

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, April 20th, 2023 from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM**

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

Purpose: Regularly Scheduled Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

Agenda:

1. Chamber Business

1.1 Roll Call & Introductions

Chelsea Deweese, Brian Koski, Debbie Mackey, Sarah Ondrus, Mike Skelton, Trina Smith, Billie Taylor
Excused Absence: Amanda Hagerty and Mike Keller

1.2 Approval of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

Smith motioned to approve the minutes from March 2023. Mackey seconded. 5 in favor/ 0 opposed/0 abstentions. Motion approved.

2. Presentation – Terese Petcoff – FY24 CVB Marketing Plan Budget

Petcoff presented the CVB Marketing Plan Budget for fiscal year 2024.

Petcoff Presented the FY24 Destination Marketing Plan for the Gardiner CVB highlights included:

Goals for the Gardiner CVB in the FY24 Destination Marketing Plan

1. Improve the visitor experience by focusing on areas the CVB can do at the Visitor Information Center, in the vestibule, and throughout Gardiner.
2. Focus on communicating and educating visitors on what to expect when you come to Gardiner and recreate responsibly messaging.
3. Maintain the increase of collections bed tax collections compared to 2021.

Petcoff proposed the following budget: Note the total is based on using \$10,887 of FY23 funding and the projected FY24 collections of \$33,453

Gardiner CVB	
Method	FY24
Administration	\$6,690.60
Joint Ventures	\$4,500.00
Opportunity Marketing	\$50.00
Cooperative Marketing	\$1,250.00

Agency Services	\$800
Marketing Resources	\$150.00
Paid Media	\$12,600.00
Earned Media	\$500.00
Website Development	\$1,500.00
Education / Outreach	\$800.00
Research	-
Product Development	\$5,000.00
Visitor Services	\$10,050.00
	\$44,340.60

Mackey motioned to approve the budget. Smith seconded. 4 in favor/ 0 opposed/1 abstention. Motion approved.

3. Committee Updates

3.1 Mary Wilson – Yellowstone NPS

Visitation: March visitation was down 15.59% from March 2022. Recreation visits YTD are down 2.27% from the same time in 2022.

Spring Road Opening Dates: Roads will open at 8:00 am on the following dates (conditions permitting):

April 21 (tomorrow!): West Entrance to Madison Junction, Mammoth Hot Springs to Old Faithful, Norris to Canyon Village

May 5: East Entrance to Lake Village (Sylvan Pass), Canyon Village to Lake Village

May 12: South Entrance to West Thumb, Lake Village to West Thumb, West Thumb to Old Faithful (Craig Pass), Tower Junction to Tower Fall

May 26: Tower Fall to Canyon Junction (Dunraven Pass), Beartooth Highway (US-212)*

Park road updates can be obtained by texting 82190 to 888-777, calling the park's Public Road Report Line at 307-344-2117, and/or by visiting the Park Roads page on the park's website.

Norris Geyser Basin will remain closed until further notice due to significant snowpack on boardwalks. Please remind visitors there will be very limited services this time of year, and area closures.

Winter Mortality and Bears on Carcasses: Higher than average winter mortality this year due to severe winter, so bison elk, moose stressed and weak and using roadways more. Do not push wildlife on roadways, BE PATIENT. Please remind visitors to stay at least 100 yds from bears and wolves, stay alert and carry bear spray.

Mammoth Campground: OPENING (date TBD): Work continues on the new waste treatment system to serve the Mammoth area, including the hotel and campground. A small number of campsites will remain closed as the restroom facility serving these sites will not be connected to the new (temporary) wastewater system. Watch for updates: Camping - Yellowstone National Park (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)

Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel: Due to the heavy winter and difficult construction conditions, opening has been delayed until the wastewater treatment system in the area is completed/operational. Hotel's gift shop, coffee and beverage service, and lobby will open as scheduled on April 28.

Hotel dining room and Terrace Grill will be temporarily closed and regularly scheduled tours departing from Mammoth Hotel will not be available.

Major Road Improvement Projects (2023)

Four projects will cause delays (Lewis River Bridge, Old Faithful to West Thumb, Yellowstone River Bridge and Northeast Entrance Road). Roads between North Entrance and Northeast Entrance are open to all traffic with no restrictions. To learn more about each project one can visit:

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/parkroads.htm>

Steamboat Geyser (most recent eruption)

Tuesday, January 28, 2023 (81 days since then)...second longest interval since March 15, 2018 (longest is 89 days which ended with the September 18, 2022 eruption).

