

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.

DATE: Thursday, March 20, 2025 from 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

LOCATION: Gardiner Chamber of Commerce 216 Park St. Gardiner, MT & [Virtual via Zoom](#)

PURPOSE: Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

PRESENT: Karrie Kahle, Debbie Mackey, Cara McGary, Sarah Ondrus, Maria Sascha, Billie Taylor, and Todd Walton

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Amanda Hagerty & Karoline Sleichter

Agenda:

1. Debbie Mackey called the meeting to order at 2:31 PM

1.1 Roll Call & Introductions

1.2 APPROVAL/CORRECTIONS of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the February 2025 Board Meeting. Motion by Todd Walton. Seconded by Sarah Ondrus.
- **Carried.**

2. Presentations:

2.1. Katherine Daly – Park County Housing Coalition. Phase I highlights include the development of the 2021 Park County Housing Needs Assessment, outlining a shared vision, and a recommendation of 12 tools to address Park County’s housing needs. PCHC is currently in Phase II. The objectives include implementing the 2022 Park County Action Plan and recruiting new funding sources for community housing. More resources are available at parkcountyhousing.com. Handouts were provided and are available upon request at the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce.

Ondrus asked if community members can contact the PCHC on another’s behalf and refer them to PCHC programs. Daly stated that you can refer other community members if they need assistance.

3. Committee Updates

3.1. Mike Tranel – Yellowstone NPS

Please note that Mike Tranel presented prior to Katherine Daly.

- NPS is currently on schedule and plans to have the roads cleared in time for the tentative opening date of the park’s West Entrance on April 18th, despite losing a few key equipment operators. Updated information can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/parkroads.htm>
- Yellowstone NPS will start the summer season with a full complement of seasonal staff, however, operations may be slightly delayed due to a slow start on the hiring process. The North Entrance gate may be affected due to a lack of staff. May and June may have more “glitches” than a typical year.
- Many of the Federal workforce changes will not be noticeable to visitors.
- The Yellowstone River Bridge Project is set to continue through 2025. Intermittent stoplights may cause traffic delays in Lamar Valley. Additional information can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/news/24014.htm>
- Construction in Golden Gate will widen and strengthen the road. Work on this project will increase later in the summer and night closures will be implemented. A complete closure of this section of road is expected around Labor Day. Dunraven Pass will be kept open as long as possible to ease the pressure on the Golden Gate area. It is currently unlikely that the night closure at Golden Gate will overlap with closures on Dunraven Pass.
- Additional updates were given about various bridge projects throughout the Park. Long-term funded infrastructure projects should not be affected by current funding changes. Updated information can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/management/infrastructure.htm>

- Mackey asked for updates on the permanent North Entrance Road. Decisions are expected to be announced later this year. There will be a public comment period after decisions are announced. More information can be found at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=115825>
- McGary asked if the Park lost any sanitation workers for the 2025 season. Tranel confirmed that the seasonal positions are full for the summer.
- A community member asked about the logistics of removing the old Yellowstone River Bridge regarding the effect on wildlife. Tranel stated that the old bridge could not be left in place because it would be a safety concern for visitors and wildlife.

3.2 Terese Petcoff – Director’s Report

- USFS updates on behalf of Mike Thom, who could not be in attendance. Volunteers are currently being recruited for Eagle Creek, Bear Creek, and Soda Butte Campgrounds. Reservations are rolling in for Eagle Creek Campground.
- Visitor Guide ads closed today. Ad revenue increased compared to last year. Petcoff confirmed that the guide ad sales will be able to cover the printing costs, which is essential to the publication.
- Walking Map ad sales will go live soon.
- Met with John Durnal from Senator Daines’ office. He thanked Petcoff for the recent letter expressing concern about recent events and emphasized that the Senator’s office appreciates data on the impact of these events on Gardiner.
- Provided updates on the Chamber’s financial developments, including:
 - Account closure for the Capital Grant account being that the building has been paid off but she is still awaiting the final documents/deed
 - The CVB FY26 projection is \$103,649.
- Rodeo Grounds updates: Discussion about the formation of a committee focusing on possible uses for the Grounds. Casey Hubbard will not be selling fireworks this year. Followed up with Linda Gray about the Wood Bank utilizing the Grounds. The potential location of the Wood Bank was discussed.
- Rebecca Bent with the Gateway Hose Company suggested merging the Chamber Potluck with First Responder’s Night Out.
- 2024 Q4 lodging tax collections increased 23% versus 2023.

3. Old Business

4. New Business

- Richard Parks, Chair of GRAD, provided an overview of the upcoming Resort Tax measures included in this spring’s Mail-In Ballot Election. The hope is that the resort

tax will serve to increase revenue for infrastructure projects and community improvement. Examples of potential projects and improvements were discussed. Two amendments are being proposed on the ballot:

1. Should the collection of the resort tax be extended an additional 20 years?
2. Should May and October be included in the resort tax collection period?

It is important to note that if passed the amendments would not go into effect until January 1, 2026.

5. Public Comment

None

6. Motion to adjourn made by Karrie Kahle. Seconded by Todd Walton. Motion carried and meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:15pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, April, 17, 2025, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM