



Minutes- Gardiner Chamber of Commerce-

Annual Meeting of the Members

Start time: 6:00PM-end time: 8:10PM

November 19, 2015 - Cowboys Lodge & Grille

6:00-6:30PM Cocktails and Conversation

6:53PM Roll Call: Danny Bierschwale-Jean Modesette(excused), Cheryl Hoppe, Sandy Bierle, Frankie Aars, Hal Broadhead, Scott Demaree, Schalene Darr, Sabina Strauss(excused)

Approval of the meeting minutes from October 22, 2015 Danny Bierschwale-

Motion to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2015 meeting by Hal Broadhead. Second -Schalene Darr. All in favor, none opposed-motion carried.

Resolution # 11.19.15.01

Year in Review: Danny Bierschwale

Opening comments,

GGP,

Strategic Plan,

P/L15 reviewed (see P/L in Minutes binder).

Marketing & Grants: Barbara Shesky

Overview of this past year's marketing achievements. We have continued to promote the Northern Range of Yellowstone in partnership with the Cooke City Silvergate Colter Pass Chamber of Commerce. Funds and timing have been challenging. But we continue to highlight the Northern Range Video and utilized it in several grant presentations. We have had the privilege to have it shown by our peers in the Montana Tourism Industry as an exemplary model in marketing following the Montana State brand. We have also published ads in both Montana Quarterly and Outside Bozeman in an attempt to draw instate travelers. Moving forward we would like to be able to update the information and photos on the website to keep it fresh. We also plan on creating some Google ads- the budget that we have for this project is small so we try to spend wisely.

Facebook continues to grow under the careful tending of Jean Modesette. Jean has generously agreed to continue to post for us on Facebook and teach the newest member of our staff, Zondra Skertich the ropes. Jean will continue to monitor our posts and frequencies until we are secure that we are on the right track. When Jean started, I think we had 100 or so likes. Over the past 3 years, with her attention to detail and eye for photography, thank to Jean we now have 3,458 likes to date. I wish Jean were here I went into the stats pages and got frustrated so I know that there is probably some great data there that I wish I could share-

Late last winter it was decided by the Chamber marketing committee that we should focus on achieving Convention and Visitor's Bureau status and with that we would then qualify to apply for a portion of the bed tax dollars that are being collected here in Gardiner for marketing. In May the County Commissioners passed a resolution designating us as the Gardiner Resort Area CVB, we prepared a marketing plan and I drove to Shelby Mt for the Tourism Advisory Council meeting- we were officially recognized as a CVB and the marketing plan was approved, garnering us \$28,000. So moving forward, every May I will be submitted a marketing plan to the TAC for approval. This year's plan is to go through the branding process and develop a marketing strategy for the next 2-3 years. We went through an RFP (request for proposal process) and 4 high caliber plans were submitted. In the end- we chose ENGAGE Strategies- Mike Bento. We feel very

privileged to be able to work with him and his research Company Prime Group. They created the Montana state brand which has had great results. Mike's process and vision of branding is much different than any other plan and methodology submitted and we are very excited to see the end results

Branding and strategic marketing plan development is an expensive process therefore I wrote another grant application to Yellowstone Country Inc, the regional tourism Board, Scott and I attended their meeting in Columbus this past Tuesday and I am pleased to say that we have received an additional \$12,800 to finish paying for the project. With the results we get from this year's marketing plan. I feel that we will be well positioned for next year's granting cycle by TAC and have great direction on when and where to spend the dollars we are allotted. I am also confident, that with the branding and planning in place that we can increase revenues in the shoulder and winter seasons thereby increasing the bed tax collection, which translates into additional marketing dollars for ourselves as well as our partner Yellowstone country Inc.

