

Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Meeting date: **Wednesday, July 18, 2012** Started: **12:07 PM** Ended: **1:55 PM**

Location: Community Center Board Room

Purpose/Notes: Regular scheduled meeting

Chaired by: Daniel Bierschwale

Minutes rec. by: Gardiner Chamber

Attendance:

Present: Elizabeth Baker, Daniel Bierschwale, Gardiner Chamber, Chuck Curtis, Scott Demaree, Anna Holloway, Cheryl Hoppe, Gina Knight, Kremer's Cenex, Jean Modesette, Barbara Shesky, Sabina Strauss, Brian Suderman, Ker'en Walters

Regrets:

Absent: Above the Rest Lodge, Absaroka Knoll Construction, Absaroka Lodge, Adventure Yellowstone Inc, Bear Lair Lodge, Bill Berg, Big Wild Adventures, Cabin By The River, CCC Salon, Child Care Connections, Comfort Inn- Yellowstone North, Crevice Mountain Lodge, Diamond Bar Heart Guest Ranch, Diamond Heart Guest Ranch, E.L.K., Inc, Elk River Art Gallery and Studio, Elk River Lodge, Entre Nous, ERA Landmark Western Land, Family Massage Care, Flying Pig Camp Store and Rafting, Gardiner Laundry, Gardiner Pharmacy/Yellowstone Perk, Gardiner Therapeutic, Gateway Hose Company, Gold Strike Gifts, Graybeal's All Service, Greater Gardiner Community Council, Gail Habener, Headwaters of the Yellowstone B&B, Hell's A Roarin' Outfitters, Hillcrest Cottages, Home On The Range, Johnstad's B&B and Log Cabin, Kim Kaiser, Kellem's Montana Saddlery, Little People's Learning Center, Chris Lyness, MacNeil Lyons, Medcor Inc at Yellowstone, Montana Buffalo Company, Montana Whitewater Rafting&Zipline, Mountain Mobile Auto Glass, North Entrance Shopping - Food Farm, North Entrance Washtub, Outwest T's, Richard Parks, Riverside Cottages, Rocky Mountain RV Park&Lodging LLC, Smith Family Ranch, Stafford Animal Shelter, Story Distributing, The Silvertip, The Town Cafe, The Wildside Tours and Treks, Upper Yellowstone Roundup Assoc., Wild West Rafting, Wild West Vacations and Travel, Xanterra, Yellowstone Association, Yellowstone Country, Yellowstone Federal Credit Union, Yellowstone Gallery & Frameworks, Yellowstone Gateway Inn, Yellowstone General Stores, Yellowstone Mine, Yellowstone Park Riverfront Cabins, Yellowstone Park Travel Lodge, Yellowstone River Motel, Yellowstone Suites B&B, Yellowstone Super 8 Motel, Yellowstone Wilderness Outfitters, Yellowstone Yoga

Late:

Guests:

Scott Allen (present)

Meeting Documents:

(no documents)

Meeting Minutes:

1. Chamber Business

1.1. Roll Call & Introductions

Gardiner Chamber

Daniel Bierschwale

Chuck Curtis

Anna Holloway

Gina Knight

Scott Demaree

Sabina Strauss

Cheryl Hoppe

MacNeil Lyons

Jean Modesette

MacNeil Lyons not present, Cheryl Hoppe 1 min late

Daniel Bierschwale - "Thanks to all for coming for this extended meeting"

Status: Completed

1.2. Treasurer's Report

Anna Holloway

Reviewed bank account balances, CD's and savings accounts, Scott Demaree inquired as to how much our grant was for the map production- \$3,000.00

Status: Completed

1.3. Secretary's Report

Barbara Shesky

Newsletter has again increased in revenue as compared to last year. In 2011 for the month of June \$763.00 was brought in. this year's revenue was \$2,139.70. We are up on phone calls to the office, down on walk-ins but up on signatures collected for Yellowstone Country. We are not sure what has happened with website data, we are not sure if the tracking method is accurate as we are showing a significant drop as compared to the prior months. Ker'en is going to investigate this.

