



# Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Meeting date: **Thursday, December 18, 2014**    **Started: 12:00 PM**    **Ended: 1:00 PM**

Location: Upstairs at the Gardiner Market

Purpose/Notes: Regular scheduled meeting

Chaired by: Daniel Bierschwale

Minutes rec. by: Gardiner Chamber

## Attendance:

Present: Mountain Home, Mountain Mike's Tours, Outwest T's, Upper Yellowstone River R, Wild West Rafting, Wildflour Bakery, Yellowstone River Lodge, Yellowstone Safari, YP Riverfront Cabins, Schalene Darr, "Be Our Guest " House, Frankie Aars, Above the Rest Lodge, Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters, Absaroka Lodge, Adventure Yellowstone, B Bar Ranch, B Wood Photography, Bill Berg, Best Western By Mammoth Hotsprings, Sandy Bierle, Daniel Bierschwale, Big Wild Adventures, Hal Broadhead, Gardiner Chamber, Child Care Connections, Comfort Inn- Yellowstone North, Aspen Cottage, Crevice Mountain Lodge, Scott Demaree, Diamond Bar Heart Guest Ranch, Elk Inc, Elk River Art Gallery and Studio, Elk River Lodge, Entre Nous, ERA Landmark Western Land, Gardiner Food Pantry, Gardiner Laundry, Gardiner Market, Gardiner Pharmacy/Yellowstone Perk, Gateway Hose Company, Gold Strike Gifts, Graybeal's All Service, Greater Gardiner Community Council, Headwaters B&B, Hell's A Roarin' Outfitters, Hillcrest Cottages, Home on the Range, Cheryl Hoppe, Chico Hotsprings, Johnstad's B&B and Log Cabin, Kellem's Montana Saddlery, Absaroka Knoll Construction, Little People's Learning Center, Livingston Job Service, Cowboy's Lodge, Medcor Inc at Yellowstone, Midwest Welding and Machinery, Jean Modesette, Montana Buffalo Company, Montana Whitewater Rafting&Zipline, Mountain Mobile Auto Glass, MSU Park County Extension, North Entrance Vacation Rental, North Entrance Washtub, North Yellowstone Lodge and Hostel, NorthWestern Energy, Paradise Adventure Company, Paradise Gateway B&B & Vacation , Richard Parks, Photos by Sandi, Riversbend Lodge, Rockin' HK Outfitters, Barbara Shesky, Smith Family Ranch, Stafford Animal Shelter, Stonegate Chiropractics, Story Distributing, Sabina Strauss, Subway, Brian Suderman, Sunny Slope Lodge, The Wildside Tours and Treks, Tumbleweed Bookstore & Cafe, Two Bit, Upper Yellowstone Roundup Assoc., Wild Bear Adventures, Wilderness Connection, Wolf Ridge Lamb & Wool Company, Xanterra, Yellowstone Association, Yellowstone Basin Inn, Yellowstone Country, Yellowstone Federal Credit Union, Yellowstone Gallery & Frameworks, Yellowstone Gateway Inn, Yellowstone General Stores, Yellowstone Mine, Yellowstone Park Travel Lodge, Yellowstone Raft Company, Yellowstone River Motel, Yellowstone Suites B&B, General Manager Yellowstone Super 8, Yellowstone Village Inn, Yellowstone Wilderness Outfitters

Regrets:

Absent: Riverside Cottages

Late:

## Guests:

Beth Casey (present)

## Meeting Documents:

(no documents)

## Meeting Minutes:

### 1. Committee business

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#### 1.1. Roll Call & Introductions

Daniel Bierschwale

Sabina Strauss

Frankie Aars

Scott Demaree

Sandy Bierle

Daniel Bierschwale



Cheryl Hoppe  
Schalene Darr  
Jean Modesette  
Hal Broadhead

Cheryl Hoppe excused. All others present. Quorum.

