

**Wind River Visitors Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, Nov. 18, 2021**  
**Headwaters Arts and Conference Center, Dubois, WY**

**PRESENT:** Frank Welty – Dubois; Randy Lahr – Dubois; Julie Buller – Riverton; Hal Herron – Riverton; Owen Sweeney – Lander; Helen Gordon – Hudson (Arrived 9:16 a.m.); John Bass – County (Arrived 9:24 a.m.); Joel Highsmith – Shoshoni (Arrived 9:42 a.m.); Cy Lee – County (Arrived 9:51 a.m.).

**ABSENT:** Thomas Pede – Lander.

**WRVC STAFF:** Helen Wilson, Melanie Hoefle.

**GUESTS:** Wanda Weisz – Shoshoni Chamber of Commerce, Gary Weisz – Shoshoni, Bethany and Jason Baldes – Riverton, Jennifer Marshall Weydeveld – Dubois Chamber of Commerce, Janet Winslow – Riverton Chamber of Commerce; Tony Tolstedt – Riverton City Administrator.

**WRVC PHOTO:** A group photo of staff and Board members was taken shortly before 9 a.m.

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Randy Lahr called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. A quorum was present.

**REVIEW & APPROVE AGENDA:** Hal Herron moved, and Owen Sweeney seconded to approve the Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Bethany Baldes announced her new business, 307 Three-Sixty, a 360-view photography business. Janet Winslow requested permission for the distribution of videos and photographs of locations throughout Riverton that were taken by Brad Christensen for a WRVC project. Helen Wilson will check with Brad on permissions for these assets to be used by a third party.

**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 23 MINUTES:** Owen Sweeney moved and Hal Herron seconded to approve the Minutes as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**

Joel Highsmith (Treasurer) was absent when this line item appeared on the Agenda. Helen Wilson provided the Treasurer’s Report.

- A. The WRVC is having a tremendous financial year (in addition to receiving CARES funds).

- B. The Board had a few questions about expenditures, and Helen explained.
- C. Hal Herron asked about the finances payable from Riverton to Dubois. Helen explained that in 2018 County lodging tax money was divided equally between Dubois, Lander and Riverton. Riverton has very few County lodging tax properties, and in 2018 it was determined that Riverton “owed” Dubois \$12,000. (At that time, County lodging tax facilities began being split by zip code.) A payment schedule was agreed upon by all parties and set up, and the WRVC paid \$10,000 to Dubois (\$2,000 is still owed). Riverton has since been paying off this “debt.” Helen recommended that Riverton pay Dubois the \$2,000 that is still owed from their next TAD check. She suggested that the remaining balance (which is owed to the WRVC) is removed. Hal Herron moved to go with Helen’s recommendation, and Randy Lahr seconded. Julie Buller intervened and asked for Janet Winslow’s thoughts. Janet requested that the \$2,000 be forgiven as well. This debt will continue to be paid per the previous agreement until other arrangements are made.
- D. Randy Lahr motioned to approve budget reports and Julie Buller seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **GUEST PRESENTER: DARREN RUDLOFF OF RUDLOFF SOLUTIONS**

A. Draft Personnel Manual:

The draft of a Personnel Manual was presented to the Board for the Staff of the WRVC. Helen will send an electronic copy of this manual for feedback via “Suggesting Mode” on Google Docs. Board Members should review and provide feedback before the January 27 meeting.

B. Strategic Plan Implementation Option – Suggested by Berkley Young:

Darren discussed a strategic plan that includes overall direction, organization structure and strategic initiatives. The WRVC is committed to promoting and building awareness of Fremont County and the Wind River Indian Reservation, recognizing and celebrating the unique attributes of numerous communities, as well as two tribes and creating a total visitor destination.

Top strategies to implement:

- a. Market the Destination (All)
  - b. A First-Class Destination Marketing Organization (Helen Gordon will head efforts, along with WRVC staff)
  - c. Outdoor Attractions and Amenities to be More of a Year-Round Destination (Julie Buller, Frank Welty and Cy Lee will head efforts, along with WRVC staff)
  - d. A Hospitality Workforce to Provide Optimum Visitor Experiences (Randy Lahr will head efforts, along with WRVC staff)
- C. Funding Options Spring/Summer 2022:
- Darren talked about several funding options and timelines including CARES Funds, Economic Development Administration (EDA), Tourism Improvement Districts and ARPA (specifically Governor Mead’s Survive Drive Thrive plan using state ARPA

funds). Darren also discussed the need to prioritize potential shovel-ready projects, and the Board reviewed proposed projects from within the communities.

The list of impactful projects suitable for development within two to three years includes:

- a. Trails - Dubois, Lander, Riverton, etc.
- b. Wayfinding/Signage - RV parking, trail signs.
- c. Arts - Lander Art District, Riverton Art Banners, etc.
- d. Interpretation - Audio (Wind River Indian Reservation and walking tours of Dubois, Lander and Riverton), Birding Map
- e. Technology - Cell, EV.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting adjourned at 12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Hoefle.