Status: Completed

2. Old business

2.1. Meeting Minutes

Daniel Bierschwale

March 27th

April 18th

May 16th

All approved

Resolution #: 071812-1

Moved by: Chuck Curtis

Seconded by: Gina Knight

Status: Carried

Vote: All In Favor

2.2. Cycle Greater Yellowstone

Anna Holloway

Community MOU with CGY; needs signatures.

Anna Holloway has provided CGY with a photo for the web link and she had been going back and forth w/the principal to set up a meeting between the two parties, Barbara Shesky, the administrative secretary interjects that she was able to get the meeting set up and that it occurred on the 17th, and from what CYG said she felt that the school was willing to let them use the football field for an overnight encampment.

Anna also placed an ad in the newsletter asking for lodging participants chamber and nonchamber. Only 3 lodging people responded to the ad for lodging and they were all chamber members. She described the stipends that volunteer groups will get for their nonprofit that they designate. See attached handout at the Chamber office.

We have a Community MOU that needs signed by local businesses as well as a representative of the Chamber.

Scott Demaree- This is big enough that we should send out a special alert so we should email it to members and post it as a news release but also place an ad regarding it in the newsletter so others can access it. A notice asking for signatures will be posted in the newsletter next week.

The bicyclist will be bussed to Cooke City. CGY is having issues with getting volunteers so they asked if we would consider helping. The dates for here in Gardiner are August 22/23.

Keren will begin assisting Anna with this and verify that we are the community coordinator. Cheryl- we need to designate that it is the 22nd and 23rd so that everyone understands this, as she had read it and misunderstood, thinking it was for a whole week, that way maybe more people will volunteer.

Status: Completed

3. New business

3.1. Travel packets

Barbara Shesky

Should we or shouldn't we mail out travel packets? I have been- but it's \$\$ and flip side- are we losing \$\$ because of not sending info to people who may not have internet access? Reference to MT Dept of Tourism for every \$1.00 spent \$150.00 comes back into Montana in Tourism \$\$.

We will reinstate mailing out the travel packs, and track how many and how much it costs. We will have to pick and choose brochures and not be able to send, for example, all our rafting brochures out, as I was doing in the past. So to be sure that everyone gets a fair shot of having their brochure or rack card mailed out, we will keep a running list of whose brochures have been mailed so that we can insert someone else's brochure in the next pack and keep a rotation going.

Resolution #: 071812-2

Moved by: Anna Holloway

Seconded by: Scott Demaree

Status: Carried

Vote: All In Favor

3.2. Limiting Newsletter Content

Barbara Shesky

Due to the recent increase in controversial content being submitted (and attempting to be submitted) to the newsletter; and the repercussion the Chamber staff has been subjected to, the chamber staff feels that it is appropriate to limit newsletter ads/content to only those items pertaining to:

- Promoting businesses,
- Events - ie chili cookoffs, rodeos, brewfest, running/skiing races, classes, film presentations about nature or other non-controversial events.
- Classified help wanted items/property for sale, lease or free stuff,
- Sincere thank yous and condolences,
- Religious ads may be published to announce services and activities,
- Ads being run by political candidates would still be considered for publication as long as they are generic in nature ie: Come meet Fred Smith at 2pm at the Community Center he is running for such and such an office.

Ads containing opinions, political statements and religious statements submitted solely and/or attached to other content that would have otherwise been deemed appropriate- will not be published. The decision to Completely omit or edit is solely at the editors' and/or director's discretion.

It was agreed to limit the newsletter and change the name to be clearer that it is a Chamber newsletter to promote business and appropriate things like condolences and thank yous not editorial. It will now be called the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce Community Newsletter and our mission statement will be published at the bottom of the front page weekly. Opinions and statements will no longer be accepted and either/or Ker'en or Barbara has the final say as to whether an ad will be published, meaning if only one of us doesn't approve, then it won't be published. The Board supports this, in addition, the Board agrees that if the Secretary or any office staff feels harrassed or threatened that the Sherriff's office will be called upon.

