



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 19th, 2022 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 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, and Billie Taylor

Absent: Amanda Hagerty

1.2 Approval of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

Strauss asked if her follow-up email regarding the Wild Livelihoods Business Coalition discussion and previous Gardiner Chamber Board of Directors decisions made on the Lucky Mineral Mine in Pray, Crevice Mine in Gardiner, and delisting of the Grizzly Bear should be included in the April Minutes Skelton responded that her email has been noted. He then made a correction to the April Minutes as Melanie Fabrizius's last name had not been recorded.

Minutes from April 2022 approved with correction. Deweese made motion to approve the Minutes from April 2022 with correction, Strauss seconded the motion.

2. Committee Updates

2.1 Mary Wilson – Yellowstone NPS

Not present

2.2 Mike Thom – US Forest Service Gardiner District

Not present

2.3 Terese Petcoff – Director's Report

There are two new members this month.

- Montana Yellowstone Tours, who provides private tours and hikes in and around Yellowstone based out of Gardiner, MT. The guide will also do food such as dinners for clients!
- The O.T.O Dude Ranch Yellowstone Pop-up located at the O.T.O Ranch, Montana's first Dude ranch. Now visitors can return to this historic ranch for an exclusive pop-up dude ranch experience that will raise funds to help shape its future. The Pop-Up runs from July 24 to August 20, 2022 and offers six night, Sunday to Saturday stays. This is a Pop-Up Ranch production by Ranch Preservation in cooperation with the Custer Gallatin National Forest. 100% of the proceeds of this special pop-up event will be donated toward the efforts to preserve and restore the historic O.T.O. Ranch, which operated as a dude ranch from the 1910s to 1930s and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Petcoff added that this organization will also be doing a lot of advertising with the Chamber.

Petcoff Updated that the Chamber was approved to sell park passes! Now we will need to decide how many to purchase up front. She noted that due to the value of the passes purchasing a safe to keep them in should be considered.

Petcoff relayed a conversation Sutton briefly had with Nelly Karamfilova, the owner of the property adjacent to the Chamber, formerly Eat Café. Karamfilova is requesting the Chamber to consider installing rain gutters. This request came from the guidance of their contractor because currently rainwater from the Chamber roof is running off and splashing onto their walls and may cause damage in the future. Strauss responded that she was proposed the same request buy the owners. Discussion continued about the request as this was not an issue in prior years. Skelton said he would look into it and report back to the Board.

2.4 Tracey Sutton – Office Manager’s Report

Not Present – Petcoff stated that Sutton would email her report on Monday. The following is a summary of the report sent to the Board on Monday May 23rd.

***Visitation for May 2022** – From May 1st – May 31st , the Visitor Center has had 2,683 visitors. Sutton will have year to date comparisons at the June meeting.*

***Seasonal employees** – The Chamber has hired five seasonal employees for the 2022 season. Tentative the hours will be 9 am to 6 pm Monday – Friday , and Noon to 4 pm Saturday & Sunday.*

***Properties & Facilities:** MR Locks was recommended to the Chamber to repair our back Emergency exit door. He recently came and completed the repair within an hour at a very reasonably priced. He is currently not a but a member application was sent to him.*

***Open house** – Catering for the Spring Open House was provided by member Chuck Tanner, owner of the Emigrant Outpost. Sutton requested Board members and attendees send her feedback about the Open House.*

3. Outstanding Business

3.1 Sesquicentennial

Skelton asked Petcoff about the Yellowstone 150th event that was held on May 6th by Xanterra. She responded that it was a lot of fun passing on compliments to Keller who was a speaker and host of the event. She especially enjoyed the art, cake and free Yellow Bus Tour!

Petcoff spoke to a meeting she recently had about the Teepee Village (running the week of August 25th) in which there were representatives from the National Park Service, Mountain Time Arts (MTA), and various other organizations. She reported that the Village is still in the planning process but tentatively it will be in the grassy area running parallel to Park St. She shared that she has offered the Rodeo Grounds for parking or other use to Mountain Time Arts during the Village installation. Lastly, she stated that there was discussion about who currently owns the corner lot of Park St. E where the Sinclair gas station used to be and requested if anyone knew to please pass it along to her as MTA may be interested in utilizing the area.

4. New Business

Conversation continued regarding Wild Livelihoods Business Coalition’s ask of the Chamber on a letter of support and an internal email communication from Dr. Jeff Reed’s that was forwarded to Board Members by Skelton regarding the Chamber’s stance to remain neutral. It was discussed that there is still no data from an economic standpoint on how the legislation change has impacted businesses.

Mackey and Skelton both stated that from a personal and/or business standpoint members could write letters on the matter but from the Chamber perspective remaining neutral would be in our best interest.

Strauss spoke to the fact that no member has come to the Chamber with the economic impact the wolf culling has had on their business either, stating that when the decision to oppose the Crevice Mine was made by the Board the potential impacts e.g. water quality issues, costs of maintain the roads the mining trucks were using, and effects on wildlife were clear. However, in this matter, the impact is not clear.

Additionally, Skelton updated the Board that various Board members and Petcoff had received feedback from a Chamber Member that is not on the Board regarding Dr. Reed's email and the Chamber's stance on the topic. He stated that this member could have only received this email by having it forwarded to them. He reminded the Board emails are to remain internal and to please never forward communications outside of the Board of Directors.

The consensus was that the Chamber stay neutral.

Deweese proposed inviting law enforcement to the next Board meeting to discuss urban campers. Skelton also brought up the problem of abandoned cars throughout Gardiner and communication he had with the Sheriff's department. All Board members agreed that inviting law enforcement would be appropriate.

5. Public Comment

Keller moved to adjourn the May Board of Director Meeting, Ondrus seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, June 16, 2022