

**TOURISM TASK FORCE
AGENDA
Zoom
Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

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| 6:00 – 6:05 | 1. Welcome – intro remarks – John |
| 6:05 – 6:10 | 2. Review notes from February 25 meeting for edits/additions – Sara |
| 6:10 – 6:15 | 3. Introduction of Stormy Lake Consulting – Lisa |
| 6:15 – 7:15 | 4. Stormy Lake Consulting presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Review Project Plan and implications of Three Sisters ASP proposal• Explain research initiatives, including dialogic workshop (example exercises provided)• Communication channels• Review Task Force involvement expectations• Discussion |
| 7:15 – 7:55 | 5. Current Three Sisters ASP and impacts on Task Force Work |
| 7:55 – 8:00 | 6. Wrap up and meeting schedule going forward – Lisa and Sally |
| 8:00 | 7. Adjourn |

**TOURISM TASK FORCE
MINUTES
Zoom
Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT

John Borrowman	Mayor
Rob Seeley	Councillor
Rachel Ludwig	Industry Representative
Martin Bean	Public Member
Jodi Conuel	Public Member
Michael Hay	Public Member
David Huggill	Public Member
Sean Krausert	Public Member
Michelle MacDonell	Public Member
Christie Pashby	Public Member
Geoff Powter	Public Member
Mace Rosenstein	Public Member
Dawn Saunders Dahl	Public Member

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT

Sarah Elmeligi	Public Member
Norbert Meier	Public Member
Carol Poland	Public Member
Avneet Sahani	Public Member
Adam Walker	Public Member

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Lisa de Soto	Chief Administrative Officer
Sally Caudill	GM of Municipal Services
Sara Jones	Executive Assistant (Recorder)

- 1. Review notes/minutes from February 11, 2021 Meeting**
 - No edits/additions
- 2. Taxes and other Municipal Funding**
 - **Why is this conversation important?**
 - Municipalities have limited revenue generation opportunities
 - Property taxes and fees/fines
 - GoA's Tourism Strategy proposes to grow the tourism industry (NDP target \$10B/yr., UPC target \$20B/yr.)
 - Growth in tourism is dependent on Alberta's mountain destination communities
 - Current revenue model disproportionately burdens local businesses and residents (through taxes) to the benefit of visitors and higher orders of government

- **Property Taxes – where do they go?**
 - Fund (some) municipal programs and services (some programs are funded through fees)
 - Recreation, RCMP, Bylaw, Fire, Streets & Roads, Parks, Planning & Development, Corporate Services
 - Fund Provincial education requisition
 - Fund seniors housing requisition
 - <https://canmore.ca/residents/property-tax>
- **Tax Dollar Distribution =\$1**
 - Municipal Tax = 0.58
 - Corporate Services = 0.19
 - Protective Services = 0.11
 - Public Works = 0.09
 - Facilities & Recreation = 0.08
 - Planning & Engineering = 0.05
 - Affiliates = 0.05
 - Community Social Development = 0.01
 - Education Tax = 0.40
 - Seniors Requisition = 0.02
- **Municipal Taxes (2021 budget)**
 - Cost of delivering programs/services = \$58M
 - Less revenue from other sources = \$31M
 - Total = \$27M
 - Municipal Taxes = 47%
 - Utility Fees = 26%
 - Other Fees/Fines/Transfers = 12%
 - Recreation Sales & Rentals = 7%
 - Franchise Fees = 5%
 - Provincial Grants = 3%
- **Property Assessment**
 - Assessment split:
 - Residential (\$7.1B) =80%
 - Non-residential (\$1.8B) = 20%
 - Tax split:
 - Residential = 66%
 - Non-residential = 33%
 - We use neighbouring municipalities and what they do/how we compare to them with respect to our assessment share and tax share

- **Tax Rate (Mill Rate Calculation)**

Residential calculation: $\frac{\text{Tax to be collected} = \$18\text{M}}{\text{Total Assessment} = \$7.1\text{B}} = 0.00253$

Non-residential calculation: $\frac{\text{Tax to be collected} = \$9\text{M}}{\text{Total Assessment} = \$1.7\text{B}} = 0.00529$

Tax Paid by Home Assessed at \$1,000,000: \$1,000,000 x 0.00253 = \$2,530	Tax Paid by Hotel Assessed at \$10,000,000: \$10,000,000 x 0.00529 = \$52,900
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- **Advocacy to Date (along with the Towns of Banff and Jasper)**

- Meetings with ~20 provincial ministers over 10 years
 - Municipal Affairs, Tourism & Culture, Finance & Treasury
- Commissioned 3 studies/reports
 - AB Tourism-Based Communities – Definition & Revenue Sources (April 2010)
 - Municipal Benchmarking and Competitiveness Study (August 2015)
 - Economic Impact of Tourism Study (February 2017)
- Position papers submitted for MGA amendments
 - Define tourism-based communities
 - Allow for alternative revenue tools beyond property taxes/fees
 - Allow for visitor adjusted populations to be counted for grants