**Status:** Completed

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### 1.2. Approval of prior month's meeting minutes

Daniel Bierschwale

Approval of minutes from the Annual Meeting of the Members

Motion to approve the minutes of last month's Annual Meeting of The Members. All In favor, motion passes

**Resolution #:** 20141218-01

**Moved by:** Frankie Aars

**Seconded by:** Schalene Darr

**Status:** Carried

**Vote:**

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## 2. Old business

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## 3. New business

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### 3.1. Budget FY15

Daniel Bierschwale

Review/approval of the budget for the new Chamber fiscal year.

Budget review: we have a simple sheet and a detailed review.

Danny gives background on QB and our new accountant Cat Moody, reviews budget presentation documents and explains format. He also gives background on properties owned by the Chamber, marketing and the horse drive. as well as, CVB Funds, RT Funds and the GGP account.

GGP account cannot be included as income – these funds are on hand and will be used up.

CVB \$25,000 funds from Bed tax was never available before. Danny reviews CVB timeline.

We will do a spread sheet of month to month expenses. We also will need a statement of cash flow.

Next year we hope to have the 2016 budget started in July 2015 and ready to go In November.

RT District- Barb working with Mona Jamison on the District formation.

He also reviews plans for construction and the future build out, the property will be ours on 1/6/15.

We want to apply for the TIIP grant. We could get \$100,000+/- from this fund. We will also probably have to borrow some money to pay for the cost of construction of the public restrooms and visitor center updates. Cheryl is talking with FIB to determine if we can go that route. We also have the potential to go to the county or bonding, The TIIP application is due in August. We will have to work as a group, there is no reason we shouldn't go after this additional funding.

Scott we will make enough through the RT to cover our mortgage? Danny: Yes –review spreadsheet We are receiving \$57K for the capital improvement fund and 38K in for the operations. We aren't going to spend all the money in this fiscal year so that we make sure we are covered in November and December since we don't know exactly when the checks will come in.

This January we need to move into our new facility.

Events not very good revenue generators. Brewfest is not happening this year due to Arch Park being closed. We will do the Horse Drive. We will use the Horse drive as a Community Marketing program as opposed to a money generator. We we are willing to spend \$5,000 cash and we need to bring in \$5,000 so that this is a break even. A one day event. No rodeo.

Next year (2015) we have the gateway project construction starting. The utility work this year could have gone a bit more smoothly so we are working to improve this process.

We are talking about hosting a significant event in 2016, we are hoping to work with Joanne Gardner she was the VP of production at Sony, put on the Red Ants Pants Festival and the Shout in Livingston.

We need to have seed money- we need a media sponsor- we want the president and the 1st lady and the Governor to come to Gardiner.



Joanne is connected to many musicians, she has thrown out the idea of creating an ongoing Yellowstone Music Festival. We would have a National event and then a regional event for the weekend. We didn't have capacity to create such an event before. Gardiner will be positioned for national media attention. The Find Your Park initiative of NPS- Pullman in Chicago is set to become the newest National Park. Pullman Car -Teddy Roosevelt tie in.

Sandy- How do we get positioned as the signature event? Danny- we have had conversations with Dan Wenk YNP now NPF Chair. We are already on the radar as the only event on the National Park calendar is the rededication of the Arch.

We are allocating \$15K to pay Joanne so that we can start the planning process – Nat Geo., NBC, History Channel- those are the media partners we want to get with- they would sponsor the 1 hour TV broadcast event.

The Rodeo Club has approached us to rent the grounds only for their event.

Staffing discussion- Barb leaves the room for this portion of the meeting- the following minutes were recorded by Jean Modesette:

The board discussed the permanent position of the Chamber Executive Director. The Chamber Executive Committee recommended that Interim Director, Barbara Shesky, be offered the permanent position based on her great past performance in this roll. Board discussed wages and benefits and agreed that offering this position to Barbara was in the best interest of the Chamber. Frankie asked if a written job description will be available and Jean responded that this will be distributed to the board within the next few weeks.

Barb resumes taking the minutes.

