to direct 2019 campaigns. Florida ranks 30-40 most of the summer but moved up for the Outerbike weekend. Is that a good market for us? Fayetteville/Bentonville we would assume was a great market for mountain biking. Arrivalist data showed that it was not near as strong as expected. We can also understand a bit about where folks are staying, for instance in the STR market. We can see exposures from which campaigns and then arrival rates. Guests are 700% more likely to come if we get them to our website. We are just beginning to understand what ad campaigns are working and which are not. This data will become better as time goes on. There are also implications to STOR and Land Use Planning based on the heat maps of where people are. We are working with the county GIS manager. STOR committee might use it for bathroom planning etc.

We see more arrivals on Thursday Friday and Saturday. It is interesting that winter and summer look very similar. This can help us to drive restaurant management etc.

TrailQuest with Daniel Kreykes

We are working to increase TrailQuest participation.

Current efforts:

- Brittany's TrailQuest Stories video.
- Banners around the valley
- Print media
 - Wildflower Festival
 - Elevation Outdoors
 - John's TrailQuest weekly columns.
- Events
 - Ride the Rockies

Bike Week and TrailQuest Challenge

Outerbike

Language provided to grantees for inclusion in racer/participant emails and documents

-Blister Podcast

Bikes and Big Ideas

Off the Couch

-PR

Pickups in Dirtrag, Elevation Outdoors, 5280, TGR during Fall 2018. Elevation Outdoors pickup in April 2019 Bike Issue.

-New Website

Content migration underway soon. New website will be much cleaner have better explanations for CBGTRails, TrailQuest etc.

-Influencer Trips

Plans for two influencers to come out in mid-July for General MTB.

-STOR

Coasters and STOR messaging

-Other efforts

Dirtbag Diaries

Bikepacking

The Trek

The app is one of the best engagement tools that we have. Now it is a good mapping tool, but we are further developing the engagement side.

Helping Western. How best can we do that?

Greg Salsbury presented a “state of the university report” to the TAPP Board and suggested ways in which we can work together such as potential internship program or by supporting counselor visits.

Follow up/Next Steps

A few things that come out of this meeting. What Greg has asked for here is, “this is the problem and I need help with the solution.” How can we create more internships here in the valley for students? How can we help with high school recruiters? Staff will discuss and bring follow up to the July board meeting.

For the branding subcommittee. The marketing and branding committee press forward and report back if there is more to share for the July meeting.

Grant Cycle we will talk about for the July meeting. Staff will submit a proposal.

Economic Development follow up falls back to ICELab staff and advisory board.
How do we mechanize the organic piece and get businesses interested in the programming?
Come to the July meeting with a better focus on how we can achieve this.

Finance committee meeting prior to the next board meeting in July to discuss a mechanism to formalize department budget requests.

Meeting adjourned 11:43