

Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

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The Gardiner Chamber of Commerce serves our community through developing local tourism while endorsing stewardship of the Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Meeting date: **Thursday, December 17, 2020 from 12:00pm – 1:00pm**

Location: Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Purpose: Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Agenda:

1. Chamber Business

1.1 Roll Call & Introductions

Trina Smith, Jeff Guengerich, Mike Keller, Mike Skelton, Edwin Johnson, Alex Roberts, Sarah Ondrus

1.2 Approval of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

Mike Keller Approves the November Meeting Minutes. Mike Skelton seconds.

2. Committee Updates

25 min.

2.1 Mary Wilson – Yellowstone NPS

Wilson reported that visitation for November in YNP was up 42% from the previous period in 2019. Overall, for 2020 the park is down 5.2% compared to 2019. Beginning December 18th there will likely be no restrictions on vehicles in the park, and over snow travel will become available via the West, South and East Entrances. Please remember to call 2117 for the YNP road conditions. A common theme that NPS has noted regarding the travelers in the park is that they are unprepared with appropriate winter gear. At Canyon village the lobby and restrooms will be open. Canyon will also have half of their picnic tables available with propane heaters outside. Currently there are only restrooms open at Old Faithful. They hope to have some Visitor Centers open later in the season. Yellowstone has named a new Deputy Superintendent, Mike Tranel; you can read the full press release announcing his hire [here](#). Lastly, Wilson reported that Steamboat's last eruption was December 11th, making it the 47th eruption of 2020.

2.2 Sabina Strauss – Successful Gardiner

Strauss reported on behalf of Successful Gardiner regarding their latest meeting on December 16th. The current members have worked on putting together the work from Future West and the information from the public meetings into a neighborhood plan. They believe they have a final draft of the neighborhood plan in which they have identified eight goals. Moving forward they would like to host four meetings in which they would discuss and strategize two goals per meeting. They hope to begin these meetings in January and have them every other week. They are requesting the Chambers involvement at these meetings. The Executive director agreed to attend these meetings on behalf of the Chamber.

2.2 Director & CVB Report – Terese Petcoff

Petcoff reported that The Department of Revenue reported bed tax collections for the 3rd Quarter of 2020 are down 14% statewide. For the calendar year 2020 bed tax collections are down 25% statewide. Specifically, Gardiner is down 12%.

Regarding Visit Gardiner MT social media platforms, she highlighted the following items:

- The Roosevelt Arch continues to be the highest generator for organic reach.
- The Instagram following has grown exponentially with almost 2,000 new followers in the past 6 months.
- www.VisitGardienrMT.com website traffic is up 29% from this time last year.

Beginning in late January/early February TDG will be running a digital ad campaign. In addition to using photos they will also be using the promotional videos from 2017 for this upcoming campaign.

Petcoff updated the board that since Travel Guide Ad reservations have opened, they have had enough reservations to pay for the printing of the guide. The deadline to reserve is January 8th.

The Chamber is on track to spend all the funding they were awarded through the Montana Aware Safety Grant. With the new items they receive they will continue to distribute them to members and visitors. Petcoff asked for the board members to help spread the word that they have plenty of PPE if a business is in need.

Petcoff alerted the board that the Chamber received a notice that their Chamber's commercial insurance would not be renewed through their current provider. She will keep the board updated and may seek their help in the future regarding this matter.

Lastly, Petcoff requested the board's permission to change the Chamber's winter hours to 8AM – 4PM. The board proposed changing the hours to 9AM – 4PM allowing the staff to have an hour of admin time to start their day. Edwin Johnson motioned to approve, and Sarah Ondrus seconded the motion.

3. Outstanding Business

35 min.

3.1 Gardiner Chamber of Commerce FY2021 Budget

Petcoff proposed the FY2021 operating budget to the board members. She made members aware of the line items that had been adjusted from the previous year. The following line items were discussed in greater detail.

Gardiner Resort Tax > Capital Grant

Being that the Chamber can only put a \$25,000 lumpsum payment per year and a monthly payment of \$4,171.10 towards the building mortgage this does not add up to the sum of the awarded grant. Petcoff inquired about how to offset the funds in the Capital Grant line item that are not put towards the building's mortgage. Keller proposed adding the line item of "Contingency Holding Capital Acc.". This line item is needed to appropriately offset these remaining funds as we cannot use them towards our operating budget.

Payroll Expenses > Company Contributions

Petcoff communicated that in previous budgets Company Contributions were not accounted for. In the FY2021 budget a line item of \$9,000 was added to account for this.

After discussion it was determined that Petcoff would update the budget and send it out via email for the board's approval by Monday, December 21st.