Danny requests a motion to approve the Fy15 Budget as presented:

Frankie makes the motion, Sandy seconds the motion – all in favor. motion passed

**Resolution #:** 20141218-02

**Moved by:** Frankie Aars

**Seconded by:** Sandy Bierle

**Status:** Carried

**Vote:**

### 3.2. Bison brochures from FWP

Yellowstone Basin Inn

Newly created brochures for distribution from FWP

Sabina is proposing to bring in educational brochures produced by the Citizens Group On Bison Education (which is supported by the Interagency Bison Management Partners) regarding Bison safety, biology and behavior and tribal people into the Chamber office.

Also she has been asked to approach the Board to see if the Chamber would be a clearing house for notifying the membership and telling them that they can come into the office to pick up these brochures. Sandy- good with it.

Scott- Backlash to Chamber? Who- Livestock growers, some residents.

History: Group formed in 2011 in response to the Interagency Bison Management Plan. Their mission is to manage wild and free ranging bison and prevent brucellosis transmission to Livestock. This is a citizen group of about 40 people that includes ranchers, sportsmen and individuals and representatives from the Buffalo Field Campaign.

Barb gives an overview of what brochures she has in the office currently. Members brochures and brochures for Museums, educational brochures and brochures for educational places that we don't have here in Gardiner. Montana state and regional brochures. She has been weeding out any brochures from other areas for services that are available here in Gardiner through Chamber members.

We should create a policy for brochures.

This is educational Danny thinks it is good to go others agree.

With regard to the second request of the Chamber being a clearing house for these brochures and specifically contacting the members to offer for them to carry the brochures-Do we want to communicate these to our members? No

Put a blurb in the news? No

Barb will contact Sabina when she runs out.

**Status:** Completed



Yellowstone Basin Inn

### 3.3. Restructuring of Park Entrance Fees

Preparation for questions regarding the new entrance fee restructuring for YNP

Sabina- Proposal for entrance and backcountry fee restructuring in YNP- In the meeting presentation Steve Yobst mentioned that, similarly to the West Yellowstone Chamber (where the Park Service shares space and sells park passes), they will be asking the gateway chambers to sell park passes and give out information to the visitors. At that point Sabina chimed in to let him know that we do not have the staff at this time to sell passes, maybe give out information.

(I have the materials from the meeting if anyone is interested.)

**Status:** Parked

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### 3.4. Wolf Issue

Frankie Aars

Discussion regarding letters the Chamber office receives regarding the states wolf management.

The Chamber Board had this discussion last year – recently though, we received an email from a woman from Michigan regarding the wolf management –

Frankie- reviews our mission statement.

Letter- Frankie found her sentence structure in the email interesting – the woman had looked up the names of all of our business members- "... your tourism dollars will suffer you would be wise to realize the hit you take on social media...Recognize where the money comes from...put tourism dollars at risk..."

Sabina's - our responsibility is to protect our members.

We as a Chamber have had this come up at least one time before and we decided was not to take a stand.

We need to create a formal response. Danny interjects that my response was the formal response created last time.

Sabina hands out a new version-See Handout.

Update our response- Sabina thinks we should put a bit more info into the letter- More expanded.

Does this create a window of opportunity to rethink or position if it is appropriate to take a stand or should we alter our mission statement?

Example given of a Chamber member. This is a reference back to the Bison management/hunt. She is losing guests because of gut piles and bullets whizzing by because of the tribal hunt \*\* is a chamber member.

Danny-Clarity is good we do have members and an economy that does receive benefit from hunters- Our Guide services- they operate under the state laws and aren't doing anything illegal- Our members are operating legally. This would be taking an advocacy stand- Sabina- that is what I'm asking- should we take a stand? Scott As a business owner and chamber member I would stay away from this

Frankie I think we need to address these issues.

