

NEVADA COMMISSION ON TOURISM
Wednesday, November 4, 2020

Call to order

Lt. Governor Kate Marshall, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Commissioners present

Lt. Governor Kate Marshall, Chair
Bob Stoldal
Brian Wadsworth
Cynthia Mun
Edward Estipona
Herb Santos, Jr.
Jane Moon
Jennifer Cunningham
Jill Lagan
Julie Pazina
Kristin Windbigler
Pam Robinson
Rick Murdock

Commissioners absent/excused

Steve Hill

Staff and other guests present

Benda Scolari
Christian Passink
Harry Ward
Jessica Grundy
Juraj Sojka
Kate Wilson
Kyle Shulz
M.E. Kawchack
Shari Bombard

Meeting

MARSHALL: All right. Let me call the meeting to order. This is the Nevada Commission on Tourism, November

4th, 1:00 p.m. PST. All right. Can I get confirmation if the meeting was properly noticed and posted?

GRUNDY: Yes, it was.

MARSHALL: Thank you, Jessica. And then would you call roll for me please and tell me if we have a quorum?

GRUNDY: Absolutely. Okay. Lieutenant Governor Marshall?

MARSHALL: Here.

GRUNDY: Cynthia Mun?

MUN: Here.

GRUNDY: Edward Estipona?

ESTIPONA: Here.

GRUNDY: Herb Santos, Jr.?

SANTOS: Here.

GRUNDY: Jane Moon?

MOON: Present.

GRUNDY: Jennifer Cunningham?

CUNNINGHAM: Here.

GRUNDY: Jill Lagan?

LAGAN: Here.

GRUNDY: Julie Pazina?

PAZINA: Here.

GRUNDY: Kristin Windbigler?

WINDBIGLER: Here.

GRUNDY: Rick Murdock. Rick? Steve Hill? Okay. Looks like we have a quorum.

STOLDAL: I'm here too.

GRUNDY: I'm sorry. Bob Stoldal is here.

CUNNINGHAM: Jessica. This is Jennifer Cunningham. I just got a text from Mr. Murdock saying he's having problems getting on the meeting. Is there someone from your department that can maybe assist him?

GRUNDY: Yes, we will check on that right now. Thank you. And then, Brian Wadsworth? Okay. We have a quorum.

MARSHALL: Why don't we give it a few more minutes for Rick Murdock to see if he can get on.

WEBSTER: Please have Mr. Murdock reach out to me. I put it in chat for the phone number, please. Thank you.

CUNNINGHAM: Will do.

MARSHALL: Is he trying to get onto Zoom or call in?

CUNNINGHAM: Zoom.

MARSHALL: Okay. Let's give it a few seconds since he's a new member. Well, why don't I, since the new members can't approve the meeting minutes anyway, let me move to agenda item B while we're waiting for Mr. Murdock come on. This is a time for public comment. I'd like people to know that there will be time again for public comment at the end, but if you have a public comment now, if you want to maybe put your name in the chat so that I can see that you want to make a public comment. Is there anyone who would like to make public comment on the call? Okay. Just remember that if you missed it this time, there is public comment at the end. All right. Moving to agenda item C, approval of minutes from August 13th, 2020. Are there any --

WARD: Madam Chair. Deputy Attorney General Harry Ward. May we also make a note on the record whether we received any e-mail public comment, whether to the commissioners or the staff?

MARSHALL: Thank you so much for reminding me, I really appreciate that. Going back to agenda item B. I'm sorry. Were there any e-mails presented for public comment, Jessica?

GRUNDY: No, there were not.

MARSHALL: Okay. Thank you. Thank you so much and thank you for flagging that for me. Okay. Moving to agenda item C approval of minutes from August 13th. Who do we have here, Herb? You said you had two changes to the minutes.

SANTOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just saw two things I'd like to change. Page 11, the word was typed in as improved. It should have said approved. When I'm citing the statute and then on page 27, it says billion and I don't think we have a \$4.5 billion budget during the pandemic. It should've said million instead of billion. So those are the two changes I had there. So, page 11 change improved to approved and page 27, change billion to million.

MARSHALL: Well, we're striving for billion.

SANTOS: I wish it really was 4.5 billion, but --

MARSHALL: Thank you, Herb. Julia Pazina.

PAZINA: On page 33, I believe it should be M.E. Kawchack, but it was written as Kawchack for just referring to what she was sharing at the time.

MARSHALL: That's a good catch. Thank you, Julie. Kristin Windbigler.

WINDBIGLER: I am actually not listed as present in the minutes.

MARSHALL: Really. Why?

WINDBIGLER: I want to make sure that you know I'm here today.

MARSHALL: Yeah. Could we please correct the minutes to show that Kristin was present last time and then make sure that she's shown as present for today. Thank you. Okay. Herb, you said you had one more.

SANTOS: Yes. I apologize. Madam Chair. Herb Santos for the record. At page 28, it says "Thank you, Madam Chair, second." Then it has "M.E." I have no idea what the M.E. stands for. I was talking about the written materials. I may have garbled a little bit so if we could take the "M.E." out because I don't think it is –

GRUNDY: I think it was referring to M.E. Kawchack.

SANTOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Second M -- yeah, but I'm talking. Did I say her name or –

GRUDNY: I believe so.

SANTOS: Okay. Well then if I did that, then I'll withdraw that. Sorry.

GRUNDY: I'll check it.

MARSHALL: Okay. Any other changes, corrections? If not, do I have a motion to approve the minutes?

CUNNINGHAM: So moved.

MARSHALL: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Cunningham, do I have a second?

MUN: I second.

MARSHALL: All right. Any discussion? Okay. Hearing none. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion passes. Just so you know that -- I don't know if you guys can hear that? That's my puppy. Hold on. She has a very high success rate. She gets a hundred percent. Squeaky toys all destroyed.

GRUNDY: Rick has joined us.

MARSHALL: Rick. Thank you. Okay. Very, very glad then. Thank you. All right. Then this is totally perfect.

We're moving then to the new commissioners, but before I start, I just wanted to say that we had quite a number of commissioners whose terms were ended or the Governor did not reappoint them, and I just wanted to make a comment on the record that the Board that we had was really incredible. I was just very, very impressed. You know you come onto a new board and you're supposed to be the leader, but in fact, you are not up to speed compared to the other board members and don't have their expertise. And I just really felt that the Board showed real

leadership and I greatly appreciated them. And so actually, we're going to be creating certificates from the Lieutenant Governor's Office and we will be sending them to those board members. I just wanted people to know that I was very grateful for the board.

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. I just also want to express my gratitude on behalf of myself and staff. As you said, the appointment process is such that we don't always have the opportunity to thank outgoing members in person, but very much grateful for their service and their commitment to Nevada tourism. Thank you.

MARSHALL: They're very impressive. We have new commissioners, which I'm very excited about and I wanted to give people a moment to say something. I'll start with our new commissioner, who's an old hand at this, Edward Estipona. How are you?

ESTIPONA: Okay, thank you. I'm an old hand because I was a non-voting, but now I'm a voting. So yay, I get to be part of the team. Just wanted to give a little insight on myself. I am an ad agency owner for the last 27 years, a Nevada corporation. Done fair amount of work in tourism, healthcare technology, various different industries. Super excited at this point to really help the state of Nevada get back on its feet with tourism. I think it's a good time. I think there's some phenomenal opportunities that we have, and this is the thing, like all the formulas are broken again like they were in 2008. The cool thing about when formulas are broken is whoever gets there first gets to recreate the formula and I think Nevada can get there first. I'm excited to do that and excited to help and excited to be part of the Board. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Very excited to have you as a voting member. Thanks, Edward. I really appreciate it. Jill Lagan.

LAGAN: Thank you very much. I'm very excited to be a part of this. Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to being able to help represent some of the rural communities in the State of Nevada. We have such a great state. It's something to be proud of. So personally, I've been with the Chamber of Commerce here in Boulder City for the last 20 years. Very grateful to be able to represent the tourism and businesses here in Boulder. Also, I was born and raised here in the State of Nevada, right here in Boulder City. My family's been here since 1947. Grateful to have roots here and to have family members who helped build Hoover Dam and so we're really glad that we can be able to help promote the history and the outdoor recreation that Boulder City has to offer. Thank you for this opportunity.

MARSHALL: Thank you. And I've had a chance to visit with you down in Boulder and that's really great. You're definitely a dynamo, so I'm really happy to have you on board.

LAGAN: Thank you.

MARSHALL: Jane Moon, I had an opportunity to visit with you also. How are you?

MOON: I'm well, thank you. And thank you for stopping by Fallon and welcoming me on board. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm happy to be here and hopefully I can be a good service to Nevada tourism and the citizens of Nevada. And I'm especially excited to represent the rural communities because we are so unique here in Nevada and so diverse in what we offer that we want to continue to share that out with the rest of the nation and the world. I'm happy to serve and I'm glad to be here with you.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Really appreciate it. And then Rick Murdock.

