



To: Mayor and Town Council
From: Clint Kinney, Town Manager
Date: March 12, 2021
Re: Info Update

BY THE NUMBERS

January sales tax revenue was down 45% for the month or about \$192K in actual dollars. Not surprising, lodging was the hardest hit sector; lodging tax was down 57% in January. Starting in November, the overall winter season is now about 26% behind the previous season. While we won't receive February sales tax numbers for another month, we do know that February occupancy rate was down 42% and the average daily rate was down 4.5%. These are strong leading indicator of what to expect. Heck, even marijuana and tobacco tax revenue was down in January; about 12% from last year. While none of that is necessarily good news, it is not surprising, and March is trending up and April should beat projections. And then ending on a super high note, we have a high level of confidence that we will be receiving an additional \$2.3 million grant from the Federal Government to go toward transit operations. The deal is not done yet, so cross your fingers, but obviously \$2.3 million bucks is NOT chump change.

SPEAKING OF TRENDING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

As everyone is aware, the CDPHE changed the state-wide covid dial a few weeks back. The changes generally loosened restrictions and allowed for local business to operate in the yellow level of restriction with our current case counts. We are now anticipating that the state will be bringing forth another version of the dial in early April. While no one knows for sure what the changes will be, the rumor mill is anticipating further reductions on occupancy and other similar restrictions. These reduced restrictions have been discussed in terms of the state's exit strategy from COVID times, or the slow transition back to the new normal. As of early March, the CDPHE reported that Colorado met the state-wide goal of vaccinating 70% of all Coloradans aged 70 and above. With this threshold met and the fact that Pitkin County currently passed our CDPHE Report card, *5-Star certified businesses* have been permitted to operate with Level Blue allowances since March 3. Knowing the Dial and its requirements/restriction will be changing again in a few weeks, we are still working to finalizing the summer event schedule. Obviously, we are staying flexible with it.

BEING POLITE ON THE TRAILS

Knowing the Council's goal of "Maintaining a safe multi-modal transportation network is critical; this includes efforts to establish respectful and safe utilization of our multi-use trail system by all of those that enjoy it", we are planning to continue our information sharing, education and "bell" program this summer. Trail Rangers, Police Officers and Trails Crews will continue to hand out educational information and bike bells to people on the trail. These bells have proven to be very effective to help all sorts of user groups to safely share the trails. In addition to the educational cards and bells, we will

continue to have temporary signage (foam board signs) and outreach and education at trailheads and hopefully some new kiosks. All of these efforts are also being coordinate with Pitkin County Trails.

SWIM FAST, TAKE CHANCES

The Aspen High School girls did great at the regional meet last week. The team will soon be off to the state championship meet in Thorton. The state meet was supposed to be tomorrow (Saturday), but because of the impending storm, they moved to the meet to Monday. As such, I plan to be watching an exciting girls 3A High School Championship meet in place of attending the scheduled Council meeting. While I am away, Travis Elliott will be the Acting Town Manager.

THE PEOPLE, ARE THEY A CHANG'N?

The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) and Colorado Association of Ski Towns (CAST) designed a survey to help us better understand in-and-outflow to our mountain communities. The survey expires 3/31/2021. We have shared this link through our standard channels, but please take a moment to share the link with your constituents & participate in this regional survey. Here is a note from CAST and NWCOG:

Have you noticed that the usual seasonal pattern of visitor in-and-outflow to our mountain communities seems to have changed during COVID? Does it seem that more people are here all the time? If so, you are not alone. There is much anecdotal experience leading to this conclusion. But to what extent is the migration “really happening” and are changes here to stay or will things shift when the pandemic eases? Gathering input from our residents – new and existing, full-time and part-time – is the goal of a new project to better understand if these shifts are here to stay and, if so, how we can best meet community needs.

A regional research project entitled “Mountain Migration” funded by the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) and Colorado Association of Ski Towns (CAST) is geared to help local leaders better understand these trends. Research has begun, and Pitkin County residents are encouraged to complete the survey at: www.polco.us/nwccog-survey

TID BITS

- The BOCC received the Town Council’s recommendation for who you would like to see serve on the BOH. They are working through their appointment process now, they may need a recommendation from the Town Council for who you would like to serve as an alternate on the BOH, but we will not know for a while.
- Summer is coming. We are hiring for lots of positions at the Recreation Center. If you know someone looking for a summer gig, send the cool kids our way.
- Pitkin County is setting a joint meeting on April 20th (4-6 pm) between the County, Aspen, TOSV and the Forest Service (Kevin Warner) to discuss the upcoming wildfire season and Maroon Bells summer plans. Please let Rhonda know if you are available to attend this virtual meeting.
- We put the RFP out to bid for the stairway project connecting Brush Creek Lane to Brush Creek Road.

- We have lots of plan review underway including the Westin, Snowmass Center, Electric Pass Lodge and the Ski Co maintenance facilities on top of Sam's Knob.
- Weight restrictions for local streets will go into effect in two weeks. No, they don't need a diet, but by reducing heavy trucks on the road this time of year, we are adding a lot of life to the infrastructure.
- The Planning Commission will start its bi-annual review of the Comprehensive Plan starting next week.
- Big news, the Official Town Ski Day and socially distanced lunch will be on April 2. Of course, ATCKWBT.
- The next round of Carriage Way boiler replacements will continue forward next week when the Top of the Village boilers go out to bid.
- We are currently advertising for the open Planning Commission Seat.
- The Town ice rink is done for the season. It lasted just about 78 days this year.
- We had a significant electrical failure at 1100 Building of Creekside apartments earlier this week. Through a lot of quick thinking and good teamwork, we were able to provide temporary heat for the one night the issue occurred. We are now working on a long term fix for the issue.
- The Snowmass not-for-profit that raised private funds for local restaurants will be making one more round of distributions to 17 locally owned restaurants. Last September, it gave 14 restaurants \$2,000 each. This upcoming distribution is expected to be something similar.

CC: Department Directors