3.2 Gardiner CVB FY21 Budget Update

Petcoff made the board aware that the CVB needs to adjust the FY21 Budget and submit it for approval to the TAC committee. The adjustment needed to be made by recommendations from the state the bed taxes collections would be lower due to COVID19. Petcoff proposed her suggestions for board approval including changes to the following methods: Social Media, Website/Internet Developments, Joint Ventures, Printed Material, Print Advertising, Online/Digital Advertising, Administration, and Cooperative Marketing. *Mike Skelton motioned to approve. Mike Keller seconded the motion.* The updated budget was approved and Petcoff will submit to the TAC for approval.

3.3 Annual Member Meeting Strategy

Due to COVID19 the Annual Members Meeting will not be able to be held in person and will be moved to a Zoom virtual meeting. Petcoff purposed the following timeline and details regarding the meeting.

- Thursday January 7th & 14th: E-Blast to membership base Annual Members Meeting Invite with Zoom Link. This email will also include bios on the candidates running for the open Board of Directors seats.
- Different from previous years the meeting will take place at the regular meeting time of January 21st, 12PM – 1PM, rather than in the evening.
- The meeting agenda will be like previous years. However, to vote for the Board of Directors, during the Zoom meeting Petcoff will send a Google Survey for members to vote in real time. When the new board is announced Petcoff will put the attendees that are not on the new Board of Directors in the Zoom Waiting Room. This will enable the new Board of Directors to establish the Executive Committee. Once the Executive Committee is established Petcoff will readmit the attendees back into the meeting and the new Executive Committee will be announced.

3.4 QuickBooks Vendor Discussion

Petcoff updated the board that the Chamber would be modifying the tracking of Newsletter Ads income in QuickBooks. In the future, rather recording Newsletter transactions as a deposit towards Newsletter ads, Petcoff will create an invoice for each customer/ad. For accounting purposes this system needed to change. This system was updated after a discussion with Skelton after he proposed the question of, how much an individual/member has spent with the through the years.

3.5 Board Member Meeting Attendance

Following up from discussions at previous board meeting regarding the Board Member Attendance Policy, Petcoff updated the Board that the only attendance policy to be found on this matter was found in the Policy and Procedures Manual. After discussion about this manual, it was determined it is grossly outdated. To move forward in updating the manual Petcoff will include the following purposed change (red) in the Annual Members Meeting E-Blast to the Membership base on both January 7th and January 14th and it will be running in the Gardiner Community Newsletter on January 6, 13, and 20:

The current Gardiner Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has determined that the following statement contained in the Policy and Procedures Manual of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce, is overly restrictive in terms of allowing the Board of Directors to update the Policy and Procedures Manual in a timely, necessary manner.

WHEREFORE, the Policies and Procedures Manual of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce is approved by the affirming vote of the current members of the Board of Directors (quorum required) in attendance at the public meeting July 18, 2013. These Policies and Procedures are to become effective immediately and are to be considered binding in conjunction with the Mission statement, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce. Any future revision of these policies and procedures, other than the creation/dissolution of committees and/or their contents; and the designation of duties for/between the Executive Director and the Secretary/Administrative Assistant must be approved by a majority ruling of the presiding Board of Directors at the Annual meeting in which the membership has been advised of

such proposed revisions no less than 2 weeks in advance by mass email to the membership and posted in the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce Community Newsletter for a minimum of two consecutive weeks immediately prior to the date of the meeting in which revisions are to be voted upon.

The following proposal, which the Board of Directors will vote on at the upcoming Annual Meeting, will replace the current text (noted above) in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

The Policy and Procedures Manual of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce was first adopted by a majority affirmative vote of the presiding Board of Directors on July 18, 2013. It may be necessary to update or revise these policies and procedures from time to time to ensure they reflect the current operational needs of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce. Upon proper notice given, any revisions, when necessary, will be voted upon by the Board of Directors. These revisions will take effect upon a majority affirmative vote of the Board of Directors. The Policy and Procedures Manual is to be used in conjunction with, but does not supersede, the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution/By Laws and Mission Statement of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce.

If approved this would allow the Board of Directors to make necessary updates to the manual at any time rather than just at the Annual Members Meeting.

It was then discussed to propose the following addition regarding directors attendance policy to the Chamber's Bylaws as Article 5, Section 8:

Upon election, each Director accepts and affirms their obligation to attend each regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors in person, or if circumstances warrant, to attend via teleconference or video conference. Two or more unexcused absences from these meetings, in any 12-month period, may result in the offending Director being removed from the Board via a Motion for Removal presented by a member of the Executive Committee, seconded, and confirmed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

If approved by the Board of Directors Petcoff will update the Bylaws with the change, as well as add this policy to the confidentially agreement signed by each Director.

4. Public Comment

5 min.

5. Date of Next Meeting: January 21, 2021 12pm – 1pm