



**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS  
MANITOU ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE BOARD**  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Zoom Meeting  
September 25, 2025

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Routon called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:**

Chair Ralph Routon  
Vice Chair Kinsey Watts  
Board Member Wren Almitra  
Board Member Mark Lee  
Board Member Marcus Medina  
Board Member Neale Minch  
Board Member Peter Sommers  
Alternate Board Member Gerald Mitchell  
Alternate Board Member Jason Wells

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT FOR ROLL CALL:**

Alternate Board Member Lisette Casey (joined at 5:27 PM)

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Board Member Lee moved to approve the agenda as amended, to bring the discussion regarding the Pikes Peak Bulletin to the top of the meeting. Board Member Minch seconded the motion. The motion was carried (7-0).

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board Member Watts moved to approve the minutes with clerical errors to be corrected. The motion was seconded by Board Member Sommers. The motion was carried (7-0).

F1. Pikes Peak Bulletin. Presentation and update by new publisher Juaquin Moble and/or managing editor Heila Ershadi

Pikes Peak Bulletin Publisher Juaquin Moble explained the premise of his role is to expand into new areas of Colorado Springs. He stated the Bulletin would cover topics and news that may not be reported by the Gazette. Some new approaches they intend to take include utilizing younger journalism students from high schools and colleges, as well as expanding the sports region they report on.

Chair Routon shared that the main concern of the MACH Board is to understand what the Arts and Culture coverage regarding Manitou Springs would be.

Publisher Mobley confirmed that nothing would change as far as coverage of Arts and Culture. The main change would be adding more journalists to cover more ground, with the intended expansion.

Chair Routon commented that, beyond articles, a calendar of events is something the Board and readers want to see published, and he asked how soon they planned to start publishing again.

Publisher Mobley stated that the Bulletin hadn't stopped publishing, pointing out that coverage is all online. He explained they plan to start publishing paper versions of the Bulletin quarterly, projected for October 10, 2025. He added the focus would be on digital publication.

There was a discussion about the role of a publisher and hard copy distribution of the Bulletin. Publisher Mobley explained that a publisher is like the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and that his main focus is on business matters. He shared that the Bulletin just collaborated with another printer and is looking to publish between 6,000 and 10,000 copies. He added that the new version would resemble magazine style format. He stated that distribution would be opening in new areas where readers could sit to read, incorporating access to the digital version via Quick Response Code (QR) codes.

There was a brief discussion about a calendar of events for Manitou Springs, during which Publisher Mobley stated they are in the process of updating the web design and that the topic is still being discussed, with the idea that the Manitou Springs calendar would be searchable.

Council Liaison Judith Chandler asked if Publisher Mobley had reviewed the MACH grant application under which the Bulletin was awarded \$7,000. He stated he had not. She recommended he review the application and report back to the Board on whether the use of funds aligns with the awarded goals, noting the importance of this information for future grant cycles. She requested that Publisher Mobley email the Board a brief summary of his understanding of the grant requirements.

There was a brief discussion about the Project Completion Report, in which Publisher Mobley confirmed he had been in the non-profit realm for 13 years and is familiar with reporting requirements for grants.

There was a discussion about the future of the paper industry. Publisher Mobley confirmed that research suggests that paper news is in decline. He explained that the Bulletin is headed toward a media outlet model, including podcasts, social media, and other formats.

Board Member Almitra inquired if the Bulletin knew how much they would be relying on grant funding. Publisher Mobley stated that they would like to be no more than 30% reliant on grants in the future.

Chair Routon asked if it was too late to get anything into the October addition of the Bulletin. Publisher Mobley stated it would be possible and suggested that content be sent to Heila Ershadi.

Council Liaison Chandler asked whether current subscribers would receive the new version or have to resubscribe. Publisher Mobley confirmed subscribers would receive the new version automatically.

**Note for the record** – Board Member Casey joined the meeting at 5:27 PM.

Board Member Minch suggested that media grants should be discussed at a future meeting and proposed the idea of paying for an ad rather than grant funding for media projects.

Board Member Sommers expressed disappointment that the funding is being used for only 1 publication rather than 26.

Chair Routon shared that he plans to send a follow up email to recap the conversation and expectations.

The consensus was to consider how to move forward with grants for media.

#### **D. PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There was no public comment.

#### **E. REPORTS – CITY COUNCIL LIAISON & STAFF**

##### 1. City Staff Report (Rebecca Davis)

Finance Director Rebecca Davis referred to the Financial Report noting that it only runs through September 22, 2025, and the sales tax is only through July due to delays in State reporting. The focus was on reminding the Board that tax revenue reported in the packet didn't accurately reflect the impact of lost recreational marijuana sales tax.

##### 2. City Council Liaison Report (Judith Chandler)

Council Liaison Chandler stated that City Council did not meet on September 23, 2025 and is likely not expected to meet on Sept 30, 2025. She shared that Saturday, September 27, 2025 is the Creek Walk Clean-Up and it runs from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Chipper Day is from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. There will be a Candidate Forum on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at The Cliff House.

##### 3. Board Member Reports on Attended Events

Board Member Medina announced that Clay Fest is on Saturday, September 27, 2025.

Chair Routon shared that the Commonwheel event on Labor Day weekend was terrific. The music was funded by the MACH Board, and he noted that the band didn't advertise the support from MACH at the event.

There was a discussion about buying a banner for display at events, as well as the completion report possibly including examples of how support was displayed.

Board Member Minch announced that Brew Fest will be on October 4, 2025.

Board Member Wells shared that the Indigenous Peoples Day event is being held at Memorial Hall on October 12, 2025.

Board Member Lee recommended that when a grant is awarded, MACH could establish a list of events on a calendar.

Council Liaison Chandler suggested that there could be a Manitou Springs newsletter and podcast.

## **F. BUSINESS**

1. Pikes Peak Bulletin. Presentation and update by new publisher Juaquin Mobley and/or managing editor Heila Ershadi

**Note for the Record** – This item was moved after the Approval of Minutes section during the Approval of Agenda section of the meeting.

2. New members. Welcome to Gerald Mitchell and Lisette Casey, appointed by City Council on September 16 as alternate members.

Chair Routon announced that the new alternate board members were recently appointed and shared that he made comment to City Council regarding MACH's unique approach to alternate members, who are more involved. He thanked the new members for joining.

Board Member Wells requested that it be clarified how the alternate board members would be utilized in the event of an absence.

3. Final discussion and approval of revised guidelines and FAQs (See attachments)

There was a consensus that a sample budget worksheet would be helpful on the website. Board Member Watts stated she would develop an acceptable version for publishing.

Board Member Minch moved to approve the revised guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Board Member Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

4. Status change, KollaCode closing, options for site maintenance work in 2026 and beyond.

Board Member Watts reported that KollaCode is closing.

Chair Routon stated he had a meeting with Finance Director Davis and City Administrator Denise Howell to discuss other possibilities. He added that there will be more to come on the topic.

5. Natalia Pulido mural grant update. Ralph will report on any recent progress.

Chair Routon stated Natalia Pulido reported she is nearing the completion of the project. He mentioned that there was discussion regarding a possible public event for unveiling of her artwork when finished.

### **G. DISCUSSION OF TOPICS FOR A FUTURE BOARD MEETING OR WORK SESSION**

Chair Routon mentioned that the City Clerk's Office wants to conduct another training. He stated that he shared the date for October's meeting for their attendance.

Board Member Minch suggested that the future of accepting grant applications from newspapers or other media outlets should be brought before City Council, as well as possible advertising material, specifically a banner, for events sponsored by the Board.

### **H. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 PM.

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