Resolution #: 071812-3

Moved by: Sabina Strauss

Seconded by: Anna Holloway

Status: Carried

Vote: All In Favor

3.3. Chamber Choices

Gardiner Chamber

Scott Allen -Educational Material about Montana Chamber Choices Program available to Chamber members.

Chamber Choices - Scott Allen - Speaker - Western States Insurance -

Opening remark; You folks put on a great parade by the way!

Montana Chamber Choices health program is an associated group health plan for small businesses. Blue Cross administers the program. The idea is to let businesses know what is available, especially with the

changes coming in the health care system. A heavy emphasis being placed on preventative health care, dental checkups and vision care. This benefit system is available to small business owners who are Chamber of Commerce members employing 2-99 people. This program covers employees and their dependants as of this year. Sole proprietors are grandfathered in as of last year.

Chamber Choices does conference calls with underwriters stakeholders and agents so they are developing a successful association program.

The program has good rate stability; only a 1% rate increase for 2012. 2013 is looking good as far as a single digit rate increase.

Members can pick any agent; he is here in Paradise Valley. He feels that most folks have been very happy with it. He is not here to promote himself, members can go online and choose an agent.

There is a summary of the plan included in the handout packet (see example at the Chamber office) life insurance is available as well. This is a very comprehensive plan.

He appreciates the opportunity to speak to us, he realizes this is a busy meeting; he can get Ker'en packets for new members, In closing he notes that the program has been in place since 2004.

Status: Completed

4. Committee Business

4.1. Rodeo Club

Upper Yellowstone Roundup
Assoc.

Update on how this year's rodeo went.

Amy Clifford was unable to make it to the meeting-Administrative Secretary-Barbara Shesky gave report (see attached hardcopy of notes at the chamber office)

This year's Gardiner Rodeo was a great success. This year the rodeo hosted the Southwest Rodeo Queen pagent; Cassidy Shay O'Neil from Livingston was crowned this years' Queen.

\$361.00 was donated to Tough Enough to wear Pink.

Best Attendance in 10 years.

The club profited approximately \$3,500 this year to be used for new bleachers and rough stock chutes.

Thank you to everyone for their help and support.

Status: Completed

4.2. Yellowstone National Park

Brian Suderman

The biggest fire in the park this year, so far, is 95% contained. It is named the Blacktail fire. It is at the north end of the Blacktail Plateau road. It was started by lightning on July 12th. Park Service chose to suppress it and then it rained so the fire restriction in the Park has been lifted as of today.

The Winter Use draft EIS is open until August 20.

Tonight, in Bozeman, there is a meeting at the Wingate next to Costco at 6pm rwegarding winter use. The preferred alternative changes the way that entry into the Park is calculated. Within the plan a "transportation event" is 1 snowcoach or a group of 5 snowmobiles. Each "event" is considered to cause a disturbance.

The new plan will allow 110 events per day, which is actually a bit more than what actually has been going on. The same plan that is currently in place will continue on for 2 years before the new plan would be put into action.

The new plan also includes an allowance for 1 self guided snowmobile tour, per day, from each entrance.

This opportunity will be a lottery, done online, which will include training, so that the group going into the Park would be self-guided. This would open a small opportunity for someone to be able to add a small additional business of making BAT snowmobiles available for rental to the group that wins the lottery for our Gardiner entrance.

Visitation was 2nd highest on record this year for the month of June parkwide. Our North entrance was down 1.7% We are the only entrance that was down in numbers passing through the gate.

Status: Completed

4.3. Marketing

Jean Modesette

We have been using our Gardiner Chamber of Commerce Facebook Page as a tool to promote Gardiner.

We have grown to 149,734 visits this month - Facebook insights breaks down the numbers for us.

