

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, May 18, 2016 from 12:00 PM to 1:00PM

Location: Upstairs at the Gardiner Welcome Center

Purpose: Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Agenda:

Meeting Called to Order 12:03

1. Chamber Business

Schalene Darr 3 mins.

1.1. Roll Call & Introductions

Schalene Darr, Sabina Strauss, Jeff Guengerich, Anna Holloway, Sue Johnson. Neli Karamfilova, Edwin Johnson, Loren Guerin

Excused Absent-Jim Stark, Trina Smith

1.2 Approval of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

Minutes from April 2017

Change Noted- Sabina Absent, Schalene in attendance.

Sue Motion to Approve, Jim seconds, Sabina Abstains from Vote, All in Favor, Minutes Approved

1.3 Recap of Colors Meeting

Was a successful team building project. Will do a similar workshop when we sit down to do strategic plan in the fall. Mike Banville presented proposal for Google Street View and partnership with the Chamber. We will let CVB make a recommendation about this.

2. Committee Business

10 mins.

2.1 Yellowstone National Park

Not Present. Brian Suderman is retiring in the future Beth Taylor will be in attendance.

2.2 Properties and Facilities

Item One: House of Clean has donated new hardware for the bathroom that we can locally source, current fixtures are proprietary and very expensive as a result. Tom has been hired for cleaning and is coming in 15-45 mins a night, has been doing a great job. We are in discussions with CTA over the final bill as we have been issued a change order for the concrete pouring at approx. 6000. This change order was never signed and approved by anyone at the Chamber and puts the project over budget. Hope to have this resolved shortly. Need to find key to family restroom to lock in the evenings.

Item Two: Hank Rite- We have been informed the Championship signs at the Rodeo Grounds are on MTOD property and need to be moved back 10ft. Would like to recruit volunteers to move signs back to the fence line. Everyone agrees we can move these back.

Item Three: Rodeo Grounds contract for Father's Day rodeo needs to be ready to sign by Monday. We sponsor the annual rodeo by allowing the rodeo club to use the grounds for free, they are also requesting free advertising in the newsletter. We are unclear on our policy on what events/who we provide free advertising for. We are going to create a clear policy for newsletter advertising. Due to the deadline for this event the consensus is since it is a Chamber sponsored event we would like to provide advertising and reassess for next year.

Item 4: Liability of the rodeo grounds. We are having an increasing amount of folks parking there and not letting the Chamber know. We have placed one advertisement in the newsletter with no response. Will continue running ad until June 10th for the bucking horse, and warn folks that they will be towed as of June 5th. Sue is going to put notes on the windows as well.

We want gather input on how the community would like to use the property. Properties and Facilities will create survey and Loren will send to the members.

Item 5: Fireworks at the Rodeo Grounds. Last year was the first year Casey had a fireworks display as well as allowed patrons to shoot off fireworks at the rodeo grounds. Feels that since it was the first year he gained a lot of knowledge on how to further improve it. The time frame was approx 9:30(dark)-11:30, was unsure of the numbers but said majority of folks were in the stands, maybe 100-200 people. Fire Dept was not on the scene but 2 fire volunteers and 2 deputies, and 2 rangers were. Casey wants to create a safe community space were fireworks can be done and the community can gather on the fourth. Feels that offering this service will discourage people from lighting fireworks on private property and reduce fire risk.

Taylor representing her parents at Yellowstone Village Inn gave a statement in opposition(see attached)

Main concern was insurance. Casey is insured for 1 million the chamber is insured for one million. Board requested Casey put fire department as an additional insured and engage them to be on site by Village Inn and reduce curfew to 11:00. Also suggested that the Village Inn is listed as additional insured. Board was unable to vote today, will come back to both parties with concessions.

2.3 Gardiner Gateway Project

None

2.4 CVB

Working on Promotional Video and researching different companies. Looking as focusing this summer's advertising on winter. Was suggested we look at the new Livingston video that was shot by Outlaw Partners

3. Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act

Colin Davis 20mins.

Reviewed mission of the Coalition and the timeline. Current big push is the pass Testers Legislation to permanently halt any industrial scale gold mining on public lands in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. This legislation would have no effect on private land, and the coalition stressed that they are not anti-mining but are concerned about how and where. (Material Attached)

Chamber has endorsed the coalition in 2015 and they ask that we continue to show support and pressure Steve Daines and Ryan Zinke to make public statement in opposition to Crevice and Lucky Mines.

4. Proposal to Merge Operations and Main Account

5 mins.

With the completion of the bathroom reconstruction there is no longer a reason to keep two separate accounts. Line items can be detailed in QuickBooks accounting.

Sue Motions for the combining of the accounts, Neli Seconds, All in Favor

Resolution #Motion Approved

6. Open House

5 mins.

Happy Hour for Restroom Project Wrap up

Will be held June 1 4:30-6:30, with a presentation by the Gardiner Sector Partnership at 4:00. Schalene will cater. Will run announcement in newsletter and send out invite to members.