MURDOCK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Great to be here. Thirty-nine years with the Row. However, I do have small business interests in Douglas County, Ormsby County and Washoe County. That's my night job and my day job's the Row. I'm a Nevadan through and through. Love that we've got our rurals. Rurals are so important to this group and I'm excited to be here and excited for tourism recovery. As we all know, we all need it and this is the engine I think that it's most important for the State of Nevada for obvious reasons and I'll do whatever you need me to do. And I'm just thankful to be on this Commission. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Well, I can tell you're a real Nevadan when you said Ormsby County. Thank you. And then, Jennifer, so do we have Charles Harris? How's that going at RSCVA?

CUNNINGHAM: Charles Harris has been appointed as our new CEO and he starts on November 16th. This most likely will be my final meeting, much to my sadness.

MARSHALL: Well, you can always tell him you'll be sitting in for him. We wouldn't mind.

CUNNINGHAM: Okay. Well, I'll try that first. Thank you, Kate.

MARSHALL: All right. Thank you very much. I want to welcome all the new commissioners. I really, really appreciate you stepping up to being on the board. We are in a challenging moment, but you will quickly learn that Brenda and her staff bring an incredible amount of expertise and passion to this job. We are well taken care of. The next thing I wanted to talk to you about was an appointment of a vice-chair. We have a lot of new members on

the Board and I live in Reno, and so I also don't have a lot of marketing experience. And so, I would like to appoint Cynthia Mun if she will have it. I would like to appoint her and wonder how the Board feels about that.

CUNNINGHAM: Wonderful idea.

SANTOS: Beautiful. All for it.

PAZINA: No one better.

STOLDAL: One hundred percent support for that.

MARSHALL: Cynthia you're silent.

MUN: I am so honored to be able to serve on the board, to work with the Commission, the commissioners, you, Brenda and Travel Nevada. In the past two years, it has been an amazing experience to say that I can actually add value and to help Nevada. It's been one of those things where I feel like I can finally do something for Nevada and I'm very grateful and I will do my best to continue to serve Nevada. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Well, if people are comfortable with that, I would accept a motion.

ESTIPONA: So moved.

MARSHALL: I will take a motion from Edward and then Julie, would you like to second?

PAZINA: I would love to second.

MARSHALL: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All right. Hearing none. All those in favor of Cynthia Mun as vice-chair, say aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion carries. Thank you, Cynthia. I didn't know whether to congratulate you or commiserate with you but thank you very much.

MUN: Thank you.

MARSHALL: Edward, I got your message that you may have to leave at two. Thank you for saying that. All right. I think what we're doing now is director's report. Is that right, Brenda?

SCOLARI: Lieutenant Governor, I believe we have item F, which is the appointment of a Recovery Committee chair.

MARSHALL: I'm sorry. I'm looking at an old version of the agenda. I apologize. Guys, we have the Recovery Subcommittee. Pam Robinson was a member of our board. As many of you know, she has been a very, very

valuable member and she finished her term as a member of the Board, and I had asked her to serve on the recovery sub-committee. And I wonder what you guys think about her being chair of that subcommittee, given her incredible experience as one of the longer serving members and someone who is wherever we go, she's always there at the Roundup and any of the meetings and conferences we have with respect to tourism. I wonder what people thought about her. I would like to nominate her as chair of the Recovery Committee, and I wonder what the Board thought about that.

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. That's another excellent choice.

MUN: Cynthia Mun, for the record. I completely agree. I think Pam's been there, her experience with the previous administration and her kind of knowledge of what's been going on for the Commission and for Nevada, I think is knowledge that we don't want to lose and she's an excellent -- been a hardworking commissioner and she's also really smart. So yes, I completely agree.

MARSHALL: Yes, very smart. Yes. She has a lot of experience. I don't think she's here at our board meeting today, but I did ask her if she would consider it. I can tell you that she would accept if we made that offer to her. If people don't have any other thoughts, I would accept a motion.

WILSON: This is Kate Wilson, for the record. I did just want the larger Board to know that the Recovery Subcommittee also --

MARSHALL: Okay. -- you're cutting out a little or I don't know if it's just my --

Mun: No, I couldn't hear her either.

MARSHALL: Okay. Yeah. The Recovery Subcommittee also nominated her to be Chair of the Recovery Committee. I think I guess I should say, I'm wondering if the Board would approve that.

SANTOS: This is Herb Santos, for the record. If you want to entertain a motion, I'll make the motion right now.

MARSHALL: Yes.

SANTOS: I would move to appoint Pam Robinson as the Recovery Committee Chair for the Subcommittee Recovery Committee. Mouthful.

MARSHALL: You can correct it on the minutes next time.

SANTOS: That's probably what I'm going to have to do.

MARSHALL: All right. I have a motion. Do I have a second?

MUN: Yes. Cynthia Mun, for the record and I second.

MARSHALL: Okay. I have a motion and a second. Do I have any discussion? All right. Hearing none, all those in favor of Pam Robinson as Chair of the Recovery Subcommittee, say aye.

COMMISSOIN: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion carries. Thank you very much. I think I'm looking at an old agenda, Brenda. Thank you for -- hold on a second. No, I have them. Yeah. What I have next on the agenda, your report. Is that correct?

SCOLARI: That is correct.

MARSHALL: Okay. Yeah. So just keep me honest, but anyway. Moving to the next agenda item, for discussion only, directors report. Take it away, Brenda.

SCOLARI: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. I'm just going to go over some of the highlights of staff activity that won't be covered elsewhere in the agenda. I'm going to refer to my notes here because there was a lot going on. I want to remind everyone to visit travelnevada.com, which has completed a content reformatting and the new website is completely navigation friendly. It will be less expensive to maintain and for visitors, the site will offer more travel inspiration in a more visually compelling way and will be easier to find via search due to extensive optimization efforts by marketing staff and the Noble Studios team, which is our web developer of record. I'm happy to say in the short time since it has launched, the website has already been awarded the 2020 W3 award in the silver category for tourism website. Web traffic in the first quarter increased 13.3% over the previous quarter and behavioral metrics improved indicating better overall engagement with the site, which was our goal. As the Discover Your Nevada campaign ramped up in September, the website saw an increase of Nevada resident traffic of 18.7% in the same period year over year, which was a direct KPI for the Discover Your Nevada campaign. Though our paid efforts in public relations have been minimal, we've gotten extensive earned journalistic coverage via television and radio stations for Discover Your Nevada, as well as national and global coverage in publications like Newsweek, the Saturday Evening Post and Travel & Leisure, featuring Nevada's position as an outdoor destination. I want to give full kudos to our PR team, Tracie Barnthouse and Chris Moran, for making those stories happen. Marketing, as you know, is very centered onto the Discover Your Nevada campaign right now. The team focused

on the development of new content, such as trip ideas, highlighted communities and local deals featured on discoveryournevada.com, which is refreshed weekly. That campaign began with a rolling soft launch in September and we'll continue through the end of the calendar year, focusing on our in-state audience, our Nevada residents. The goal is to educate them about all our state has to offer and boost the economy through safe, nearcation excursions. There have been some incredibly well-executed pieces that have been placed including this insert in the Reno Gazette Journal, similar wrap in the Las Vegas Sun and each of these placements was accompanied by a digital takeover for those readerships. If anyone wants a hard copy, I believe we have some to share, but they're really impressive and informative. We'll have a report from the Marketing Committee later in the agenda, but I do want to point out one of our good news items is thanks to CRF funding for Discover Your Nevada, we've been able to expand the approved based budget of \$300,000 by \$1.5 million, which has greatly enhanced our ability to buy broadcast and online streaming for TV and radio, which, as you know, are the most expensive mediums. Besides the recovery grant applications you'll review today, the sales and industry partners team has continued their partner outreach with grant workshops, weekly partner director calls, and of course, their quarterly industry newsletter. Industry partners staff also hosted webinars with tour operators to boost awareness of the Volaris flight from Guadalajara. The only current international flight to Reno/Tahoe, which was eliminated for months after the pandemic outbreak break but is now back on with two weekly flights. They've also engaged with tour operators and travel agents in California and Arizona to promote Nevada's 10 branded road trips and participated in the virtual Go West Summit trade show, taking meetings with industry professionals from around the world. They also assisted the marketing team with efforts to reach the Hispanic community with translations and Discover Your Nevada promotional opportunities. Both marketing and PR always assist the cultural agencies within the department , this quarter, including promotion of the Indian Commission's, *This is Why We Dance* virtual event and Nevada State Railroad's suffrage train event and the Carson museum's creation of the special medallion honoring healthcare workers on coin press number one and the Nevada Art Council's *Poetry Out Loud* event. I do want to wrap up by saying that Travel Nevada staff has been incredibly challenged as you know. This has been a tough summer of financial and workload challenges. I just want to thank them all for their diligence and hard work as we make our way through this very challenging time for the industry. If there aren't any questions about any of those items, I will move on to the next part of item G, which is funding projections. But do we have any questions?

MARSHALL: Are there any questions from Board members what Brenda has given us so far?

SCOLARI: Okay. I'll move on to an update on our lodging tax funding projections and we'll turn it over to Kyle Shulz who is Travel Nevada's research manager.

