



WHISTLER

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAY LONG WEEKEND COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2021, STARTING AT 2:00 P.M.

Remote Meeting

Held via Zoom – Link available at www.whistler.ca/committees

PRESENT	Mtgs. YTD (1)
Chair, Councillor Ralph Forsyth	1
Accommodation Sector Representative, Doug Andrews	1
Community Member at Large Representative, Sarah McCullough	1
Liquor Primary Sector Representative, Terry Clark	1
Retail Merchants Sector Representative, Nicole Shannon	1
RCMP Representative, Sgt. Sascha Banks	1
RMOW General Manager, Corporate and Community Services, Ted Battiston	
RMOW Manager, Protective Services, Lindsay DeBou	1

RMOW Manager, Village Animation and Events, Bob Andrea	1
RMOW Supervisor, Village Animation and Events, Christa Vandenberg	1
Recording Secretary, Rose Lawrence	1

REGRETS	
Restaurant Sector Representative, Kevin Wallace	0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by L. DeBou

Seconded by D. Andrews

That the May Long Weekend Committee adopt the May Long Weekend Committee Agenda of Wednesday, April 21, 2021.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by N. Shannon

Seconded by T. Clark

That the May Long Weekend Committee adopt the Regular May Long Weekend Committee Minutes of Tuesday, April 9, 2019 as circulated.

CARRIED

PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

Past Summary and 2021 Plans

A presentation by Manager, Protective Services, Lindsay DeBou was given regarding a summary of the past few years plus plans for the 2021 May Long Weekend. 2015-2019 of note:

- Highly visible presence of public safety officials including:
 - RCMP: extended shifts, additional officers and support from Lower Mainland
 - Bylaw Department fully staffed, hours adjusted to meet needs
 - Fire Department: extra staffing for valley and park patrols
- Family orientated programming
- 2019 was a successful demonstration of the Committee's dedication to safety.

2020 of note:

- Very low occupancy rates due to pandemic; started to see increase in day visitors
- All parks re-opened for public use effective May 19, 2020
- Primary focus was education on social distancing.

Key 2021 points:

- Provincial public health orders extended until May 25.
- Anticipating day and weekend visitors from the local health region, including Vancouver.

A round table was held whereby participants outlined their sector's preparations and concerns. Most stated that they were waiting to hear the April 23 provincial announcement regarding detailed restrictions before they finalized plans.

Accommodation Sector: Hotel bookings at 30-50 percent of 2019 levels. Implementing same measures as previous years. Don't want front line staff to police, educating bookings regarding procedures before they arrive. As in previous years, some hotels have age restrictions and other measures to minimize parties. Concerned re: Airbnb bookings they are harder to manage.

Community Member at Large (WB): The 2019 closing day was later than the holiday Monday and in 2020 and 2021 Whistler Blackcomb was closed. The VCH region encompasses a lot of potential visitors. Intended bike park and sightseeing start date was the long weekend, provincial announcement might change this timing.

Liquor Primary Sector: Open to keep staff working and employed, not expecting a busy weekend. Not busy currently, and not expecting that to change too much.

Protective Services: Will have Bylaw park and trail ambassadors out, plus increased parking regulations signage. RMOW has started a Whistler Summer

Experience working group, with some initiatives starting on the long weekend.

Retail Merchants Sector: Retailers are having a tough time - many just trying to stay afloat. In past holiday weekends there have been business showcase events; e.g. sidewalk sales, where some vendors have participated. Very little of this is planned this year.

RCMP Representative: anticipating similar to Easter and last weekend - lots of people will come out to play, just not in the Village (Pemberton, Forest Service roads, backcountry). Limited backcountry in the VCH region, therefore likely to be concentrated in this area. Have done a lot of work to get the community to this point - preparing in-community and outside.

RMOW General Manager, Corporate and Community Services: continuing to liaise with the Province; anticipating a recommendation versus a restriction, therefore implications on potential sustained pressures, e.g. for RCMP. Also might see messaging encouraging accommodation providers not to take 'out of region' bookings and cancelling existing ones. Expecting burn-out, if Whistler area case numbers lessen, expect to see more visitors; if they worsen, perhaps fewer. Messaging heavy; enforcement light is likely.

- The group discussed ideas for messages to the Province; these included:
 - Easier to manage people who book regulated accommodation: their purpose, location is more easily known, vs. non-regulated.
 - How to mitigate the chatter while not alienating visitors. Want to be proactive as well as thoughtful and health conscious.

The group agreed to hold a second meeting to discuss round table preparations following the April 23 provincial announcement.

GO Fest

A presentation by Supervisor, Village Animation and Events, Christa Vandenberg was given regarding GO Fest 2021. The festival has moved online in light of continued pandemic: focus is on all-ages health and wellness offerings for the Whistler community, and free downloadable content in partnership with Tourism Whistler. Aiming to support local activity providers and build community pride.

This year continues the traditional programming around four pillars:

- Arts & music:
 - Local indigenous welcome & education (SLCC)
 - Pre-produced, downloadable art classes with local artists
 - Music replays of local online production (Arts Whistler, WSSF music sessions), curated music playlist, family sing-along
- Sports & education:
 - Online sports classes taught by local teachers
 - Nature-themed gardening and photography workshops
 - Virtual participation events (bike rides, trail running, scavenger hunt)

MINUTES

Regular May Long Weekend Committee Meeting

April 21, 2021

Page 4

A discussion was held and mental health & wellness, food & addiction support (e.g. WCSS, WB Foundation) was mentioned in terms of including support links wherever possible during the pandemic, including at this festival.

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of Other Business.

MOTION TO TERMINATE

Moved by L. DeBou

Seconded by N. Shannon

That the May Long Weekend Committee meeting of Wednesday, April 21, 2021 be terminated at 2:46 p.m.

CARRIED

Chair, Councillor R. Forsyth

Recording Secretary, B. Sullivan
(Signed for R. Lawrence on leave)