



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 21st, 2022 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

All meetings are recorded and available upon request by emailing

executivedirector@gardinerchamber.com.

Agenda:

1. Chamber Business

1.1 Roll Call & Introductions

Chelsea Deweese, Mike Keller, Debbie Mackey, Sarah Ondrus, Mike Skelton, Trina Smith, Sabina Strauss

Absent: Billie Taylor

1.2 Approval of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

Minutes from March 2022 approved with correction. Keller made motion to approve the minutes for March 2022 with correction, Ondrus seconded the motion.

2. Presentations

All presentations, including Q&A, will be timed and a two-minute remaining warning will be given to ensure that all agenda items are discussed.

2.1 Terese Petcoff – FY23 Destination Marketing Organization Plan

Petcoff Presented the FY23 Destination Marketing Plan for the Gardiner CVB highlights included:

Goals for the Gardiner CVB in the FY23 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 year over year

Petcoff proposed the following budget: Note the total is based on using \$38,000 of FY22 funding and the projected FY23 collections of \$92,809.80

Gardiner CVB	
Method	FY23
Administration	\$18,561.80
Joint Ventures	\$8,000.00
Opportunity Marketing	\$178.00
Cooperative Marketing	\$2,500.00
Agency Services	\$20,000.00
Marketing Resources	\$600.00
Paid Media	\$47,920.00
Earned Media	\$1,500.00

Website Development	\$7,000.00
Education / Outreach	\$2,800.00
Research	\$700.00
Product Development	\$10,000.00
Visitor Services	\$11,050.00
	\$130,809.80

Speaking to a few areas of the budget Petcoff explained

- Research regards having an economic impact survey done of Rodeo attendees in 2023 by University of Montana Institute of Tourism Research and Recreation
- Agency services would be used to contract out marketing creative and social media management.
- Paid media is for print advertising, billboards, digital advertising, blog posts, the e-newsletter, and updating the CVB photo and video library
- Product development is for updating the Visitor Information Center (VIC) signs with the current logos and branding and eventually a wayfinding project for the town of Gardiner.
- Visitor’s services could be used towards VIC staffing & wages, drop shipping of the travel guides, and additional improvements .

Following the presentation there was conversation surrounding updating/replacing the current welcome to Gardiner sign on HWY 89. Petcoff stated that this would be apart of a larger wayfinding project for the town of Gardiner.

Mackey made the motion to approve, and Keller seconded the motion. Deweese abstained from voting. The FY23 Destination Marketing plan was approved.

3. Committee Updates

3.1 Mary Wilson – Yellowstone NPS

Wilson spoke to YNP roads opening despite bad weather. She requested help for all in attendance to communicate the importance of being prepared to visitors. She also encouraged visitors to sign up for Nixle updates by texting “82190 to 888-777 this way they will receive up to date text messages on YNP road status.

Wilson spoke to the following 2022 road construction projects and potential delays

- Lewis River Bridge- traffic in and out 20-minute delays, overnight closures
- Craig Pass- overnight closures 8pm-6pm
- Yellowstone River Bridge 30-minute delays
 - Keller spoke to the details of the Yellowstone River Bridge; that it will not be fully closed while the new bridge is being built but rather traffic will be down to one lane at times.

She shared her happy news that Dunraven Pass is opening this year set for May 27th.

Wilson repeated the proper distances to remain away from wildlife to ensure safety being that calving season is approaching and to please remind visitors of this.

Lastly she shared that Tower & Norris Campground will not be opening for the 2022 season.

3.2 Terese Petcoff – Director’s Report

Petcoff shared that the Livingston construction with pilot car has begun and to remind visitors to expect this delay when traveling from the north.

She shared some highlights from the 2022 Governor’s conference including:

- Destination Development and Stewardship messaging have been sweeping the world. That during the conference Visit South Africa became a DXO organization.
- That short term rentals in Honolulu, HI now have 3 month stay minimum
- Red Lodge won travel destination of the year award

Petcoff communicated that more film crews have been reaching out to her. She will share if and when Gardiner is featured. She spoke to her recent video done with Montana Senator Daines's office regarding the Gateway Communities Bill being introduced in the Senate. Petcoff will follow up with the details of the Bill.

She shared that there is a new calendar layout on VisitGardinerMT.com. Additionally, the 2022 – 2023 Gardiner Travel Guide would be delivered before the next Board meeting, and once delivered staff will begin distributing to area businesses.

She updated that the Chamber recently hired a new Bookkeeper, Judy Righter.

She shared that the winners for the bear proof container wraps were Rachel Cudmore, Melanie Fabrizius, Janet Rawlings, and Nolan Darr.

Finally, there will be an open house after the May Board meeting from 5 pm – 7 pm. It is open to the public.

3.3 Tracey Sutton – Office Manager's Report

Sutton reported that she has completed her first month at the Chamber and has really enjoyed it! She has been training, learning how to update the website, and providing input on the marketing She is looking most forward to learning more about grant writing and helping to plan activities the Chamber puts on! Daily, she stays busy greeting visitors, answering questions, and doing a variety of other daily tasks.

She stated that the Visitor's Center captured some Spring Break visitation, with about 1700 visitors from March 1st to the date of the board meeting. She said that there have been some issues with the door counter working properly, and with the advice of West Yellowstone (that has the same counter) the Chamber is planning to surround the unit with pvc piping to avoid visitors from bumping it.

Sutton has reached out to all Member tour operators and lodging properties regarding tracking their availability throughout the season. Regarding the Tour Operator's availability each week, a two to three question survey will be emailed to them. From their answers, a daily/weekly referral list will be created and shared.

Additionally, she is developing a safety training program for Chamber employees that includes OSHA safety topics; Bloodborne pathogens, fire safety, chemical safety, ladders & lifting, and injuries and emergencies. Other topics include types of harassment, inclusion, and The Best Visitor Service Skills.

Regarding VIC seasonal staff so far, there are two returners and two new applicants. She has also spoken with Gardiner Public Schools to have them encourage High School students to apply even if it is only 1 day a week.

4. Outstanding Business

4.1 Sesquicentennial

No discussion occurred.

5. New Business

Mike Skelton updated/inquired with the Board on the following.

- The FFA group that presented at the March Board meeting won the Montana state championship.
- He asked for an update on the AED. Petcoff stated that the Hose company will provide the Chamber with one as soon as they can. She will also check in with them following the meeting on a timeline of delivery.

- Regarding Wild Livelihoods he stated that if the Chamber were to be the financial sponsor of the project that any donations made to Wild Livelihoods would not be tax deductible as the Chamber is a 501 – C6 organization.

Additional Board discussion was had regarding being a financial sponsor and a letter of support. Ultimately, it was decided to not move forward with being the financial sponsor of the projects. In regards to writing a letter of support, being that there is no current quantified data reflective of the economic impact the 2021 quota changes on wolf hunting and trapping in Montana have on our membership the Board decided not to issue a letter of support. Deweese proposed that if there is data released in the future the Chamber could revisit its position at the time of release.

6. Public Comment

Date of Next Meeting: May 19, 2022 12:00PM – 1:00PM Changed to 3:00pm – 4:00pm