SHULZ: Thank you, Brenda. Can everyone hear me okay? Okay, perfect. I'm going to share my screen real quick, just so we're all kind of looking at the same thing here. What we really wanted to do is take the opportunity here to present the Commission some updated funding projections, as Brenda mentioned, and kind of compare those to what we presented to the Commission back in August. On the left-hand side of this screen you'll see here are the previous projections in that box in the middle. On the right-hand side are our current projections. In our current projections, the yellow-shaded values our actual values, the blue shaded values are what our current projected values are, but I wanted to point out here that in our current projected values, that July and August numbers, we have most of that data. We're only waiting on a couple of data points here, so those are pretty close to final numbers. You can see July and August; those projected values are a bit better than what we had projected previously. We should wind up somewhere around \$790,000 in room tax collections in July, probably going to be somewhere around \$860,000 to \$870,000 in August. Previously, we had projected about \$600,000 in July and about \$615,000 in August. Things have been a little bit better than we've anticipated so far in terms of room demand in this fiscal year. We've revised our projections upward a bit, which you can see reflected in the -- that bottom box in the fiscal year totals. Previously we had anticipated, or we had projected about nine and a half million dollars in room tax collections in fiscal year 21. We're now projecting about \$13.1, \$13.2 million. In terms of room tax collections, previously we had about \$28.9 million projected room nights occupied. Now we're about \$35.6, \$35.7. So again, we've revised upwards as things have been a little bit better than expected, but there's a couple of things that we wanted you all to keep in mind when looking at these figures. These are things that we're keeping in mind as well. One of these is that the assumptions that we listed in that top box at the top of the screen, particularly that bottom assumption, which is COVID hospitalizations. Under this scenario, which is scenario two, we have a best case, worst case. This is our scenario two, which is kind of a mid-level case in between those two. We're assuming that COVID hospitalizations have gradual improvement from month to month. As I'm sure we're all aware of at this point in time, hospitalizations are gradually increasing, as our case levels are increasing as well. So that assumption is very much in jeopardy right now, at least for the short term.

Another thing that we wanted to point out is, again, this is a mid-level scenario in between a best case and a worst case. In a best-case scenario, we are thinking that the health situation in the states will improve pretty drastically or pretty dramatically in the short term and there'll be a vaccine in the spring. In the worst case, we are assuming that hospitalizations and the health situation will decrease or decline pretty severely in the short term, which will lead to a shutdown in the early part of next year. Actuality is probably going to be somewhere in between these two extremes, which way we don't really know, but at least in terms of what we're seeing right now in the hospitalizations, again we're seeing increases in hospitalizations, a little bit worsening of the health situation. We've already seen from travel sentiment data that as, at least nationally, as the health situation kind of deteriorates, travel sentiment declines. Whether that will turn out in this case, as far as whether it will turn out in terms of less room demand in our projections or an actual value is yet to be seen. But again, those are just things to keep in mind when looking at these values. So even though we're projecting \$13.1, \$13.2 million in room tax collections under these assumptions, again, if the health situation declines a bit that could be reflected in travel demand. One other thing that we wanted to point out here is, again, this is for the state as a whole on aggregate. From the data that we've seen so far, we know that rural Nevada is doing better than the two urban areas. And we know that out of the two urban areas, Reno is doing a little bit better than Vegas. So those are all kind of things that we're taking into account in these assumptions and in these projections as well. There's a lot of moving parts as you might well imagine, but that's where we're sitting currently. And again, we just wanted to provide that update to the Commission. With that, I'll hand it back over to you, Brenda, unless there are any questions.

MARSHALL: Any questions from the Board? I really appreciate the information. I note that while there's improvement, it's still very small, right? And we're still in a difficult situation, but it is nice to see some improvement and that's got to be due to your work on the Discover Your Nevada. Thank you.

SCOLARI: Thank you, Kyle. Kyle, if you could stop sharing screen so I can bring up my -- for the record, Brenda Scolari. I'll just go over some of the funding and budget expenditures. There are three budget tables included in your Commission materials. Let me kind of step you through those. The top table is a lodging tax funding comparison for Travel Nevada's budget categories. What Kyle reviewed, the projections overall are for the three-eighths of one percent that comes to the entire department in lodging tax. These tables represent the funding and expenditures for Travel Nevada. The coronavirus relief funding we secured from the Governor's

Finance Office is included in the purple rows. The CRF funding amounts approved by the interim finance committee are detailed in the middle table.

MARSHALL: You want to share your screen, Brenda, so – can you do –

GRUNDY: I can share it Brenda.

SCOLARI: Yeah, let me –

GRUNDY: Want me to go ahead and try?

SCOLARI: Yes. If you could, Jessica. I didn't have it ready to pull up and should have.

MARSHALL: No worries. There you go. Okay. Is that easier for Board members then? We can follow along. I'm sorry, Brenda, go ahead.

SCOLARI: Okay, hang on just a moment here. Okay. As I said, the CRF funding is detailed in the middle table in the purple and it represents Travel Nevada payroll for Q2. The Cares Act did allow for payroll expenditures for anything associated with COVID compliant, promotion and marketing restarts. We were able to quantify payroll for the second quarter for marketing team, sales and industry partners team and some of the fiscal and administrative time for those programs. It's payroll, travelnevada.com revisions, the visitor's guide, Discover Your Nevada. What we've now titled the Volunteer Impact Projects, formerly referred to as the Tourism Peers Volunteer Projects, creative development in regard to COVID, open and ready for business messages, marketing research and, of course, the recovery grants. Any CRF funding within this \$4.6 million that is unexpended by December 30th will be returned to the state. The bolded rows on the top table kind of tell our current funding story within the marketing Category 31. With the increase from updated projections that Kyle described, and the addition of CRF funding, which has been added to the budget as Category 15 for tracking purposes, the projected total available for Travel Nevada to spend this fiscal year is now just over \$8.9 million. The third table is our year-to-date expenditures within Category 31 and Category 15, as you can see the biggest expenditures thus far, have been within marketing and research. The first quarter of the fiscal year will be our leanest in regard to actual lodging tax collections since it represents the period of statewide closure. I believe I described at the last full Commission meeting that we do experience a six to eight-week lag from collections within the municipalities and then when we actually receive it in our account. What I'm describing, and as you look at the table, you can see that we've been extremely conservative with spending in the first quarter as a result of that. As lodging tax collections improve and CRF

funding is expended, our spending will go up considerably in Q2 and in 2021 as we turn our focus to domestic markets and implement plans for PR and industry outreach. So further expenditure plans related to the recovery plan approved in June will be brought before the Recovery Committee in December for review. Are there any questions for Kyle our I?

MUN: Brenda, Cynthia Mun, for the record. When you were talking about the marketing research, did you say that was already spent, or -- I'm just trying to -- it's a little too small for me. I'm trying to figure out is that also to be spent?

SCOLARI: Yes, it is. Which Kyle can probably speak to where those expenditures are at, but because we are so closely tracking travel sentiment and we're always trying to stay on top of projections, but this year more than ever. Kyle has kind of identified further surveys and data that we can collect to do that. Kyle, do you have anything to say in that regard?

SHULZ: Not too much from that. I would just say, based on those line items that you see there. The IME, Web Usability, International Economics, those sorts of things. Some of those are existing studies that we're kind of tailoring towards some questions that we want to address with COVID. Some of these came from the Marketing Committee suggestions. So yeah, really nothing too substantive, other than they will be very COVID-focus based on how people perceive travel during COVID, how people perceive Nevada in particular in that sort of environment. Again, all of these studies are going to be very heavily revolving around impacts of COVID and travel and have a Nevada focus as well.

MUN: Cynthia Mun, for the record. I don't think we talked as much in the Marketing Committee as to what that research might be, but just to keep in mind that we already know that the impacts of COVID and how people are overall thinking about travel and tourism in general. So that maybe we don't need as extensive or as detailed research and maybe that you might want to consider other avenues for that. I know it's not a huge amount, but just like continuing to do more research for research sake might not always be the best thing to do. When you know what the current situation is and the situation isn't going to drastically change, unless there's some safety measures that are going to be proven in the marketplace. So just some thoughts on that.

MARSHALL: Would it be possible, Brenda, for the Marketing Committee to discuss that research aspect and then bring some recommendations back to you and the Board with respect to those monies?

SCOLARI: Brenda Scolari, for the record. Of course, yes and I think a better understanding of what these research expenditures do for us. They're all very specific to Nevada. I know there's a lot of industry research and data out there and available that we're all aware of, but things like our Integrated Marketing Effectiveness study is specific to our media buys and awareness and engagement through those. It's very specific to us and what we've executed. Our Web Usability is similar -- that's travelnevada.com. It's very much an owned asset. Even international economics would be more specific to international travel to Nevada. I think I do understand what you're saying, Commissioner Mun. I think we are all kind of inundated with data, but we're looking for what can differentiate us.