3.2 Tim Schumacher – USFS

Not Present

3.3 Terese Petcoff – Director’s Report

New Members: Dreamcatcher Tipi Hotel & in talks with Cowboy Coffee

Spring cleaning went really well and with the help of both myself and Maria we were able to really clean this upstairs area. More of these items and E-waste will be removed by the end of this weekend with the assistance of the Earth Day Volunteers.

Petcoff will be speaking with Caitlin Avery from Senator Tester’s office tomorrow around 10:30/11 am and will report back on how the meeting goes.

More and more media outlets reaching out, actually doing an interview after this board meeting. Many outlets reaching out being that the one year anniversary is coming up.

3.4 Maria Koppelberger – Operations Manager’s Report

Visitor Information Center

Maria reached out to past VIC staff about their interest in this summer, a few are returning, but we need to hire a few more staff. We will put the help wanted ad in the next edition of the newsletter on April 26.

We are revamping the tour operator availability project. We’ll send out weekly Sunday emails to tour operators asking whether or not they have availability that particular week. At the Chamber, we receive a lot of questions about last-minute bookings for people whose vacation is already underway. It’s frustrating for them when we give a long list of guides who may or may not be able to help. Finding out weekly availability will help the visitors and the guides. Maria will send out the first email tomorrow re-introducing the project, and then weekly on Sunday afternoons beginning the end of May.

Properties and Facilities

- fire extinguishers were inspected last Friday, we passed with flying colors.
 - fireplace cleaning pushed back to October
 - Katy, our contracted cleaner, will deep clean restrooms next week in preparation for summer
 - Flag issues – We can’t lower the Montana flag due to tangled cables. The US flag is twisted up because the loop and weight on the lower part of the flag are hooked on the top of the flagpole. Zondra can help with the tangled cables, she knows how it works. But with the US flag, there’s nothing we can do except get someone up there on a boom lift/cherry picker machine. *Board members suggested contacting local fire department, NPS, Xanterra, Sinclair for help with the flag.*
- Up next:
- possibly getting sharps containers for the restrooms
 - cleaning up the back entrance and the shed

4. Outstanding Business

Skelton brought up several items:

-Updates to Policy and Procedure Handbook is tabled until June board meeting.

-Appointing the Rodeo Grounds Committee

Motion to Appoint Ondrus, Taylor, Koski, Mackey, Smith to Rodeo Grounds Committee :

Deweese motioned to approve the budget. Ondrus seconded. 5 in favor/ 0 opposed/0 abstentions. Motion approved.

-Plowing the parking lot: The Chamber previously agreed to plow the parking lot in a Memorandum of Understanding with Park County. We don't need the whole thing plowed on a daily basis since only a few places are open. This will be an ongoing agenda item to find someone to plow.

-Convergence Conference is coming up. May 12th there is a media event with Superintendent Sholly in front of the Chamber. In any conversations with media, please stress that Gardiner is OPEN and ready for visitors.

-Expansion of a current seasonal position into a part-time, year-round position: Visitor Experience and Community Engagement Coordinator. The hours will primarily be in May-September with furlough in the fall and spring, and a few days a week in the winter.

-There is another grant possibility coming up soon. It may come close to the amount of the projected deficit.

5. New Business

Skleton brought up the need for an additional \$5,000 in the budget for the VECE Coordinator.

Deweese motioned to approve the additional \$5,000 in the budget for the VECE Coordinator. Smith Seconded. 5 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstentions. Motion approved.

-ABC News is in town doing interviews with businesses. If you're interviewed, please stress that the road is OPEN into Yellowstone, no restrictions.

-Congratulations to Neli and Dimitar Nikolov for winning this year's Small Business Persons of the Year award for the state of Montana. May 2nd there will be a presentation at Eat Café at 11am. The board is invited to attend.

-Be on the lookout for a press release from Joe Josephson with Greater Yellowstone Coalition regarding the Crevice Mine. He will present at the next board meeting in June.

-Mike Tranel will present at the July board meeting.

-Rodeo Grounds Banners: In the next couple days we need to figure out any regulations from the Montana Department of Transportation regarding banner advertising at the Rodeo Grounds. Park County zoning ends at the boundary of the Gardiner Water District. The ads will bring a new revenue stream for the Chamber.

6. Public Comment

No public comment

Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ondrus seconded. 5 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstentions. Motion carried.

Date of Next Meeting: June 15, 2023, 12:00PM – 1:00PM