7. Public Comment

1 min.

Joe Gross inquired as to the cost of the restroom renovation. Approximately 187,000

Kiosk from Yellowstone Country by pocket park needs to be updated. Anna Holloway volunteered to get that taken care of. Will also reach out to boy scouts to see if they would like to be in charge of updating that as a community service project

8. Date of next meeting.

1 min.

June 15, 2017 at 12:00

Adjourned 1:40

Yellowstone Village Inn Statement:

I am here to represent Yellowstone Village Inn and Suites. My parents Bert and Wanda were unable to be here today, but would like me to share some facts, history, and concerns.

My grandparents, the Dowdy's, started in Gardiner in 1972, when their property was known as Paradise Campgrounds. In 1988, they built the hotel. They have been chamber members the entire time.

Now for today's topic, we must start at the beginning.

Several years ago, Casey told my mom Wanda that he wanted to do a firework show next-door. She explained to him many different reasons why this would be an unreasonable burden and safety hazard to my family, guests and neighbors. At this time she asked him not to perform a firework show next door.

The next thing we know the show was all scheduled. When we contacted the Chamber of Commerce they told us not to worry, the fire department is nearby and if anything started they would just put it out. Luckily, we did get a little rain shower last year which helped, but it was accompanied by plenty of wind. This wind blew debris all over our property. It didn't blow through the 6 foot fence that separates our property from the rodeo grounds, it rained down on us as hot burning debris. I'm not a fire marshal but I can clearly see that this is a major problem when you have 150 sleeping people inside the building.

The next morning our property looked like a bomb had gone off. The wind was blowing exploded firework debris all around our property. We had four people outside all day sweeping and raking. Even though we called the chamber and complained, Casey never came over and helped us in anyway shape or form with any of the problems that this event caused.

We were also told that for some reason holding it at the edge of town would be safer. Safer for who I don't know. That they would even say this is a clear admission that this is a dangerous event and they know it. The prevailing wind in Gardiner usually blows from the south-west, so if a fire on that end of town did catch, it would blow through our property into the trees and Fenceline, across our neighbors

property, and then sweep through all the next properties with ease, potentially destroying this whole end of town. Gardiner has experienced devastating fires like these in the past and it is not out of the realm of possibility that it could happen again from an activity such as this. Gardiner and the surrounding area is a very dry climate that is usually on high alert for fires during the summer.

For those of you unfamiliar with our property, we do have seven buildings to keep an eye including one for my 80-year-old grandma right on the other side of the fence. This leaves us with areas all over the place that are impossible to get a visual on to make sure nothing is lying there smoldering.

Let's take a look at worst case scenario for a moment. Say a little fire gets started there's some damage and some people get hurt. Who is responsible for that? Casey do you have insurance for your event and is it high enough to cover all of these hotels and homes along the strip in the event of an accidental fire?

Or is it the Chamber of Commerce who will be held responsible? Did the Chamber vote to allow a potentially dangerous event to take place without insurance? Does the chamber have insurance for this event?

Surely an entity such as the chamber that was created solely to promote all businesses in Gardiner would proceed with extreme caution in authorizing an uninsured event.

Or is it just that the Yellowstone Village Inn and all the people in the line of fire are expected to cover potential damage?

By the letter of the law the people that will be responsible in the event of an accident will be each and every member of the chamber of commerce. Our insurance underwriter American Hallmark is aware of your intention to do this event and they would like to see how this event is being insured, as certainly it would need to be.

We feel that it is totally unfair to ask Yellowstone Village Inn to bare the entire brunt and risk of this event. Not only is it incredibly risky for actual human lives on site it's a complete annoyance for two or three hours of fireworks going off to a business that sells sleep. Even on the Fourth of July that's a lot to ask. Wouldn't it be safer to hold this event out of the populated area where they can actually keep an eye it? Is there no where else this can be done?

Sure, some people enjoy watching fireworks, and yes people know that's what happens on the Fourth of July, but are these reasons enough to take on this kind of risk?

There are also lots of people who don't enjoy fireworks, who are worried about our natural environment here in Gardiner. If the rain doesn't happen again, then we are really taking a big risk.

We ask that you cast your vote cautiously today as this is a very important and a potentially dangerous topic. Some questions you may consider. How much will Casey contribute? Is it close to the amount we chip in? Is it anything? Is it enough to cover the litigation that the chamber could incur over an event such as this? What does Casey pay the Chamber of Commerce in return for this huge risk to each and every person that is a member of the Chamber of Commerce?

Yellowstone Village Inn has also cooperated in payment of the resort tax since it's inception. We feel that we have a strong economic presence in Gardiner and we would like for that to continue.

We would hope that as long time chamber members, who have contributed heavily to Gardiner, that the board members will take The safety of our guests and family into account when they cast their vote today.