SHULZ: Yeah. If I could add onto that too, Brenda, in terms of the IME and Web Usability studies specifically. In the Marketing Committee, not this most recent one but the previous one a couple of months ago, we talked about doing more exploratory research. So not just doing research for research's sake, but kind of adjusting how we've done our previous research and kind of tailoring that to this situation. And again, doing more exploratory research in terms of how people are feeling in the current environment and, Brenda, you mentioned this all has a very Nevada-specific focus. The web usability study will focus on our own websites and how that performs and how people use it. With the IME study, as Brenda mentioned, it's all around kind of our media buying, whether there's any differences in people who are aware of our information and our advertising as those some aren't. But again, those have been tailored based on some conversations we had during the Marketing Committee meeting a couple months ago -- to be more exploratory in their nature rather than just status quo. I just wanted to point that out as well.

MUN: Cynthia Mun, for the record. Yes. I think anything that deals with the website deals with the opportunities or the technology aspects of how we do the market. I think those are all very good ways to use the research money. I like what you just said. I'm just wary about constantly asking for sentiments because I think we'll see that not much has changed and it probably won't change for some time and it might change in terms of people coming and going, but we would already know that information. But to understand usability, how our websites are working, which channels work best, all those pieces, which even after COVID, would be really helpful. It won't be just like when you're doing the research, all the internet, all the technology stuff that you can get dialed into will

be useful even after COVID issues. Things of that nature, you're going to get your money. It's going to be double-duty. So that's great.

KAWCHACK: This is M.E. Kawchack, for the record. I have to keep muting because people are working right outside my window, so sorry about that if it gets very loud, but I do just want to point out that you've been seeing a lot of the sentiment because that's the existing research that's been ongoing and we just see a long lag in results. Anything that's been happening now, you'll see in the next quarter. Those are things that are happening now that we've made the updates to currently. You'll be seeing that awareness and the changes in the upcoming Marketing Committee meeting.

MUN: Thank you. Because I've looked at the Nevada side. I've done the website, the handheld device, and the content is beautiful. I don't know if the other commissioners have been there, but the content, the writing, the graphics. I mean, you just do fall into our new website and it's just wonderful. So nice job to everyone who's been working.

MARSHALL: I have to second that because I was on the website late last week. So really nice. Brenda, did you have any more? Are there other board member comments?

SCOLARI: That completes my update. If there are any other questions?

MARSHALL: Okay. Thank you very much. That was a discussion only. I really appreciate having the director's report a little earlier in the board meeting. Thank you, Brenda, and thanks for the work, Kyle. I think we move now to the recovery grants. Before we start, I want to say, Shari, I went through all the grants last week and I had some questions or thoughts or I don't know, comments. And I sent them all to my staff who sent them on to Shari. Hopefully, not my comment that I was very excited about donkeys and Esmeralda. Hopefully she erased that. But, other than that, she sent all my comments on to Shari. And Shari, I just wanted to say, your response was so well thought out and professional and really provided me with the kind of information that I so appreciate, and given all the work you guys are doing with such little staff, I was just really wowed by your taking the time and what you did. Thank you so much. Hopefully, my staff took away the donkey part, but anyway, thank you so much. So, with that, I would like to hear from other board members because I did have the opportunity to have Shari comment on my thoughts. So, Shari, did you want to do a presentation then first to get us started?

BOMBARD: Yeah, that would be great, because I do kind of go over an explanation as to the process that I go through and I think that would maybe be helpful and may even head off some questions before they even need to be asked. I think that would be great and I wish they had included the donkey comment because I too was excited for the donkeys and -- so. Okay. But no. And thank you for your kind words. It has been a lot of work. I really appreciate that more than you know. For the record, my name is Shari Bombard and I am the rural programs manager for Travel Nevada. Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor Marshall, members of the Commission. It is my pleasure to present to you the recommendations for the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant Program funded through the Coronavirus Relief Fund. We received 169 applications requesting \$3,376,079.48 in funding. We were able to provide funding for 120 of those requests, totaling \$1.65 million. However, \$1,726,079.48 had to be cut or denied. We had to cut more than we were able to award, which was not easy as you can imagine. The use of CRF funding required changes to our marketing grant and projects relating to tourism grant programs. The two programs were combined, edited and stipulations were added to ensure compliance with the federal rules, creating the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant guidelines and application, both of which were approved by the Governor's Finance Office and the Recovery Committee. Three Zoom grant workshops were held to explain the new rules and new application to partners. The Voluntourism Impact Project was also part of these grant workshops and Juraj Sojka will address that program after my presentation. Because so many of the parameters are the same, the VIP the application was run through the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant program application. As grants were reviewed, all applications that also applied for the VIP program were shared with Juraj for further evaluation of eligibility for that program. Because we have new commissioners, we thought it would be helpful to explain how grant review works, especially since this grant program is so different from previous grant cycles. So once the grant application period closed, all the grants, backup quotes, everything was printed out. I then read every single word, review all the quotes and backup and make notes right on the applications. I wrote down questions to ask the applicants about concerns with eligibility areas that could be cut. Because these grants must follow all of those federal CRF rules and funds must be paid back if a project is determined by audit to be ineligible, any projects that had any doubt whatsoever as to eligibility were either denied or the portion that was potentially ineligible was cut immediately. With so many applications and so much to cut the possibility of having to return the funds, it's just not worth the risk. The CRF rules had the most impact at this stage were the requirement to remarket an area as

open or safe, and the requirement the project be completed by that 12/30/2020 deadline. In the case of media buys, the CRF rules state that the advertising must significantly begin and have impact prior to that 12/30/2020 date. The advertising may go into 2021 as long as it is part of a normal purchasing practice. That's why, as you look at the recommendations, you'll see television buys or billboard buys that go 12 weeks or three months and those sorts of things. Those types of media purchases are normal and thus eligible per the Governor's Finance Office. Following these steps gave a good starting point to really look at the quality and potential economic impact that the projects could make in rural Nevada. One of the first steps was to look at the projects to see if they would provide sufficient return on investment for the cost. The intent of the CRF program is to have immediate economic impact to assist with recovery. This is where advertising projects that would bring people to our rural areas were given preference over certain signage and other projects that would not contribute to actually bringing visitors to our rural areas. The questions that led to some projects being cut or denied or approved or approved in full were the following. Will this project bring visitors to the area? Does this project market the destination as either open or safe? Will this project encourage people on road trips who had not planned on stopping in a certain area, to stop? Does this project have immediate impact? How does this project contribute to economic impact? Is this project completable by 12/30/2020? Is this project a duplication of efforts from the various territories or other organizations? And if projects are similar, do they complement each other and is approving both a responsible use of funds? Can this project be completed with less funds? Is there room in the budget to cut to more reasonable amounts without hurting the integrity of the project? I asked myself all of those and wrote them all down. And once those questions are answered and various projects are cut or denied based on the answers, I start looking at an equitable distribution of funds throughout the rural areas of the state. In some cases, individual communities applied for upwards of \$500,000 total. So just one little town or one little area. That would represent almost a third of the full amount available and would not be an equitable or fair distribution of funds. At this point, applications that made it through the initial process are compared to each other based on geographic area. If organizations had multiple applications that would cause a drastic imbalance of funds, the applicants were contacted to ask what their priorities were and if there were areas that could be cut or reduced while still completing the project. One example of this is the Travelzoo application for Las Vegas Territory. They applied for \$50,000, which is a large amount, especially since the territory had submitted quite a few applications at a high

price point, but Travelzoo also had a \$25,000 package that was also very effective. The cut was made without making the project unable to be completed. And this is true of all awarded projects. I am certain all of them will be able to be completed with the funds awarded based on budgets provided or quotes or discussions with the applicants. That's one thing that when you look at those awarded amounts, I'm certain that they can complete the project either after discussions with them or information that I had. I would also like to point out that their preferences were taken into consideration as part of the review process, but they are no way any sort of guarantee as to funding. The project still needed to be based on what was most effective with the best ROI. But knowing an applicant's priorities is very, very helpful when applications are kind of similar in impact. Once all of these steps have been completed, the amounts are once again tallied up to see how much still needs to be cut. It's at this point that the projects that have lesser priority are denied or cut based on all of the above parameters. Throughout the process, I was in constant contact with the Governor's Finance Office to ensure compliance with all CRF requirements. After the initial recommendations were made, they were reviewed with Christian Passink, director of sales and industry partners. And then once finalized, the recommendations were shared with all the territory chairs and the rural commissioner, and then feedback was requested. If there are any questions or comments, I'm happy to address them. And then respectfully ask for a motion to approve the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant recommendations so that we may notify the applicants.

MARSHALL: What I'd like to do is I'd like to – actually, I think what I need to do is, before we get into discussion and Herb, I see you have a question. I would like our DAG to provide some guidance to the new members in case we have a couple of new members who may have an interest in particular grants. I had asked our DAG prior to this meeting if he could provide some guidance to the members with respect to voting or commenting or et cetera. I'm going to let him provide that guidance if you want to, Mr. Ward.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. Madam Chair, you are correct. If any of the voting commissioners feel that they may have an appearance of a quote unquote conflict or an interest in any matter that comes before the Commission, they should disclose it to the Commission. This is an open meeting. Now, additionally, in the event that they feel like that they can vote on it, they should likewise inform the commissioners that yes, I have this quote unquote, an appearance of a conflict. I still feel I can be fair. I can be unbiased. And those are basically the key words. You, the commissioner can only tell if you can be fair and

unbiased. And likewise, if you feel that you do have a conflict, likewise you should in the open meeting say, I am going to recuse myself from voting in this matter because A, B, C, and D. I feel I have a conflict or there might be an appearance of a conflict. If you have any other questions, I am available.