We are receiving hits from around the world; such places as Columbia and Australia to name two.

Comments have been really great for the most part, there have been very few negative comments. 2 rodeo photos had a response about it being animal abuse. A recent comment posted on Gardiner Chamber's Facebook is Jean's favorite; a man stated that he has decided to make his trip out west longer so he can come to Gardiner. Jean also posts specials that chamber businesses have listed in the newsletter. She also posts YNP info and lots and lots of photos which are of great interest to tourists and locals alike.

We have done a members only 2 page ad in Montana Quarterly for the summer issue and are preparing to do another in their fall issue promoting fall and winter trips here. We also placed a town image ad in the Elmhurst Independent, a paper that circulates in the suburbs of Chicago.

We have gone through the Montana Travel Magazines highlighting what coverage we have had and the state recognizes that they haven't done as much for us as they could and will be improving on their editorials of our area in the state travel guides next year.

Status: Completed

4.3.1. Member interested in joining committee

Daniel Bierschwale

Lynelle Dahn is interested in joining the Marketing committee, Peter Dahn wants to be on the Restroom committee. Chuck Curtis is concerned because the first meeting with them didn't seem very positive.

Board members Sabina Strauss and Scott Demaree felt that a decision to vote could not be made as neither applicant is here. The Board wants to meet with them and ask them questions, so these votes on the matter will be held until the September meeting; at which time it is hoped, that if interest is still there, they will attend the meeting and introduce themselves and explain what they hope to offer to the committees they are interested in.

Resolution #: 071812-

Status: Deferred: 9/19/2012

4.4. Gardiner Gateway Project

Daniel Bierschwale

GGP update from Danny

Update from Ker'en

In early June we hosted a "kick off" event for the Gardiner Gateway Project. The event was well attended and remarks were made by dignitaries including Montana Governor Schweitzer and Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk. The ceremony was ornamented in true Gardiner style with an escort of riders on horseback and a Yellowstone stagecoach.

Executive Director, Ker'en Walters submitted a requested for start-up funds to the Montana Department of Tourism and they responded with a check for \$250,000 specifically for the GGP!

Now we have money, so we can start looking at specifics: In partnering with the Department of transportation, Yellowstone National Park, Yellowstone Country and the Montana Department of Tourism and a number of other groups, we now have an opportunity to claim the Park Service 100th anniversary party.

We are looking at how we can get to the next stage. We need to get to the 30% design phase. Joe Regula had made initial plans. We need to start looking at lighting, sidewalks etc., we need an EA done so we can have three public meetings for input.

, Sarah from MPCA, Jerry -who is at the Sonoran Institute, Stewart from Prospera Networks County Park Gilmore- Rob We have a team of grant writers available:

We need to allocate a portion of this check to submit so we can get matching funds.

We are looking at Big Sky EDA grant as well as others. With funds that we can use from GGCC and the new Chamber funds we can start planning meetings and then we can get to the goal of the 30% design phase.

We will need to allocate a portion of that funding for the planning process for the original downtown area and business corridor renovations.

and use those dollars to then leverage more money for the purchase/renovation. Center Visitor We can also start using a portion of the money for a

. County Park The state sees this as a great opportunity; but we do need to acknowledge that this is

infrastructure funding, not operation money. We can use the money to leverage funding because now the steering committee can say; "Gardiner has ponied up so how about you match it" to GGCC allocated \$6,500 it has been recommended that we allocate \$50,000 by the steering committee and allocation group.

"Good Job Ker'en!" (Chuck Curtis and Cheryl Hoppe)

Park EA completed several months ago, now they will go into the engineering/design phase.

Katrina Hecimovic- transportation scholar -they aren't quite ready to pick the details. Park Service wants to have the engineering plan done this fall. Sidewalks, water flow, storm drains, Our local Water Board is excited because we can upgrade. We can also be eligible for not just state funds but federal funds as well.