With the purchase and creation of the Gardiner Visitor Center and the promise to this community of a Public Restroom Facility as part of the Gateway Project, this past July I wrote an grant application to the Tourism Infrastructure Improvement Program- we have been notified that we are indeed receiving funding to the tune of over 101K, these funds, along with RT capital fund account dollars and monies remaining from the MTOT Gardiner Gateway seed monies, we will now be able to proceed in making that dream a reality.

For staffing of the VIC this past summer I also wrote a grant to YC for \$8,000 which we also received we were then given an additional 3K, this was used to keep the chamber open addition hours in the evening on weekdays.

Reports (See Reports in Minutes Binder)

The past few years have been full of planning, teamwork, struggle and optimism. As we continue to grow and strive for achievements we—l-- have had the direction and the leadership of some fantastic and forward thinking individuals. Cheryl, Danny and Jean have been my rocks-- on some occasions I wanted to throw rocks!- but in the end we always figured out how to make it work. I look forward to working with those of you that come to this Board this evening- But I must admit I will miss their advice, strength, vision and most of all- them.

Barbara Presents Cards

Properties & Facilities: Schalene Darr

Opening Comments,

Community Center,

Rodeo Grounds,

Visitor Center- Public Restroom Renovation

Introduction of First Interstate Banc System Foundation Grant Presentation: Peter Fox, Executive Director Park County Community Foundation and Joe Hanser, President First Interstate Bank, Livingston Market.

First Interstate Bank- Livingston Market and First Interstate Bank President Joe Hanser, along with First Interstate Bank Foundation and its Board of Directors present the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce with a grant check for \$10,000 These monies are matching funds that were necessary to qualify for the TIIP grant. Without this initial, generous grant, it is doubtful that we would have been able to qualify for the TIIP grant or bring this project to its fruition.

Nor could this transaction have happened without the assistance of the Park County Community Foundation and its Executive Director, Mr. Peter Fox, who worked with us to implement funds transition between our organizations.

Nominating Committee: Cheryl Hoppe

Opening Comments,

6 seats on the Board of Directors up for election:

Running this year: Scott Demaree, Schalene Darr, Sharon Gilbert, Sarah Ondrus, Chris Lyness, Nelli Kramafilova, Sue Johnson & Anna Holloway. (write in votes also accepted). None Submitted. Each candidate gives a brief statement. Sarah Ondrus and Chris Lyness were not able to attend but still would like to run.

Voted in by the membership: Scott Demaree, Schalene Darr, Sue Johnson, Sharon Gilbert, Anna Holloway & Nellie Kramafilova

Public Comment: Bill Berg thanks Danny and the Chamber and remarks on the stride taken over the past 4 years. Brewster Freeland comments on the influx of Pacific Rim tourists that he believes will be traveling to our area next Winter. Nathan Varley comments thanking Danny for his years of service to the Chamber. Sue Johnson comments that there will be a meeting next Monday (23rd) regarding the FWP Bull Elk tag restrictions that are being considered in our hunting district.

Meeting adjourns Danny leaves the table- standing ovation. 8:01PM

8:02 First meeting of the 2016 Board of Directors begins

Roll Call: Barbara Shesky

Schalene Darr, Scott Demaree, Sandy Bierle, Hal Broadhead, Nelli Kramafilova, Sue Johnson & Anna Holloway, Sharon Gilbert, Sabina Strauss-excused.

Resolution(s) - Board Executive Committee appointments: Barbara Shesky will lead until the president is elected: President, Vice President, Treasurer.

Schalene Darr has offered to be president, Scott Demaree has offered to be Vice President and Sabina Strauss has offered to be the Treasurer.

Hal Broadhead makes a motion to approve the slate as presented, Sue Johnson seconds, all in favor, none opposed motion carried.

Resolution # 11.19.15.02

Packets to new incoming Board members of Articles, Bylaws, Policies & Procedures Manual and new Board Member Commitment Pledge.

Public comment

The next meeting of the Gardiner Chamber Board of Directors

Schalene Darr

December 17, 2015 at noon upstairs at the Visitor Center

8:10pm meeting adjourned.