MARSHALL: Do any board members have any questions of our DAG, with respect to the issue of apparent, an appearance of or a feeling that one might have a conflict?

MOON: Madam Chair, I do have a question because the Fallon Convention and Tourism Authority has submitted grants up for approval today. We could be potential grantees in this case, and I am reading the response that Director Scolari has put in the chat. I understand that possibly -- well, not possibly, I will recuse myself from any discussion on Fallon-related grants. However, in the bigger picture, it looks like it's been precedent that we could do the vote. I could participate in the overall vote. I just want to clarify that please.

MARSHALL: I think that our DAG can provide you the proper guidance. Go ahead.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. I think that is correct. In the past, if a commissioner is associated with an organization that's applied for a grant, that they probably should recuse themselves from the vote, maybe even specific input on the item, but you can participate in -- let me back up. Once again, you, the commissioner, would be the person, the only person that can determine if you have a conflict. But yes, as Ms. Scolari has said that in the past if the commissioner is associated with an organization that has applied for the grant, that they should recuse himself from specific input on that matter. Once again, it's going to be up to that commissioner that whether they feel that they can still be unbiased and fair and approve the vote, or if they feel that they cannot be fair and unbiased, then they should recuse themselves. So, Commissioner Moon, it's is going to be up to you on that decision.

MOON: Thank you very much.

SCOLARI: Brenda Scolari. We have historically had commissioners who are associated with applicants, who either work for the DMO or have an interest in a grant application and that's what has happened in the past. So because the item itself you're voting on, the recommendation on behalf of Shari, as a whole, with whatever revisions suggested grant award by grant award, the for instance, Commissioner Moon, wouldn't participate in any comment on the application from Fallon, but would then still be able to vote on Shari's recommendation as a whole. That's the way it's worked in the past anyway.

MARSHALL: I just want to make sure. So, to our DAG, is that the way you view the law? I want it clear on the record and I want it clear for the Board members. If what Brenda is saying is what the law is, then I want that clarified because I don't want any confusion on the record with respect to what the guidance you're providing the Board members.

WARD: May it please the commissioners. Harry Ward, for the record, Deputy Attorney General. And yes, this is not an official AG's opinion, but yes, based on what I have reviewed in regards to what the commissioner authority has and what they have done in the past, that would not be inappropriate in regards to the commissioner voting recommendation as a whole.

MARSHALL: Okay. Do board members feel that there's clarity with respect to their roles? Okay.

LAGAN: Lieutenant Governor, may I make a statement, please? This is Jill Lagan for the record.

MARSHALL: Yeah. The next thing I was going to ask is with respect to this recovery grant packet, are there any board members which would like to make any disclosures or statements? Jill?

LAGAN: Yes, Jill Lagan, for the record. In full disclosure, as an applicant and potential recipient of CRF funds, I will be recusing myself from this discussion to avoid the appearance of conflict. However, I do believe I can be fair and unbiased and voting on the larger agenda item. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Any other board members.

WINDBIGLER: Kristin Windbigler, for the record.

MARSHALL: Kristin?

WINDGBIGLER: My organization, the Western Folklife Center, also applied for one of these grants. We were not selected by Shari, which we understand, but I would just like to acknowledge that that was the case.

MARSHALL: Okay. Bob?

STOLDAL: Well, not being one of the attorneys and as a rule, listen to attorney. If I was one of the applicants, as part of this package, I would recuse myself when we vote. I mean, I don't care whether it's the whole package, but if there's something that's going to benefit me or the community that I'm representing. There's a phrase we're all hearing these days, the abundance of caution. I just think that with the abundance of caution, and I would recuse myself. Again, we got a couple of attorneys here. They know more than I do. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Thank you – I'm sorry. Herb?

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record.

MARSHALL: Yes.

SANTOS: I agree with the first part. If you are associated with organizations that have applied for grants, you shouldn't vote on those things or have input on it. When it gets to the vote, the whole thing is we want to make sure that we conduct ourselves to avoid any type of conflict and voting on the whole thing as a whole I'm really not sure you can avoid that conflict. I agree with what Robert said about not voting. I personally don't have a conflict with any of the things that are on here. I'm not associated, but if I was in that situation, I don't think I would vote because there is the appearance of impropriety of the potential of a bias. There's no way you can say that there's not a bias in not voting because you're going to benefit from that grant. And there's other folks that did not benefit from that grant. My recommendation would be if you have an interest in any of those grants that you abstain from the vote. That would be my thought.

MARSHALL: Thank you, Herb.

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina, for the record. Do we have a quorum if we didn't have the commissioners who were personally involved in certain grant items vote?

MARSHALL: DAG?

WARD: Harry Ward, for the record. You possibly would have a quorum, especially that if you pulled certain grants and voted on them individually and the commissioner would say on, let's say, grant a, I commissioner, am going to recuse myself. And then you would, may have others that would be able to vote, and you would have a quorum. So that is a suggestion that you could possibly pull them out individually on the ones that where the commissioners may have a conflict or recusing themselves. And then you would have a quorum with the other commissioners. Granted, this may take a little while to do, but that might be a suggestion as how to do it.

MARSHALL: I'm not sure I understood. Let's say we have grant one, two and three. If on grant two, a commissioner removed himself or herself, are you saying then we would have a quorum for grant one and three?

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward. I think we would, based on the numbers that are present today.

MARSHALL: And then what about, item two in the hypothetical.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward. Let's say you would pull number two and then have a separate vote by the commissioners with the commissioner that says, aye, there is an appearance of impropriety. I may have a conflict. So, I feel like it's best that I recuse myself because of the appearance of impropriety. And then from, based on the numbers that we have today, it seems like you would have a quorum. That would be my suggestion that we pull the items where an individual commissioner may have a conflict and is recusing themselves on those individual items.

MARSHALL: All right. Okay. Jennifer, your comment I think is I don't know if people are in the chat room are able to see this, but Jennifer's comment is may, perhaps we can separate these out by territory because certain people there may be no conflicts within certain territories. But I think, I need to ask for Jane Moon and Kristin Windbigler and Jill Lagan. Jill, am I pronouncing your last name, right?

LAGAN: It's Lagan.

MARSHALL: And you just let me go on. Well, you are very kind. All right. Jill, I need to hear from you guys how you feel about that.

LAGAN: Jill Lagan, for the record. I'm okay with that. I like the idea from Jennifer's suggestion to do it by territory. That will speed up the process.

MOON: I agree. Madam Chair. Pulling by territory is actually, I think a better scenario because we are also involved in the territory as individual communities. So that would be better in terms of making sure we're acting in all appropriateness. I would agree with pulling by territory and recusing myself from anything Fallon related, or Pony Express Territory related.

MARSHALL: And Kristin?

WINDBIGLER: Kristin Windbigler, for the record. Sure, I'm fine with that as well.

MARSHALL: Okay. And then Shari, does that work for you?

BOMBARD: Yes, absolutely.

MARSHALL: Okay. All right. Then let's see where we are now guys. If we look at the -- excuse me for a second, trying to pull up my notes.

MUN: Lieutenant Governor?

MARSHALL: Yes.

MUN: Cynthia Mun, for the record. I just want to say that I'm always quite impressed by the work that Shari has done in every commission meeting when we have had these grants and it's an immense amount of work, but she's always done such a great job and so thorough. And I just wanted to thank her.

MARSHALL: I agree. Shari, you're a phenom.

BOMBARD: Thank you all so much. This one in particular was a lot of work in a very short period of time. I truly appreciate it more than you know. It's been a rough few weeks, so thank you.

SANTOS: Madam Chair, may I ask Shari a question also?

MARSHALL: Yeah.

SANTOS: I mirror what Cynthia said. On these grants that we're doing, we've had a little bit of a different requirement in the timing of when they have to have them completed. And I was curious -- I know when we do our normal rural grants, but that's not a consideration. I don't think it is. And I'm just curious of what your thoughts are. Whether or not that is sort of a good requirement to place on these grants and looking at grants where people can -- they have to act on them immediately. We know they're being acted on. They're being completed by a certain amount of time. Is that something that we should consider hopefully when we get back to the normal sense of things? Should that be something we should consider as being a requirement for future grants when we do our rural grants?

BOMBARD: It already is. Shari Bombard for the record. It already is sort of. In this case, we had to just because of that CRF requirement. So that was something that we had to do. Typically when we do these grants, the first cycle is awarded in June and they can really start spending money in July and then they have to have it completed and have all their paperwork turned in by June 30th, by the end of the fiscal year. They do have sort of that date already on there. And for typical projects, they really do need that full year timeframe to be able to pull them off. There are contracts that they can sign. They can have PR people or social media people or that sort of people that they're paying on a contract basis. It really does make sense to keep it that year timeframe. They do sort of already have kind of that stipulation already.

