



Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Meeting date: **Thursday, June 12, 2014** Started: **11:00 AM** Ended: **2:30 PM**

Location: Upstairs at the Gardiner Market

Purpose/Notes: Special Meeting

Chaired by: Daniel Bierschwale

Minutes rec. by: Gardiner Chamber

Attendance:

Present: Schalene Darr, Sandy Bierle, Daniel Bierschwale, Gardiner Chamber, Scott Demaree, Jean Modesette, Richard Parks, Barbara Shesky, Yellowstone Basin Inn

Regrets:

Absent: Mountain Home, Mountain Mike's Tours, Outwest T's, Town Cafe, Upper Yellowstone River R, Wild West Rafting, Wildflour Bakery, Yellowstone River Lodge, Yellowstone Safari, YP Riverfront Cabins, "Be Our Guest " House, Frankie Aars, Above the Rest Lodge, Absaroka Lodge, Adventure Yellowstone, B Bar Ranch, B Wood Photography, Bill Berg, Best Western By Mammoth Hotsprings, Big Wild Adventures, Child Care Connections, Comfort Inn- Yellowstone North, Aspen Cottage, Crevice Mountain Lodge, 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, Montana Buffalo Company, Montana Guide Service, Montana Whitewater Rafting&Zipline, Mountain Mobile Auto Glass, North Entrance Vacation Rental, North Entrance Washtub, NorthWestern Energy, Paradise Adventure Company, Paradise Gateway B&B & Vacation , Photos by Sandi, Rainbow Ark, Riversbend Lodge, Riverside Cottages, Rockin' HK Outfitters, Smith Family Ranch, Stafford Animal Shelter, Stonegate Chiropractics, Story Distributing, 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 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, Yellowstone Super 8 Motel, Yellowstone Village Inn, Yellowstone Wilderness Outfitters

Late:

Guests:

(none)

Meeting Documents:

(no documents)

Meeting Minutes:

1. Chamber Business

1.1. Roll Call & Introductions

Daniel Bierschwale

- Daniel Bierschwale
- Richard Parks
- Frankie Aars
- Scott Demaree
- Sandy Bierle
- Cheryl Hoppe
- Schalene Darr



Jean Modesette

Minutes:

Frankie Aars and Cheryl Hoppe – Excused. All others present

Status: Completed

2. Old business

No Old business

3. New business

No New business

4. Committee Business

4.1. Gardiner Welcome Center & Public Restrooms

Daniel Bierschwale

Operations in a new facility

Minutes:

We have to continue confidentiality. The new facility owners are still breaking the news to their employees.

Today's Agenda:

Review our mission,

Define stakeholders

Do a quick comparison of our strengths versus weaknesses

Threats

Talk about how we want to announce this property selection.

Look at our opportunities and define functions of the new facility

Defines our direction.

Discuss staffing, the Board and Members.

Review our mission:

Mission statement: *The mission of the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce is to serve the Community by promoting, protecting, encouraging and developing local business and tourism with due regard to the natural environment. To strengthen and expand the income potential of all businesses and organizations. To strive to help advance the general welfare and prosperity of the Gardiner area, its citizens and all of the business community.*

Define stakeholders:

Who are our Stakeholders?

Members first and foremost-

Community residents,

Visitors,

Members look to chamber to communicate their business to the world- visitors. Membership should be front and center in the VC. The promotion piece is a major component. Improving winter tourism.

A membership Wall? Maybe digital? Electronic board? We do still need a printed format.

Tourism Partners:

Yellowstone Country,

MTOT

YNP,

Park County,

GGCC,

Forest Service

GGCC is civic and we are business; fireworks, Community Center and housing are GGCC.

A lot of people are wearing more than one hat

It is good to have the business and civic sided communicate



Resident aspect: newsletter is the primary. Need a local connection to know what to do and where to go – mobile resources don't always work here. Newsletter serves all these and there would be a big disconnect without it. Newsletter in the 60s- started by Richard's Mom on a mimeograph machine. They would print it till the stencil ran out 150-200 copies.

The Chamber's 60th anniversary is next year, May 5, 2015.

We need to have a historical display.

Do a quick comparison of our strengths versus weaknesses:

Strengths:

Board of Directors and staff that are active and engaged.

We have a bit of money right now

Future Resort Tax income will help develop a strong financial position,

YNP

Year-round outdoor recreation,

Our wildlife and natural features,

Our expansive view of Yellowstone,

The Yellowstone River itself.

Supportive membership,

Now being "nicer" to people with complaints.

Continuing our partnership with Cooke City with the Northern Range Project,

Our marketing attempts are working

Weaknesses:

Unresponsive Park County government,

Some of the new commissioners seem a bit better these days, people feeling like Gardiner and Cooke City are ignored even though we generate a large amount of income for them,

Poor outlook towards tourism by county officials and some residents,

Gardiner has never been organized.

The Chamber reputation

Lack of paid staff,

Our landlocked location.

Lack of public transportation.

YBP/Linx has gone bust. There is a need for shuttle services/ public transportation from Bozeman and Livingston and back that isn't too expensive.

Affordable housing and employee housing.

If we are going to promote the shoulder season and the winter we have to look at housing aspect because of the transportation and housing problems we have.

Wolf and bison controversy.

Our lack of stance on the matter. We live the song "Home on the Range" Do we think it is time to take a stance? We want there to be a coexistence not at the expense of the wildlife. Do we want to push political stance?

We only have so many people we can recruit as members,

Is our goal to have as many members as possible?

Threats:

Blowback because of the place we are going to move to.

We need to go for the positive spin; the owners were planning to retire any way. We should do a press release and then do something at the Stroll. We need to consult with the business' owners on how they want to release the info –tied into their retirement and them leaving a legacy.

Talk about how we want to announce this property selection.

Plan: Talk to them first, create the press release. Publish in newsletter and disseminate to local media. Danny and Barbara will meet with the owners. They may not want that (we see it is an opportunity for them to let people know they aren't disappearing)

Messaging: The Chamber was presented with an opportunity. We looked at a couple different properties, this came available and we were given a fair buying process.

Climate change; how will it affect our economy?



The future Board of Directors.

Look at our opportunities and define functions of the new facility

Opportunities:

The RT provides us a cash flow to do marketing and have more staff, paid at an appropriate wage; beyond our members' dues.

Strategically, we want our core to be local,

Visitor's Center,

Winter Marketing,

CVB status,

Recreation/Forest Service

Forest Service to do a winter use study to explore opportunities (this may not set well with some locals.

Biking, skiing, hiking, non-motorized usage.

We do have those locals that are laid off all winter that would like year-round employment.

Building/ Hardscape- interior & exterior

Local membership board,

Greater Gardiner information,

Exhibits- interactive, historic – map: Recreation info, a map that shows a “you are here” and indicates the roads to other destinations and airports,

Streetscape and artwork on our bit of the walk: flags, benches,

Board meeting room,

3 small offices,

Break room,

Air conditioning,

1 small staff bathroom.

Building Function:

Membership promotion,

Marketing,

Public restrooms,

Chamber administrative operations,

Exhibits,

Current

Historical

Information,

Promote the micro-ecosystem around Gardiner,

Local recreation information,

Community Newsletter,

Storage and security.

Tabled: Discussion of Staffing, the Board and Members, an employee apartment, outside access to restroom.

Status: Completed

4.2. Public Comment

Gardiner Chamber

Minutes:

This was an open discussion with audience participation

Status: Completed

Total time scheduled: 126 min

Recording Secretary:

Chairperson:

Date:
