

**Fallon Convention & Tourism Authority  
Meeting Minutes April 21, 2015**

Present: Chairman James Richardson, Councilwoman Kelly Frost, Board Member Pranav Morar, Board Member Scott Tate, Executive Director Rick Gray, City Clerk Gary Cordes.  
Absent: Councilman Bob Erickson

Chairman Richardson called the meeting to order and asked if the posting requirements have been met. Cordes said they have.

Chairman Richardson said the next item on the agenda is approval of the March 17, 2015 meeting minutes. Councilwoman Frost motioned to approve the March 17, 2015 meeting minutes. Board member Tate seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

Chairman Richardson said the next item on the agenda is public comments. There were none.

Chairman Richardson said the next item on the agenda is consideration and possible approval of four grant applications and asked Gray to start.

Gray said before the board are quality grants that fulfill the tourism mission which is to fill motel rooms with events that fit in with the community culture and add awareness of Fallon through their marketing efforts. Gray said a representative from each group is present to answer questions about grant requests. Gray addressed the grant applicants and asked each to come up to the podium when their grant is called and speak into the microphone. Gray said he wants to remind grant applicants the amount of a grant award is contingent on available funds and budget projections.

Gray said before the board is a grant application along with his recommendation from the Cowboy Fast Draw Association and Cal Elrich is here to answer questions.

Chairman Richardson asked if there is anything new for this year's event. Cal said they have experimented with different activities the last few years such as the Cowboy Mounted Shooters, the Civil War Reenactments and a Car Show. He said the car show was a big hit and will be having it again this year. Cal said that they weren't going to fund the Reenactments again this year because it took up so much of their budget; though they aren't funding them, he said that they are welcome to come back. He said that they are going to start to focus more on the Cowboy Fast Draw: Fastest Man Alive, which is a trademark and got a lot of coverage, including a commercial and some ads that got the information out even more.

Cal said that they are going to continue to work with the Outdoor Channel to get them out here so they are able to film it. He said that in spite of all that, the participation level for the Fast Draw is going up every year. Though there were only 200 registered shooters this year, Cal said that is 110 more than the first year. He said that when they had arrived at the Fairgrounds the arena was covered in 6 inches of mud, forcing them to have the contest out in the park at the Fairgrounds rather than the rodeo arena; this was really popular with the shooters and Cal said that they don't want to go back to the rodeo arena. He said that the only issue with this was that they didn't have it set up well enough for spectators on Sunday for the finals. Cal said that will be rearranged this year in order for it to be more spectator friendly.

Gray mentioned that with the help of Travel Nevada they are going to bring 20 writers from the Society of American Travel Writers to the Cowboy Fast Draw this year. He also said that he is hoping that the writers will get to be able to shoot in order for them to get a feeling of what this event is really all about. Cal said that they could actually put on a special shooting event just for the writers.

Board Member Tate asked how long the association was in South Dakota for. Cal said that they started there in 2002. He said that when they came to Fallon, it was an all-around better fit for their shooters. Cal also said that their membership in 2008 was right around 1,200 and right now it is in the 4,000's nationwide. He said back then there was around six or seven title championships and as of right now they have over 20. Cal said that the final event of the whole series is the Fastest Gun Alive. He said that the feedback participants give about Fallon is always positive and that many of the families throw parties over at the bowling alley. Cal also said they no longer put on a banquet at the Convention Center because they would rather have the members go out into the community to support the restaurants and businesses.

Chairman Richardson said that we also put up a banner to welcome the shooters in to town. Cal said that the shooters love that.

Board Member Tate motioned to approve a grant for \$14,000 to the Cowboy Fast Draw Association. Board Member Morar seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

Chairman Richardson said the next grant on the agenda is for Spring Wings and asked Gray to start off. Gray said before the board is a grant application along with his recommendation from Spring Wings and Susan Sawyer is here to answer questions.

Chairman Richardson asked if there was anything new or different that Susan could talk about. Susan said that there were a few changes. One of these being the dry spell that we have had which, is affecting the birds in different ways. She also said that even though this is a wet spot for the birds to land during migration, it's not going to be able to last as long as they are used to.

Susan said this year they have to cram a lot of activities into one day, even though there will still be quite a bit going on. She said that they are still planning on celebrating around the normal time and that there will be a full day on Saturday May 16 from 10 in the morning to 3 in the afternoon. She also said that prior to and after those core hours, they will be giving free hot spot tours; 2 or 3 vans will be provided in the morning and again in the afternoon.

Susan said that there will be, during the core hours, exhibit, hands on interactive activities, environmental education, as well as quite a few vendors and groups and organizations coming in to share what they do. She said that free seminars will also be held for people to come in and listen to. Susan said that there will be a decoy carving workshop being held as well. She said that the tours, seminars, and decoy carving class are their three major events for this year.

Board Member Tate asked why it was changed from 2 days down to 1 day this year as well as what happened with Wetlands and Wings. Susan said that they had one of the best turnouts for Wetlands and Wings in the six years that they have had that event. She said that it was a great success.

Board Member Tate asked if the birds were used in any type of meal after the shoot was finished. Susan said yes they were. She said they wanted the kids to be excited about the full circle; being able to go out and hunt the birds and then come in and clean them up for a meal, they taught the kids that nothing was to be wasted.

Susan said that this is the 18<sup>th</sup> year for Spring Wings. She said this year is down to one day due to the lack of volunteer support that she had. She also said that the main issue was not being able to have enough tour guides for the birding tours throughout the area. Susan said another reason is the Carson Lake is closed because they weren't taking any water access from the public. She said that there were limited areas for the tours because of water shortage, which played a big part in changing the festival to one day instead of the normal two days.

Board Member Tate asked if they were still planning on educating the schools as well. Susan said yes, all 3<sup>rd</sup> grades will have a Field Day in the park where they are invited to come learn.

Chairman Richardson asked if there were any other comments or questions from the board, there were none. Board Member Morar motioned to approve a grant for \$3,150 to Spring Wings. Councilwoman Frost seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

Chairman Richardson said next on the agenda is Board and Staff reports and asked Gray to start off. Gray said he wanted to mention he and Candy returned from the Rural Round Up last week and it was a good conference where we took away a lot of good information and networking along with securing the Travel Writers Association coming to Fallon for the Fast Draw event and think it was a worthwhile educational trip. In May at UNR the Stronger Economy Together effort produced by the USDA and Economic Development at UNR will be having a conference May 19 – 21 and will be attending and also be presenting a session on special events relative how to market those and how important video tape and pictures and footage so you can market.

Chairman Richardson asked if there were any other questions or comments, there were none.

Chairman Richardson asked if there are any public comments, there were none. The meeting is adjourned.