SANTOS: Got you. And then this says it's the 2021 COVID-19 Rural Recovery. They have to have it completed by December of this year, though, right?

BOMBARD: Per the Governor's Finance Office. They have to have the funds expended basically by December 30th. If they run Facebook ads all the way through the month of December and they don't get billed until January, that's okay. We just have to have all of our paperwork completed by the end of January. And then the Governor's Finance Office has to have all of their CRF funding, everything cleaned up by the end of March. So that's why we're having our stuff due sooner. That way they have time to audit or do whatever they need to do. It's really just a completely different timeframe for us. It has to be expended and requested reimbursement by the 30th. This one's a little -- the dates are just -- it's a weird one in a blunt way.

SANTOS: Got you. Herb Santos for the record. And then normally we have two sets of rural grants. All the money is split up. Are we going to have another one of these for the spring or is this it for the whole year or are there going to be additional COVID funds or not?

BOMBARD: I can't quite answer that. I can certainly give that portion to Brenda, but as far as I know, these are the CRF funds. They have to be expended by December 30th. This is what we're getting. We're optimistic that we'll be able to open what would be first cycle 2020, 2022 first cycle 2022, that we will be able to open that in a normal timeframe. Typically, it would open in February. It would be due in April and they would be awarded in June to start spending July one. That would be the normal progression. It would be coming up to in a typical year. As far as if we're going to have those funds, how much funds we're going to have any of that, I can't answer that question.

SANTOS: Got you.

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. In answer to Commissioner Santos, I think additional CRF funding is now up to our legislators and Congress and who's elected and how hopefully we get more relief for the industry and our state will get another allocation that we could be a part of. That's certainly our hope. Because I applied for the entire \$1.65 million, that is normally our budget earmarked budget amount for grants, for the grant awards, I still would love to have an additional cycle early in 2021 as Shari mentioned. I think that is something that will come before the Recovery Committee next month, is to take a look at how much we can expend in the second cycle.

MARSHALL: If I could just interrupt for a second, because I think that we're going to be fine, but I want to make sure. Board Member Estipona needs to leave. DAG Ward, if he leaves and if on a particular territory, we have

a board member have to recuse themselves, will we have a quorum for that territory? Jessica seems to think that we are fine.

MARSHALL: Six will be sufficient. Please note it will take all six to pass and not a simple majority of the six remaining. Okay. Thank you. Ed, thank you so much for your duties. Appreciate it. Okay, so let's get back again then. Do we have any further general questions before we go territory by territory? All right. I think that if I look at my chart, our first territory is Cowboy Country Territory. Shari, do you want to give us a quick what the demographics is of Cowboy Country Territory? So then people can decide whether they need to remove themselves.

BOMBARD: Cowboy Country is basically kind of all along I-80. In this case would really just be Commissioner Windbigler that would need to recuse herself if she so chooses for this.

MARSHALL: Okay. Do I have any questions, comments, concerns on any of the grants for Cowboy Country Territory? All right. Do I have a motion? Kristin, are you then going to recuse yourself?

WINDBIGLER: Yes, I will recuse myself.

MARSHALL: Okay. Thank you. I just want to say that I look forward to finding a way to get that pioneer poetry sign. Anyway, so, in the Cowboy Country Territory, do I have a motion to approve the series of grants for that territory?

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. I would move to approve the recommendation for the 2021 COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant Recommendations for Cowboy Country.

MARSHALL: All right. Do I have a second?

CUNNINGHAM: Jennifer Cunningham, for the record. I second that motion.

MARSHALL: All right. I have the motion and a second. Do I have discussion? All right. Hearing none. All those in favor. There should be six members who can vote on Cowboy Country Territory. How do those six members vote? All in favor?

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? All right. Motion passes. And I want to thank you, Jennifer, for your recommendation because I really appreciate that. All right. Is the next one city of West Wendover?

BOMBARD: Nope. So that's part of Cowboy Country Territory. We would move on to the Las Vegas Territory section. If you were to scroll down all through. It goes like CC-CCRF one through 17 and then you would get to Las Vegas Territory.

MARSHALL: Got it. All right. Las Vegas Territory. Do you want to describe the geographic footprint of that one?

BOMBARD: It's rural Clark County. It would be Jill in Boulder City or Commissioner Lagan.

MARSHALL: Lagan for some. Lagan for one. Okay. I'm never going to live that down.

LAGAN: Jill Lagan, for the record. I'd like to recuse myself from this vote.

MARSHALL: Okay, Jill. Thank you. All right. Do I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the grants set out in the Las Vegas Territory? All right. Do I have a motion to approve?

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina, for the record. I would like to make a motion to approve the 2020 CRF funding for the Las Vegas Territory.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Do I have a second?

MUN: This is Cynthia Mun, I second.

MARSHALL: Thank you. I have a motion and a second. Do I have any discussion? All right. Hearing none. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion carries. Thank you very much. All right, next one. What's the next one, Shari?

BOMBARD: It is Nevada Silver Trails, which would be going from Yerington down 95 through Pahrump.

MARSHALL: Yerington to Pahrump. Okay. I don't think we have anybody who needs to recuse themselves for that, right? All right. Do I have any thoughts, concerns, questions on the Nevada Silver Trails? Is this the one that is including my donkeys? No. Because that's a VIP. Is that a VIP one? Yeah.

BOMBARD: Yes. That'll be a VIP one, but Goldfield geographically is within Nevada Silver Trails.

MARSHALL: I'm going to make a specific trip? That's what I'm going to do. All right. Nevada Silver Trails. Do I have a motion to approve?

CUNNINGHAM: Jennifer Cunningham, for the record. I move to approve the COVID funding requests for Nevada Silver Trails Territory.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Do I have a second?

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. I'll second.

MARSHALL: I have a motion and a second. Do I have any discussion? All right. Hearing none. All those in favor of the grants for Nevada Silver Trails, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion carries. Next, Shari?

BOMBARD: Next would be Pony Express Territory, which goes from Dayton all the way to Great Basin.

MARSHALL: Great Basin.

MOON: Madam Chair. This is Jane Moon, for the record. I would please recuse myself from voting from the Pony Express Territory grants.

MARSHALL: All right. I hear that. I'm so sorry. Isn't that where we're going to get the telescopes?

BOMBARD: That one is Cowboy Country.

MARSHALL: That was Cowboy Country.

BOMBARD: That was Jackpot.

MARSHALL: Okay. Pony Express. Any thoughts, concerns or questions on the Pony Express Territory grants? You guys are fading on me here. Do I have a motion to approve?

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina, for the record. I would like to make a motion to approve the coronavirus relief funding for the Pony Express Territory ending December 30, 2020.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Do I have a second?

MUN: This is Cynthia Mun. I second.

MARSHALL: All right. I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All right. Hearing none. All those in favor of approving the grants for the Pony Express Territory signify by saying aye. Aye, aye. Any opposed motion. All right. Very, very glad. Next?

BOMBARD: The next would be Reno Tahoe Territory. So that's kind of the loop here. Virginia City, Lake Tahoe, Carson Valley, Carson City, Reno, all of them.

MARSHALL: Okay. Jennifer?

CUNNINGHAM: I would like to recuse myself, due to a perception of conflict.

MARSHALL: All right. I forgot to ask you earlier on and I apologize. All right. Do I have any questions or concerns on Reno Tahoe?

MURDOCK: I have a question. Madam Lieutenant Governor. Because I have an ownership in the small businesses, does that conflict me out of the counties, Ormsby, Washoe and Douglas?

MARSHALL: I will ask our DAG, but I don't think you have a vested interest in any particular grant application. Is that right?

MURDOCK: Right.

MARSHALL: Okay. DAG?

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. Commissioner Murdock, only you could probably determine that, but from what Madam Chair has said or asked you and your response that you have no interest in it or no financial issue, I don't see it being in conflict, but I would disclose in this open meeting, your stance.

MURDOCK: Okay. And then I would disclose that I do have ownerships, but it will not impair anything or there's no gain to my businesses from voting on these grants.

MARSHALL: Thank you. No gain to your businesses one way or the other. I appreciate that. All right. Any other questions, concerns with respect to the Reno Tahoe Territory? Okay. Do I have a motion to approve?

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. I would make a motion to approve the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant recommendation for the Reno Tahoe Territory.

MARSHALL: Okay. I have a motion. Do I have a second?

MOON: I will second that.

MARSHALL: Go ahead, Jane.

MOON: We're so polite here. Jane Moon will second that. Thank you, Cynthia.

MARSHALL: I have a motion and a second. Do I have any discussion? All right. Hearing none. All those in favor of approving the grants for the Reno Tahoe Territory, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion carries. Thank you very much. Where are we Shari?

BOMBARD: There is one more and it's a statewide grant and there was only one of them. Basically, this is where it's not specifically set in one territory, it kind of benefits the entire state.

MARSHALL: Okay. So here it is. This is the Wild Horse Preservation. Okay. Do you have any one with a specific interest in the Wild Horse Preservation League? Okay. Do you have any questions or thoughts for that particular grant? Okay. If not, I will take a motion to approve.

MOON: I will do that. Jane Moon, for the record, Madam Chair. I move to approve the CRF grant funding for the statewide grant for the Wild Horse Preservation League.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Do I have a second?

CUNNINGHAM: Jennifer Cunningham, for the record. I second that.

MARSHALL: All right. I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? Okay. Hearing none, all those in favor of the statewide grant, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion carries. Okay. So, Shari, do we go now to the VIP grants?

BOMBARD: We do. Yes. We're completely done with the actual COVID Recovery Grants. And so now, Juraj can speak to the VIP grants.

MARSHALL: Okay.

SOJKA: For the record, my name is Juraj Sojka, and I'm a destination development specialist for Travel Nevada. Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor Marshall and members of the Commission. I would like to present you the recommendations for the Voluntarism Impacts Project Grant Program that was introduced during this grant cycle. As we call it, VIP program during the COVID-19 crisis, we tried to come up with ways in which we could best assist our rural Nevada tourism industry partners and make it part of our recovery plan. We were also trying to find a way to get more volunteers involved in tourism and to identify areas throughout the state there that are in need of improvements, but we are in the early stages of developing the destination development program. This will help us lay the groundwork for starting to get into these communities and improve the visitor experience and as well as increase the quality of the lives for the residents. While we have programs for marketing and infrastructure, some projects are denied or don't comply with the current guidelines. We wanted to develop a

program to assist them not only financially, but to organize a workforce to help provide demand power needed to get some of these important projects completed. The main focus of the VIP grant program was on projects related to tourism grants that will improve the visitor experience and also involve community volunteers as the program develops. They are hoping to make this a permanent program for Travel Nevada. As Shari mentioned previously, the VIP grant application was included in the CRF grant application using the same grant guidelines. The total budget for this grant cycle was \$45,000. Six applications qualified to be part of this pilot program and were awarded a total of \$44,921. And here's the update of the projects that were selected and those were included in the packet. I'm going to start with the grant application from Cowboy Country, which is Bonanza Exhibit COVID-19 Recovery Exhibition. Request was by a Foundation 36, William Watson. Organization has requested 10,000 to provide public access to relocated Ponderosa Ranch exhibit in Elko. Buildings and movie set of the famous Ponderosa Ranch was relocated to Red's Ranch in Lamoille, thanks to generosity of Duffield family. But the goal is to create a cultural educational attraction to interpret Nevada rich movie and television heritage. Requested funds to allow for purchase of physical barriers to ensure social distancing, create integrative and directional signage that is compatible with COVID traffic pattern and visitor flow and, of course, construction costs. Volunteers of Foundation 36 will take a lead on this project to ensure proper safety and social distancing rules are being implemented and the project is finished in timely manner by December 30th. The grant amount awarded was for \$10,000. And this project complies with the grant guidelines and Foundation 36 is all volunteer organization. They have 25 volunteers on average, based on a project they are working on. Highlighting this state's heritage and creating the new attraction that is implementing safety guidelines, it'll be a best of interest to the visitors and help improve the economic impact for Elko and Lamoille, which has suffered a decline in visitation due to COVID-19 pandemic. Travel Nevada will assist on this project by assisting the volunteers of Foundation 36 and provide PR coverage.

MARSHALL: Let me ask, since I think the members of the board have had this packet.

SOJKA: Okay.

MARSHALL: Why don't I just see if because there's only six of them –

SOJKA: Yes.

MARSHALL: -- see if people have particular questions. It looks like the individual projects are not directly related to like Cowboy Poetry or Boulder City or Fallon. It may be the case -- or Reno that the whole board can vote.

SOJKA: Okay.

MARSHALL: But let me open it up and ask if people have questions and if they have the question that they want you to go through each one, then they'll put you to task. Okay? Are there any Board questions on the six VIP grant recommendations?

CUNNINGHAM: Jennifer Cunningham, for the record. I would just like to thank you, Lieutenant Governor, in the interest of expediting. I think we've all probably read through these. I do not have any questions on them per se.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Anyone else?

SANTOS: Herb Santos, for the record. Can we make a comment as opposed to a question or do I need to do comments after that?

MARSHALL: Are you the one who wants to make the comment? That's what I --

SANTOS: Yeah, it's me.

MARSHALL: -- Go ahead.

SANTOS: When I saw this one about the Bonanza Expert Exhibit, having grown up here in Reno, the Ponderosa Ranch was a staple. It was a place where we would always take every relative. In fact, I just pulled this off my phone. I don't know if you can see it, but that's family from Massachusetts and we went to the Ponderosa Ranch. About several months ago, I did the hike to see Monkey Rock up at Lake Tahoe and you park down by the Ponderosa Ranch. I was really sad. I remembered that the Ponderosa Ranch wasn't there. I thought that was just a complete gem for Lake Tahoe and all the history that was there. To know that the Ponderosa Ranch is going to live in another beautiful part of Nevada, I think this is awesome for Nevada. I'm so happy because I was really disappointed when I did that little hike not too long ago and realized that that whole project of the Ponderosa Ranch was gone. I'm really excited to see this. Again, I wish that if we had more money, we could provide them with a lot more money to make sure that it is a viable project and it takes hold and it's something that I know that people will enjoy. I just wanted to make that comment. I was excited about that. It's like, I know you, Madam

Chair, being excited about the donkeys. This is a good thing and just wanted to make that comment for the record about a great -- a great thing that was in Nevada that is not gone and it's going to be back in Nevada.

MARSHALL: Thank you for that. That was lovely. Do I have more comments, thoughts, questions? If not, I'll take a motion.

MOON: I do have an additional comment to that. Nothing but positive. In reading through this and knowing that this was coming, it's an amazing addition to the rural grants program because in rural Nevada, there's not a lot of people working in tourism, designated in tourism. There's a lot of need in terms of support, in terms of advertising, in terms of getting people uplifted. Some of us are volunteers, some of us are part-time. I happen to be full-time and I have some resources available to me and a great backing from my community. However, that's not the case for most of rural Nevada. We want to make sure that these folks are able to share out their spaces, the history of Nevada and that kind of thing. Kudos to Travel Nevada to always making the support available in whatever way, shape or form. Thank you all for your hard work. Thank you, Juraj. I know this will help in the destination development as well.

SOJKA: Thank you, Commissioner Moon.

MARSHALL: Thank you. All right. I'll take a motion if the Board would like to provide a motion.

CUNNINGHAM: Jennifer Cunningham, for the record. I move that we approve and authorize the VIP-grant request recommendations as laid out in the document.

MARSHALL: Thank you. I have a motion to approve. Do I have a second to second?

MURDOCK: Second.

MARSHALL: Rick. Okay. I have a motion and a second. Do I have discussion? All right. Hearing none, all those in favor of approving the VIP recommendations, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: Any opposed? Motion passes. Thank you very much, Shari and thank you. Thank you for all your work and thank you, Jennifer, for helping with the organization of this. All right. I think next is the report from the Marketing Committee. That's for discussion only, isn't it, Brenda?

SCOLARI: For the record, Brenda Scolari. Lieutenant Governor, I believe it's item I, which is a report from the Recovery Committee.

MARSHALL: I'm sorry. I'm all confused. Report from the Recovery Committee.

PASSINK: Good afternoon, Madam Chair, and members of the Commission. For the record, my name is Christian Passink and I'm the director of sales and industry partners for Travel Nevada. I would like to give you an update on the Recovery Committee meeting. The first Nevada Division of Tourism COVID-19 Recovery Subcommittee meeting was held via zoom on September 29th, 2020. The committee members are as follows Pam Robinson, Julie Pazina, Kristin Windbigler, Tim Haughinberry, Patty Herzog, Tracie Barnthouse and myself, Christian Passink. All members were present for the meeting with the exception of Commissioner Windbigler and Pam Robinson, who gave us advanced notice and were absent excused. Pam Robinson was nominated by the committee to be the chairperson for the subcommittee, pending a vote by the full commission, which happened today. I want to be the first, or one of the first, I should say to congratulate, Mrs. Robinson on her appointment. I'm looking forward to working with her again in the future. An update was given to the Committee on the coronavirus relief fund amounts and allocations that Travel Nevada had received and the various programs in which those funds would support. Travel Nevada staff updated the Committee regarding the coronavirus relief funds and the hybrid grant program opportunities, the Travel Nevada Voluntourism Program and our destination development efforts. I apologize for the sun coming in my window at the worst time. As a result of the current financial crisis, our constituents missed out on two traditional grant funding opportunities, which are the rural marketing grant program and the projects relating to tourism infrastructure grant program. We created a hybrid grant application that would cover each of these grant funding opportunities in order to best meet the needs of the applicants. The revised guidelines and application questions for the combined marketing grants and projects relating to tourism grants program were presented to the Committee for their approval. The Committee reviewed and approved the Travel Nevada Revised COVID-19 Recovery Grant Guidelines, which encompasses all federal CRF compliance requirements and approved it by unanimous vote. The Committee was then given a timeline of the events to show when certain milestones must be met in order to be in compliance with all of the coronavirus relief fund rules and regulations. After that section was completed, Travel Nevada Public Relations Specialist, Tracie Barnthouse, gave an update on the status of public affairs, which included the upcoming tourism day at the legislature and the legislative action plan. The first meeting of the Recovery Committee was adjourned, and the

next meeting has now been scheduled for Tuesday, December 1st. That concludes my update of the Recovery Committee. I'm happy to take any questions or comments that the Commission may have at this point.

MARSHALL: Thank you. And I'm happy to hear that the Recovery Committee had some involvement in the structure of the CRF grants. I appreciate that. Any, comments, questions or thoughts on the Recovery Committee? Brenda, you recommended creating that structure and I wanted to thank you for that. I think it's been really helpful.

SCOLARI: Thank you.

PAZINA: Chair, this is Julie Pazina, for the record, and I really just wanted to share a thank you to Christian, to Tracie, to Travel Nevada, Brenda, for all of their hard work behind the Recovery Committee, because I think it's so important right now for the future and the recovery of our state. I'm so happy we have this opportunity. I'm honored to be a part of it and just want to thank the Travel Nevada staff for all they do.

MARSHALL: Thank you.

PASSINK: Thank you, Commissioner. As Commissioner Murdock said, we are the engine that's going to provide the recovery. This action taken by the Commission right now provides the fuel to get that engine where it needs to go. Thank you for your consideration and your input on these very important projects.

MARSHALL: Thank you. All right. I think that since we've already approved the Committee chair, if there's no other comment I can move on to the next agenda item, the report from the Marketing Committee.

KAWCHACK: Thank you. This is M.E. Kawchack, for the record. I'm here to read into the record, Fletch Brunelle, chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism Marketing Committee's report from that meeting. Lieutenant Governor Marshall and members of the Commission, the Nevada Commission on Tourism Marketing Committee convened on Monday, October 26th. The agenda for that meeting and all presentation materials are included in the memo and as well as we have links on travelnevada.biz. I can send you links if you would like the full packet. Minutes of the meeting will be available, once approved by the committee, at the next quarterly meeting and as well as the recording of the meeting. The committee approved minutes from the July 28th and August 10th, 2020 meetings. Staff provided a report of industry and health sentiment to the Committee and the key takeaways were as follows: return to travel will be determinant on the health situation, fear levels around contracting the virus largely have been unchanged over the past few months, suggesting a lengthy travel recovery.

Travel sentiment is still far from normal levels as fear levels remain elevated. Though some indicators are trending in a positive direction, travel levels remained depressed. However, visitations statistics have increased each month after reopening Las Vegas and Nevada in general, still are top of mind destinations for travelers. This provides hope that pent up demand will lead to quicker travel recovery when the COVID crisis passes. And, just to note, this is what Commissioner Mun was talking about. We are continually getting those sentiments. They are on a monthly basis. I think that the sentiment reports are -- we're seeing those kind of level out. We are keeping in touch with everything that's going on, but we are starting to ramp up some of our other surveys, which we did present findings from a small, unweighted survey of our own consumer audience. Although the majority of respondents indicated that they are ready to travel and to hear travel messages, there are stark attitudinal differences reported among those who are ready to travel versus those not ready to travel. There was discussion on a bridge strategy to market these segments. As the Division of Tourism received expedited Cares Act relief funding, Travel Nevada staff presented the new budget allocation of \$1.5 million. As directed by the Committee and the Commission previously, staff pivoted to expand spending appropriately as it became available to enhance and optimize the Discover Your Nevada campaign and that was included in the director's report. Lastly, the Committee reviewed reporting metrics that will reflect a snapshot of the State of the State, the State of the Industry and the State of the Agency and the State of our Awareness. The goal of this report is to consistently report the indicators that gauge both marketing success and value as well as high-level situational analysis for comparison. Once feedback is collected by the Committee, a report will be provided to the Commission quarterly. There were no action items at this meeting, so we will be meeting again. I collected not a whole lot of feedback. I did hear from Commissioner Mun, but I will be following up. I know it's been a busy week for everybody, so I do want to keep those discussions going because I know how important research is and this is something that we started developing at the last -- probably about this time last year is when we started those discussions about developing a more robust report and we were planning on doing that meeting on -- it was scheduled for March 11th of this year. We didn't get to have that. Everything changed and we have been focused on the sentiment and the recovery plan and I think that we are all very eager to move towards the future and start looking to our drive markets and our domestic markets and how those things have shifted over the past year and definitely our awareness and how we can shift our focus. So hopefully, we'll have a report to you at the next meeting. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Thank you. Any questions, comments? Kudos, M.E. Thank you. And thank you to the Marketing Committee. Greatly appreciate it. All right. Moving to agenda item K, workshop. You want to talk a little bit about that, Brenda? Your thoughts?

GRUNDY: Brenda, you're on mute.

SCOLARI: Sorry. Rookie mistake. I thought since we have so many new commissioners, that it would be wonderful to have an in-person workshop as just a working afternoon. I believe, Harry, if we don't vote on anything that does not necessarily have to be a public meeting, but I thought it would be an opportunity for each commissioner to get to know one another, to get to know staff. We could introduce some of our consultants that are such integral partners of ours and I just thought it would be a wonderful way to move forward. It's such a crucial time and the more collaborative we are, I think the better, the more effective we'll be. I've suggested two dates in January and if everyone is amenable, I think what we'll do is maybe poll participation for those two days. We could either gather here in Carson in a socially-distant way or we could perhaps, if Commissioner Stoldal would approve that, maybe use the Carson museum's facilities or there are a number of ways we could do it to just have an afternoon together.

STOLDAL: If I can just ask a question of Harry. How does that not conflict with the open meeting law? I just don't think you can have a meeting of the commissioner if there's a quorum, even if there's no agenda. Help me understand that. Thank you.

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General. If this is considered a training workshop and open to the public, I don't think that's going to be a violation. And that would be my suggestion that it be a training for the commissioners and make it available to anyone. Let's say commissioners or board members or anyone else. Unfortunately, our office, the AG's office is not doing any formal training of new commissioners. As long as there is a, quote unquote, no action taken, this would be almost considered a social gathering for educational purposes that would not be in conflict of the open meeting law. My suggestion would be to classify this as quote unquote, training/workshop on how to become a better commissioner.

STOLDAL: I get that Chair. I get really cranky about open meeting law and so I apologize for the crankiness, but so this would be posted? You would post this publicly like we would do in a regular meeting?

WARD: For the record, Harry Ward, again. That could be possible. If you're going to do it, my suggestion would be, since we deal with the open meeting law, that I be involved also for quote unquote, questions or responses to any of the potential questions that are brought up. That'd be more like a training session. So yes, my suggestion would be that it'd be published and noticed as a quote unquote, workshop for commissioners, on open meeting law.

MARSHALL: Are there questions, thoughts? What do you guys think?

PAZINA: This is Julie Pazina, for the record, Madam Chair. I love the idea. This has just been about a year for me having the opportunity to serve on the Commission and there's still so much more I'd like to learn about and cannot wait to have a better idea of who the faces are behind the Travel Nevada staff, what we can do to be of the most help here in the state. And I love the idea of all of us getting together and really having that opportunity for a workshop. I think it's a great idea.

MUN: Cynthia Mun for the record. I agree with Julie completely. I think it's always good to see people in person and since we have so many new commissioners, it would be nice to just kind of connect as well and always, I'm up for learning how to become a better commissioner for sure.

MARSHALL: Well, thank you, Brenda. Why don't you go forward and see what dates might work for people for a training session?

SCOLARI: Okay, wonderful. We will do that, and we'll figure out some options for how we could include the public.

MARSHALL: Okay. Next is upcoming meetings. I just want to tell people, we're at 2:50. I know people turn into pumpkins at three, so let's see what we can do in the next 10 minutes. Upcoming meetings. Brenda?

SCOLARI: I have suggested these meetings for upcoming full commission dates. I do have to say that May meeting, I think maybe that's something we'll talk about at the workshop, in that, as Shari indicated, if we do have a second cycle of grant awards, that May date may not work in terms of that workflow. I think the May date, will be pending, but what we'll do is I'll ask Jessica if she could pull all of you for the availability on February 17th for a full commission meeting and we'll just go from there. How does that sound? That a thumbs up with everybody. Okay. Very good. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Commissioner comments. All right. This is the second time for public comment. Is there any public comment on the Zoom call? Let's see. Okay. I don't see any. I don't know if we've maybe received an e-mail between the time we began and now.

GRUNDY: I don't believe so.

MARSHALL: Okay. All right. We have a possible action here of adjournment. We are eight minutes shy of pumpkins. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

CUNNINGHAM: Absolutely. Jennifer Cunningham, for the record and probably my last Commission meeting. I move to adjourn. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Jennifer. You're wonderful. I have a motion from Jennifer to adjourn. Do I have a second?

MURDOCK: Second.

MARSHALL: Second, Richard. Any discussion over adjournment? You want to discuss the pros and cons of adjournment? Okay, good. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

COMMISSION: Aye.

MARSHALL: All right, guys. Thank you so much, new commissioners. I know this was a long meeting. Thank you, Shari, for all your work. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, all the way around. You guys are great. Have a wonderful evening. Take care.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.