A short bio on Katrina She grew up in Billings, moved to Seattle and Massachusetts prior to returning to Montana. She does architectural surveying, streetscape, state highways developement, downtown revitalization and utility undergrounding. 3.5 years ago she moved to Amhurst and earned her Masters in Civil Engineering. She has a lot of background professionally and she feels lucky to be here and wants to learn about the community and what people want and work as a liaison between the community and the park.

We received an unsolicited letter form Senator John Tester telling us "good job", Marty Malone thanked us for the Arch event, and we recieved kudos in an E-newsletter from Senator Max Baucus.

Also on a side note \$400 K is coming to Montana for Highway jobs so we will look at being able to integrate the GGP as a portion involves street development.

Status: Completed

4.4.1. GGP Project Funding

Daniel Bierschwale

Allocate \$50,000 of the \$250,000 for the preliminary engineering report and enviromental study and matching grant fund. Any discussion? Sabina Strauss: should members way in on this and vote? Anna Holloway: I disagree, if we allow every chamber member a vote then nothing will get accomplished. They (the members) can certainly way in and comment but we are the elected Board and the ones to decide because everyone had an opportunity to be a board member and they didn't apply. Agreement form the rest of the board.

Any further discussion? -none.

All in favor-motion passed .

Resolution #: 071812-4

Moved by: Chuck Curtis

Seconded by: Gina Knight

Status: Carried

Vote: All In Favor

4.5. Public Restrooms & CVB

Chuck Curtis

We have \$200K to start look seriously at a building. We are getting close now and we can look at getting matching funds. A building that is almost there would be great but we might be looking at something that will need to be reconstructed to suit our need.

This is not for a Montana Welcome Center or CVB because we don't have a resort tax and we are not incorporated so we are calling this a Gardiner Welcome Center. Operating costs are going to be next on the "things to figure out list."

Status: Completed

4.5.1. Member interested in joining committee

Daniel Bierschwale

See section 4.3.1

Resolution #:

Status: Deferred: 9/19/2012

4.6. Events

Status: Completed

4.6.1. Brewfest Update

Anna Holloway

Update on the progression of this year's Brewfest coming August 18th from 3pm till dark

Brewfest is set for August 18th at 3 there will be 11 breweries and 3 wineries and 1 of the breweries is from Washington state. There are two bands this year; Flat Cheddar and Cure for the Common.

There will be a children's tent with root beer.

Sherrie Whittaker is a volunteer, she worked the Missoula brewfest. She is taking care of the volunteers. Outside Ads are the responsibility of Sherrie.

Food will be served by 4 vendors who are paying \$100.each.

There is an artist row this year booth fee is \$50/booth as many as we can fit in.

Portajohns are being donated from Park Service.

Ice being delivered from Bozeman.

We got the open container permit we don't have the beer license yet.

Teh festivities will end around 10 or 10:30 and After party at the Two Bit maybe in the works.

This year there will be commemorative beer cozies instead of glasses with a schedule and list of the breweries on it.

Status: Completed

4.6.2. 5K Update

Ker'en Walters

Profit \$1160

Danny ran the whole way this year! Attendance was 60-70 people. The weather and the route was great.

We made \$1,100 for the Chamber. There have been suggestions of a 10K and kids dash for next year.

Sadly, this is Bill Berg's last year heading up this fundraiser.

Status: Completed

4.6.3. Shakespeare in the Park

Gardiner Chamber

This year's Shakespeare in the Park is July 28 at 6pm in Arch Park. This Year's Production is the comedy Twelfth Night

Shakespeare in the Park is coming July 28th at 6pm in Arch Park it cost \$1,250 to put on the play we donated \$100 and newsletter advertising. The school is the inclement weather backup.

Status: Completed

4.7. Public Comment

Gardiner Chamber

Perhaps, we need to put disclaimer on our Facebook page similar to the one that we have on the newsletter

Status: Completed

4.8. Date Next Meeting

Gardiner Chamber

September 19, 2012

Status: Completed

Recording Secretary:

Chairperson:

Date:
