

Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Meeting date: **Wednesday, September 19, 2012** **Started: 12:03 PM** **Ended: 1:34 PM**

Location: Community Center Board Room

Purpose/Notes: Regular scheduled meeting

Chaired by: Daniel Bierschwale

Minutes rec. by: Gardiner Chamber

Attendance:

Present: Bill Berg, Daniel Bierschwale, Gardiner Chamber, Scott Demaree, Gardiner Therapeutic, Anna Holloway, Cheryl Hoppe, Gina Knight, Jean Modesette, Barbara Shesky, Sabina Strauss, Upper Yellowstone Roundup Assoc.

Regrets:

Absent: Above the Rest Lodge, Absaroka Knoll Construction, Absaroka Lodge, Adventure Yellowstone Inc, B Bar Ranch, Elizabeth Baker, Bear Lair Lodge, Best Western By Mammoth Hotsprings, Big Wild Adventures, Cabin By The River, CCC Salon, Child Care Connections, Clear Lines Writing Consulting, Comfort Inn- Yellowstone North, Crevice Mountain Lodge, Chuck Curtis, 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, 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, Howlin' Hounds Cafe, Johnstad's B&B and Log Cabin, Kim Kaiser, Kellem's Montana Saddlery, Kremer's Cenex, 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 Vacation Rental, North Entrance Washtub, NorthWestern Energy, Outwest T's, Paradise Adventure Company, Paradise Gateway B&B & Vacation , Richard Parks, Riverside Cottages, Rocky Mountain RV Park&Lodging LLC, Smith Family Ranch, Stafford Animal Shelter, Stonegate Chiropractics, Story Distributing, Brian Suderman, The Lighthouse, The Silvertip, The Town Cafe, The Wildside Tours and Treks, Ker'en Walters, Wild West Rafting, Wild West Vacations and Travel, Wilderness Connection, Wolf Ridge Lamb & Wool Company, 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 Raft Company, Yellowstone River Motel, Yellowstone Suites B&B, Yellowstone Super 8 Motel, Yellowstone Village Inn, Yellowstone Wilderness Outfitters, Yellowstone Yoga

Late:

Guests:

Leland MacMillan (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
Chuck Curtis and MacNeil Lyons excused. All others present.

Status: Completed

1.2. Treasurer's Report

Daniel Bierschwale

Anna Holloway has resigned as treasurer.
The Chamber has \$15,126.81 more in the bank than it did last year at this time.

Status: Completed

1.3. Secretary's Report

Barbara Shesky

The Chamber office had 503 more walk-ins this year as compared to last year during the month of August, although perhaps, we could have done a bit better at getting signatures. Most visitors are happy to sign in but it is optional and we try not to be too pushy. Also, the disparity is because, only one signature is required and often there are 3-4 people in the group and sometimes as many as 20 people who are all together come in to take turns using our public restroom.

The newsletter brought in \$646.85 more this past August as compared to August, 2011.

Whilst the gate numbers are statistically down as recorded by YNP, the general sentiment in town is that business has been up as compared to last year and has continued to be steady through September to date.

Status: Completed

2. Old business

2.1. Meeting Minutes

Daniel Bierschwale

July 18, 2012

Motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting, dated July 18, 2012 made by Anna Holloway, Jean Modesette Second, Sabina Strauss abstained because she had not read the minutes. All others in favor, motion carried.

Resolution #: 091912-01

Moved by: Anna Holloway

Seconded by: Jean Modesette

Status: Carried

Vote:

3. New business

3.1. Rodeo Proposal

Leland MacMillan

Letter of interest from Leland MacMillan, of Billings Montana, regarding a proposal to lease the rodeo grounds for 2013, as either a sublet from the Upper Yellowstone Roundup Association or directly from the the Chamber of Commerce as a second lease, in order to have more frequent rodeos in Gardiner, over the 2013 summer season.

Leland MacMillan feels that there is a potential for more rodeos in Gardiner.

12 years ago, he proposed the same thing to West Yellowstone and he states that it has been a benefit to their community. He wants to work with the rodeo club and he wants to hear our concerns. He wants this to be a community event with community involvement.

He said that he could partner with the rodeo club or partner with someone else from Gardiner. He is here to ask: "Would we be willing to let him lease or be willing to work with him to bring more rodeos to Gardiner?"

Cheryl Hoppe - A brief history of the Gardiner Rodeo – She has been participating and helping with the rodeo for a number of years. When Warren Johnson had it, they tried every weekend and then every other weekend, every weekend was not as profitable because it seemed to be too many, by the end of the summer there was an overload and not as many spectators.

Question - Is it NRA sanctioned or open? Answer - Not NRA.

As far as people wanting to see the the rodeo, you have a lot of tourists that do but the number of locals that

will participate is speculative.

Why does he want to come to Gardiner?

MacMillan - He and his parents run the West Yellowstone rodeo, he has been working the circuit, he has a family and wants to stop traveling.

Scott Demaree - how much is West involved?

MacMillan- when 1st pitched, the WY chamber partnered with the family. The family did 80-90% of the work and got that in profit.

Demaree - How long has it been profitable?

MacMillan - "It has been profitable from the get go. It is much more booming now. They did 50 nights this past season. I haven't contemplated how many we would have here. It started in town, moved, again in town, and then they went out of town and that actually increased ticket sales."

Demaree - what does the rodeo club think?

Shawnee Good, (Upper Yellowstone Roundup Association Spokesperson) - We have been bringing the rodeo to Gardiner for 30 plus years. We have policies in place that would allow a sublet but the lease and the rules need to be followed. They are looking at replacing the bucking shoots and the bleachers. If damage is done it needs to be fixed by them immediately also money would need to be contributed towards improvements. They do have questions, such as; where are the contestants coming from? the current rodeo on Father's Day weekend is NRA sanctioned, we don't have the local contestants here like you do in West, Cody and Jackson it's not a fair comparison. If we get the lease back, we would consider a sublease but we sent you a letter listing our parameters and you didn't respond to the letter.

MacMillan - We got it too late in the year.

Good - Where are you going to get the contestants?

MacMillan - We do the one in WY, we can put on a rodeo with our own resources. We have people we can pull in from ranches. Rowdy Yates had come up with some ideas; guest ranch challenges maybe, my intent was to pull from local ranches, it will be difficult but it would be my job to come up with that.

With reference to hours; has lighting been researched? Not by the chamber. The current rodeo is over by 10pm.

Scott Demaree - maybe the \$\$ could go towards that as an improvement.

2 separate leases?

MacMillan- We don't want to interfere with the Father's day rodeo, My rodeo is going to grow slowly.

Good -This is an NRA Rodeo (Northern Rodeo Association) - you have to be permitted to compete. A lot of the members are also pro - PRCA-so they have to go to a certain # of rodeos to keep their status. The status gives us clout. A lot of the people in the top 15 have been competing in Gardiner. They enjoy it.

Daniel Bierschwale - Negative impact of additional rodeos?

Good - Getting sponsorship dollars from locals. The addition of more rodeos could pull from the UYRA's current funding.

MacMillan - hadn't thought it out, maybe we could partner - tie both together and then we pay a % to the club for selling the sponsorships.

Good - It costs \$30,000 to put on a rodeo, they also get \$\$ from concessions and ticket sales, the supporters change as businesses change any "extra" money after everything is paid for is put into repairs and improvements.

Bierschwale - If they sublet, would there be an opportunity for some of the \$\$ to go to the improvements?

Good - that would be part of the agreement. Upkeep, replacement and repair of items broken during in the lease. All items needed to put on their rodeo would need to be purchased by them they would have to get insurance for each rodeo they put on.

We want to see more rodeos but we can't do it because we don't have enough places to pull money from.

Bierschwale - There is government money for events from the state, that might be possibility for additional funds..

Demaree - Are there any large concerns for Leland?

MacMillan - Insurance is a given and all the other items seem reasonable, we can work out a sponsor deal. We need money for personal, it costs 5-15 thousand per performance he is only looking to spend 1-2 thousand they would like to have \$\$ for prizes too. The other expenses are his deal. He is hoping for a lease agreement with the Chamber not a sublease. He is looking for it to be cheap. Cody gets 600 viewers, West Yellowstone gets 400. Based on town size does that mean only 200 here? He is speculative but he does also have some reservations because he does need to be able to make a small profit.

Jean Modesette - It seems like it would be a nice thing for families but one of my friends saw some things at

a couple rodeos this past summer that were animal abuse and complaints were issued, the Chamber of that town was a sponsor of that rodeo and they received complaints for sponsoring it.

MacMillan - We can black list anyone we don't approve of. We don't do calf roping, I was at an event in Billings where they had a steer tripping event, I was in the bleachers and heard the tourists saying how bad they thought that was. We want an event that is more of a show and a tourist/family event. Also, my personnel and contestants will be staying overnight. So there is \$ spent in the town also, in West they would tape the performance and then play it over at a local bar. So my family is making \$\$ and the \$\$ is starting to show at local businesses.

Bierschwale - Property lease- We're not super excited to have to manage properties, from my perspective to take on additional lease is not too attractive and might lead to inequities between the club and Leland.

Demaree -We're here to improve Gardiner, I think it would be good. What would be the differences between sublease to the club versus leasing to both entities?

MacMillan - We wouldn't want to start until after the Father's day rodeo, maybe not until July. I am not sure what our exact schedule would be - every other week, every week or every day for two weeks. I could use the rodeo club's Father's Day event as a jump-off point. We could also do the footwork and partner with the club and they make the \$\$ and we do the lifting we think that it would be good for the club

Audience -Nonprofits could also come in as vendors on rotating basis.

Hoppe-How many rodeos are we looking at? a minimum and maximum.

MacMillan - Minimum 12 performances- I'm thinking (four) three day rodeos in a row from mid-July to mid-August. I would like to see the lease go from after Father's day to the end of August.

Bierschwale - We will need to, collectively as a board, start to look at the lease and/or sublease.

Macmillan - We would have to know asap.

Scott Demaree and Anna Holloway will look into this and spearhead the discussion between UYRA and Leland MacMillan.

Anyone here for the rodeo discussion only can leave at this time.

Resolution #:

Status: Carried

Vote:

4. Committee Business

4.1. Yellowstone Country

Daniel Bierschwale

Bierschwale -With regard to Flying Horse Communications, a Bozeman based branding company - assignment to each of the Board of Directors - please look at this site we are trying to integrate at the state level and with other businesses, also, be sure to look at visitmt.gov.

Project proposals are being thrown in the ring by some other towns so we should be looking at this as well. Jean can do this.

We need stories. Danny threw out "Yellowstone Country- Gateway to America's Serengeti " and thinks it will be used. YC is wanting to rectify the lack of promotion of our town.

Status: Completed

4.2. Yellowstone National Park

Brian Suderman

Report:

Brian Suderman not available for this meeting

Status: Completed

4.3. Marketing

Jean Modesette

We are working on a grant for e-marketing we have been encouraged to pursue this December 14th deadline.

There is a Cooperative marketing program through the state for radio, websites, magazines such as National Geographic, Travel and Leisure, I-Explore. The radio spots are for state and regional. We need a budget first though. because this will offer us advertising opportunities in surrounding states WY, SD, ID. n speaking with a local business owner recently, Jean had a story related to her about visitors who came here

from Jackson Hole not evening knowing that our town was here.

Facebook update- The chamber page had 64 fans when Jean came on board. three and a half months later, we now have 628 fans. We have reached 207,513. It is getting the word out about our town.

We are spotlighting 2 businesses a week and we put a direct link in to that businesses website.

Jean also has a friend working on improving our homepage to make it look even more professional. We are also working on a contest for fans. Danny has gotten a donation of some prizes from Yellowstone Association. The grand prize is a large signed photograph of a wolf in winter donated by Kim Kaiser, with matting work donated by Yellowstone Gallery and Frameworks.

Some exciting things for our print advertising; The fall edition of Montana Quarterly just came out and the fall edition of Distinctly Montana comes out this week. We have ads in both. We are going to have a marketing meeting today where we are going to start planning a half page ad that will also have a three page photo layout and story about fall, winter and spring activities here in Gardiner for the winter edition of Distinctly Montana to promote off season and winter tourism.

Reviewed the ads that went into the Chicago papers as well this past July.

Scott Demaree - What about a brochure?

Barbara Shesky - That would be great! So many people ask for a list of lodging or a list of restaurant and every other gateway town has a magazine and we don't that is why Jackson doesn't promote us.

Status: Completed

4.4. Gardiner Gateway Project

The preliminary engineering grant approved, in addition to the collective funding the Greater Gardiner Community Council donated \$3,250 the Chamber of Commerce donated 50K. Daniel Bierschwale and Katrina Hecimovic (transportation scholar) went to Helena to be sure it was noted that we as a community have put forth resources and now it was the states turn to help with funding. It was approved. There are going to be public scoping sessions that CTA architects will facilitate. Oct 4th at the School, October 30th at the Community Center and Dec 2nd at the Community Center. Locations are tentative at this point, It will also be published in the newsletter and EDD mailers are going out as well.

Website development for GGP- Bierschwale asks for a motion to approve a \$1,000 payment to the web designer out of the \$3,000 that Yellowstone Country gave us for marketing the GGP as the amount of time that it took exceeded the designers expectations when he initially offered to do it for free. Scott made the motion, Anna Holloway second, all in favor, motion passes.

Resolution #: 091912-02

Moved by: Scott Demaree

Seconded by: Anna Holloway

Status: Carried

Vote:

4.5. Public Restrooms & Gardiner Welcome Center

Daniel Bierschwale

Montana Welcome Center discussion is dead as the funding is no longer available. But it has been replaced by funding for Visitor Center staffing. We are still looking at businesses on Park Street to relocate to as a Gardiner Visitor's Center. We now have an idea of what the staff at the chamber requires.

Status: Completed

4.6. Public Comment

Gardiner Chamber

Anna Holloway -I have been getting the question - When the construction starts for the Gardiner Gateway Project, will it affect renting Arch Park? We don't know- is the answer. We should have some answers after the public scoping sessions.

Bill Berg -The Community Council has committed monies for an inventory of Gardiner historical buildings. To see if we qualify for a historic district or if there are any buildings eligible for placement of the historic register. There are 2 of 3 Park County Commissioner seats coming open so meeting with the candidates is vital.

We are going to get a look-see at some of what can be done to rebuild the depot.

The GGCC and the Solid Waste Board are looking at whether or not a variance is needed first from the airport to be able to put a trash compactor in, for now, they are just trying to figure out if it can be done as it is located at the end of the runway. No other ideas about locations.

Mary Hagemeyer complimented the board and Jean/Barbara on marketing.

Anna Holloway- a tourist came into her business and mentioned/complained/remarked about a person sitting at the desk in the Chamber office on a Sunday and breast feeding her child.

Barbara Shesky pointed out that it wasn't her and it sure wasn't Shirley Seaton.

Danny will look into the matter.

Status: Completed

4.7. Date Next Meeting

Gardiner Chamber

October 17, 2012

Status: Completed

Recording Secretary:

Chairperson:

Date:
