

Wind River Visitors Council (WRVC) Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 17, 2022
Shoshoni Senior Center, Shoshoni

PRESENT: Julie Buller – Riverton; Owen Sweeney – Lander; Kip Post – County; Hal Herron – Riverton; Joel Highsmith – Shoshoni (via Zoom); Randy Lahr – Dubois (via Zoom); Frank Welty – Dubois; Krista Lobera – Lander

ABSENT: Helen Gordon – Hudson; Cy Lee – County

WRVC STAFF: Helen Wilson, Melanie Hoefle

GUESTS: Gary Weisz – Shoshoni; Mayor Elect Tim Hancock – Riverton; County Commissioner Elect Ron Fabrizius – Fremont County; Ryan Preston – Riverton; Mayor Monte Richardson – Lander; Samuel Tower – WYRiverton Chamber & Visitor Center; Brad Tyndall – Central Wyoming College; Jason Hawk – Bar 10; Mike Jones – Fremont County Commissioner; Gary Michaud – Wind River Transportation Authority; Mike Martin – A.D. Martin Lumber

CALL TO ORDER: Vice President Owen Sweeney called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. A quorum was present.

REVIEW & APPROVE AGENDA: Hal Herron moved, and Frank Welty seconded to approve the Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2022 MINUTES: Hal Herron moved, and Frank Welty seconded to approve the Minutes as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Helen Wilson presented the Treasurer’s Report.

- A. Hal Herron suggested highlighting some of the anomalies in the Financial Report. Kip Post suggested that the columns of the budget be year to date. Helen Wilson recommended tabling the discussion about the layout of the budget for the upcoming Joint Powers Budget committee meeting on November 22, since all of the Board Members who provided input are part of that committee.
- B. The Board asked a few questions about the Statement of Activities page in the Financial Report, and Helen explained.
- C. Hal Herron moved, and Julie Buller seconded to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried unanimously.

SUPPORT FREMONT COUNTY TOURISM COALITION (PAC)—REPORT FROM RYAN PRESTON: Ryan Preston presented on the Support Fremont County Tourism Coalition (the WRVC’s PAC.) The lodging tax renewal passed at 72.02%. The radio ads and County 10 ads

did exceptionally well; in addition, the boosted Facebook posts got a lot of attention. The PAC spent about \$1,800 and has roughly \$200 remaining.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Helen Wilson presented the Director's Report.

- A. At four months into the fiscal year, Fremont County's lodging tax collections are up \$31,852.63 from last year's first four months.
- B. Helen Wilson gave an update on the Fall Hospitality & Tourism Summit.
- C. Wyoming has some Destination Development money that will be distributed to the lodging tax boards throughout the state. Helen Wilson believes the WRVC will receive around \$300,000 but recommended that the spending discussion be tabled until the WRVC has received spending rules, timelines, etc. The application is scheduled to be sent to the WRVC in November, and the money could be seen as early as January 2023.
- D. Cy Lee attended the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association's annual conference in Fanner, California in October. The (almost complete) TravelStorys Wind River Indian Reservation Audio Tour was released at the conference.
- E. Helen Wilson discussed the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Grant. Helen served on the Review Committee and enjoyed seeing applications from other parts of the state. Due to a conflict of interest, she did not review Fremont County's applications. The WRVC provided several letters of support for applications submitted by Fremont County organizations.
- F. The WRVC is in the process of its CPA audit with Summit West. The Board asked if the auditors could come to the January Board Meeting to present the process and results. Helen will check on this.
- G. The WRVC worked with the Wyoming Off-Road Racers Association (WORRA) on moving its races to the ponds at the end of east Monroe Avenue in Riverton. This was approved at the Riverton City Council Meeting on October 18.
- H. Helen discussed a WRVC campaign for celebrating tourism assets in each community. The first event is the Dubois Chamber of Commerce Annual Mixer on November 18 at the Rustic Pine. The other events are planned to be a Continental Divide Trail Gateway Community event combined with the Lander Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours, a pre-season party for the ice races in Riverton with WORRA and a multi-day event in the spring with the Eastern Shoshone Cultural Center and the University of Wyoming.
- I. Helen has been working with the WRVC's public relations firm on a media trip in early February. This trip will focus on winter recreation.
- J. Helen presented the Zartico Report, a recently launched source of data from the Wyoming Office of Tourism. She is excited about the report's potential.

PRESENTATION FROM CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE—BRAD TYNDALL:

Brad Tyndall gave a presentation on a \$99,000 grant that Central Wyoming College recently received. He also talked about the college's development in terms of outdoor and hospitality tourism.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Gary Weisz announced the progress of the new motel being built in Shoshoni. Mike Martin expressed his interest in installing a new reader board along Federal Boulevard in Riverton to announce events and news. Joel Highsmith talked to WYDOT about EV charging stations, as Wind River Country is an important pathway to Yellowstone. Joel also recommended that the WRVC look into a 360 speaker for future Zoom meetings. Julie Buller expressed interest in attending the Wyoming Governor's Hospitality & Tourism Convention in January.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Hoefle.