- **Economic Impact**

Annual Tourism Spend in Canmore		
Public Transportation	4%	\$15M
Private Auto	14%	\$49M
Accommodation	25%	\$86M
Food & Beverage	31%	\$106M
Recreation	13%	\$46M
Retail	13%	\$43M
Total		\$345M

Taxation Share		
Federal Government	64%	\$105M
Provincial Government	33%	\$54M
Town of Canmore	2%	\$3.5M
Other	1%	\$1.4M
Total		\$164M

- **Benchmarking & Competitiveness**
 - Taxpayers disproportionately fund tourism infrastructure
 - Investment in capital assets 58% higher than similar sized towns
 - Includes services such as affordable housing, transit, visitor infrastructure
 - Competitor towns have better revenue tools
 - B.C. has Resort Municipality Initiative
 - U.S. towns (Aspen, Jackson, Vail) have revenue sources such as consumption taxes and real estate transfer fees
 - Alberta funding limits tourism community competitiveness
 - Property taxes fail to capture services used by visitors
 - Government grant formulas are population based and do not include visitor or non-permanent populations
- **The B.C. Model**
 - 14 Resort Municipalities
 - Fernie, Golden, Kimberley, Radium, Revelstoke
 - How it works:
 - Province collects revenue from taxes on hotel stays
 - Funds distributed to Resort Municipalities tied to the number of accommodation units
 - Funding must be used to support visitation and growth in visitor services and amenities
- **Summary**
 - Property taxes fail to capture services used by visitors
 - Disproportionately burden local rate payers
 - Alberta's tourism communities "are a product" and need revenue tools (other than taxes) to:
 - Deliver on visitor expectations and support the tourism economy
 - Revenue tools could include:
 - Tax on overnight stays
 - Share of consumption taxes
 - Real estate transfer taxes
 - Grants that recognize visitor adjusted populations

3. RFP Update

- Stormy Lake Consulting, based in Calgary, has been selected to conduct the community education and engagement project and to use the information and insights derived from that outreach to help the task force formulate guiding principles for tourism acceptable to the community
- Selection was based on Stormy Lakes' written proposal, interview, third-party references, and response to our request that they make certain tweaks to their proposal
- The RFP, incorporating TTF member comments, was distributed on January 15 on the Town's website and Alberta Purchasing Connection website, and by targeted distribution

- 19 proposals were received by the submission deadline on February 8. Responses came from large and small firms from all across the country, from the United States, and from a Vancouver-based subsidiary of a Dutch conglomerate
- For the last three weeks the RFP evaluation subcommittee engaged in a robust and collaborative process that required many hours of thoughtful attention and discussion
- Each reviewer determined an overall score for each response on the basis of weighted performance scores across four criteria:
 - Project understanding and approach
 - Project team and relevant experience
 - The scope and elements of the proponent's public engagement plan
 - Budget and pricing data
- After eliminating the lowest-scoring respondents and a few others that failed to submit certain required materials we were left with a top group of 3 and several runners-up
- The subcommittee met on February 17 and by consensus whittled the finalists to two: Stormy Lake and WCS Engagement and Planning out of Whistler
- In separate interviews conducted on February 24 by Lisa and Sally – with members of the evaluation subcommittee observing – we asked the candidates a set of common questions focusing on:
 - The design and execution of their public education and engagement plans
 - Their internal resources and the extent to which they propose to rely for certain inputs and support on town Admin and the task force
 - The interplay of tourism and development, and how they would address the strong feelings in the community about the Three Sisters ASPs
 - The overhang of this fall's municipal election
- The Stormy Lake team emphasized:
 - Their sensitivity to the interplay among residents, visitors, industry, and the environment
 - The importance of iterative, respectful public engagement – with the goal of ensuring all participants that they're being heard
 - The importance of attempting to engage Indigenous communities
 - They have designed similar engagement projects in other communities where residents have strongly-held and sometimes conflicting views about tourism
- Operationally, Stormy Lake proposes to conduct outreach that includes:
 - Multiple live workshops in which stakeholders engage in direct conversation with others with possibly divergent views
 - In-depth individual interviews with industry, community, and government representatives
 - Online surveys
 - Youth outreach
 - Indigenous relationship building
- We were impressed by their understanding of the psychology of these types of projects – their view that the possibility of finding common ground is improved if all participants are confident that their views are being heard and respected

4. Survey Results Discussion

- Unstructured conversation in small breakout rooms took place to discuss the following three topics (no notes taken):
 - Tourism and Development
 - Unique and special qualities of Canmore to be preserved
 - Favourite speaker moments and learnings so far

Wrap up and next meeting

- Lisa will work with Stormy Lake Consulting on their availability. Next meeting will be with the consultant team

Actions:

- Sara to send out tax PowerPoint slides