Scott – she (The letter writer) is trying to push her agenda. Frankie she knows our members she has the wherewithal to use social media-

Scott- scare tactics-

Danny I don't think that advocacy is in the scope of our mission. Updating the letter give us other avenues –

Sandy we shouldn't advocate- update the letter –

Hal- we deal with lots of issues fish -wildlife- we are here to promote tourism. She should address her concerns to those agencies- as opposed to us going to Helena because that is what it appears she is shooting for – Sabina, Frankie and Sandy bring back a formal letter

Jean that would be helpful on Facebook too.

Barbara Read (from the audience) As a lodgin member she has wildlife advocates and hunters both and" I don't make political judgments on them I am here to provide hospitality". I don't appreciate threats and that lady sounded threatening and I don't appreciate it.

Hal we open our doors to people who want to go into the park; go fishing, rafting -we aren't going to say "wait your this color or that color or that political party".

Sabina to the Board- email me your thoughts and she, Sandy and Frankie will take those and create a response.

**Status:** Completed



Daniel Bierschwale

### 3.5. Committees

Chair assignments by the President for FY15

Marketing Committee- Chair- Jean Modesette. Assisting will be Frankie, Sandy, Scott & Schalene.

The Events committee is being rolled into the Marketing committee.

Property and Facilities Committee- Chair- Schalene Darr. Assisting will be Scott, Frankie, Sabina and Danny and Barb.

We are dissolving the Resort Tax, Welcome Center & Public Restrooms committee. The new Visitor Center and public restrooms will now fall under the Properties and Facilities committee.

Barbara will continue working with our lawyer, Mona Jamison, regarding the District formation and Bob Jovick on the Community Center restricted deed transfer to the Greater Gardiner Community Council.

We will need to be having one meeting a week over the next three months for properties and facilities.

Nominating Committee- Chair- Cheryl Hoppe. Assisting will be Hal.

Membership Committee- Chair- Sandy Bierle. Assisting will be Hal.

We would like to see some membership surveys created to find out what things we can do to assist our members more. This can be achieved via email but it is felt that face to face contact and phone calls are also needed to engage our membership.

Evaluation of the current membership package is also slated for this year.

GGP Committee- Danny.

The Yellowstone Country Committee is dissolved

**Resolution #:** 2014121803

**Moved by:** Daniel Bierschwale

**Seconded by:** Scott Demaree

**Status:** Carried

**Vote:**

## 4. Committee business

### 4.1. Yellowstone National Park

Brian Suderman

Update on YNP

**Status:** Completed

### 4.2. Xanterra

Beth Casey

Update on Xanterra

**Status:** Completed

### 4.3. Properties and Facilities

Schalene Darr

Update on Properties and Facilities

We just found out that we need to have a resolution regarding the signing of the papers for the new facility.

Scott Demaree- I make a motion to have Danny (Daniel Bierschwale) sign the closing papers and any accompanying paperwork on behalf of the Gardiner Chamber for the purchase of the Kahrs property.

Hal Broadhead- second

Discussion- none.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Motion carried

**Resolution #:** 2014121804

**Moved by:** Scott Demaree

**Seconded by:** Hal Broadhead



**Status:** Carried

**Vote:**

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**4.4. Public Comment**

Gardiner Chamber

Jean- Board Retreat - She will send out a Doodle Poll. We would like this one day retreat to happen in February or March.

Public meetings tonight at 5 and 6 pm.

The Resort Tax Advisory committee has had it 1st meeting. They will have a public meeting to open the applications and allocate the funds. targeting the 2nd full week of Jan the specific date is not set yet, the Board Trent, Rebecca, Ann, Richard Jessica Gerdes.

**Status:** Completed

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**4.5. Date Next Meeting**

Daniel Bierschwale

The next meeting will be January 15, 2015.

**Status:** Completed

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**5. Gardiner Welcome Center & Public Restrooms**

Daniel Bierschwale

Update on the Gardiner Welcome Center and Public restrooms

**Status:** Completed

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Total time scheduled: 61 min

Recording Secretary:

Chairperson:

Date:

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