

Wind River Visitors Council (WRVC) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Room 125, Intertribal Education & Community Center Building (CWC), Riverton

PRESENT: Randy Lahr – Dubois; Helen Gordon – Hudson; Owen Sweeney – Lander; Frank Welty – Dubois; Julie Buller – Riverton; Hal Herron – Riverton; Joel Highsmith – Shoshoni; Cy Lee – County (arrived 10:09 a.m.); Krista Lobera – Lander (via Zoom, arrived 10:15 a.m.)

ABSENT: Kip Post – County

WRVC STAFF: Helen Wilson, Melanie Hoefle

GUESTS: Representative Pepper Ottman – Riverton; County Commissioner Ron Fabrizius – Fremont County; Mayor Patricia Neveaux – Dubois

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

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

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 2023/2024 BUDGET: No comments from the public were made. Frank expressed a concern that if one municipality does not approve the Joint Powers Budget, then money cannot be spent and suggested that the Wind River Visitors Council look into revising the Joint Powers Agreement. Helen Gordon said that a requirement for unanimous approval is not stated in State Statute, and Joel said that it is. Owen requested that Joel provide the Board with the part of the State Statute where this is stated, and Joel said that he would provide this. Helen Wilson suggested that she reach out to Chris Brown, Executive Director of the Wyoming Lodging and Restaurant Association, to have him do a question and answer session at the WRVC's July Board Meeting.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 23, 2023 MINUTES: Helen Gordon requested that the Minutes be amended to state that the initial motion to approve the January 26, 2023 Minutes died. Hal Herron made a motion, and Frank Welty seconded to approve the March Minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF REVISED JANUARY 26, 2023 MINUTES: Hal Herron moved, and Julie Buller seconded to approve the Revised January Minutes to clarify that the Board voted after an Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

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

- A. The Board asked a few questions about the Statement of Activities in the Financial Report, and Helen explained. The Board requested that a copy of credit card statements be provided in the Board Packet. Helen Gordon moved, and Frank Welty seconded, to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. Reddon, Koehn & Associates is in the process of submitting the Wind River Visitors Council’s amended FY 2022/2023 Joint Powers Budget. Travis Koehn recommended some additional amendments: increase the Staff Medical and Retirement Benefits from \$15,240 to \$18,300 to accommodate the upcoming expenses in May and June; increase Conference Attendance, Mileage, Meals from \$5,000 to \$6,000; include an Accounts Receivable Forgiven budget line of \$1,800, and reclass the money spent in the Destination Development Program as Prepaid Expenses (an asset), expense it 7/1/23 and keep the \$300,000 budget for next year. Owen Sweeney moved, and Helen Gordon seconded to approve the revised FY 2022/2023 Joint Powers Budget. Joel Highsmith voted against; all others were in favor. Motion carried.
- C. The Board discussed the FY 2023 to 2024 Engagement Letter provided by Reddon, Koehn & Associates, the WRVC’s CPA. Hal Herron moved, and Helen Gordon seconded to approve the Engagement Letter. Motion carried unanimously.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS: The Executive Team recommended Owen Sweeney as President, Frank Welty as Vice President, Hal Herron as Secretary and Helen Gordon as Treasurer. Hal Herron moved, and Helen Gordon seconded the recommendations. Joel Highsmith and Julie Buller voted against; all others were in favor. Motion carried.

WRVC PERSONNEL MANUAL: Hal Herron talked about the updated WRVC Personnel Manual, which Helen Wilson and he have been working on. The Manual has been reviewed by the Compensation Committee. He intends to send the Manual to the Board in July.

FY 2023/2024 JOINT POWERS BUDGET APPROVAL UPDATE: The FY 2023/2024 Joint Powers Budget has been approved by Dubois, Hudson, Lander and Riverton. Shoshoni and the County Commissioners have yet to approve the budget. The County Commissioner’s budget hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, June 6 at 2:30 p.m. The Town of Shoshoni tabled the budget during the May 23 Town Council Meeting. Joel Highsmith stated that the Town of Shoshoni would not approve the budget because of concerns with the Destination Development Program funds. Frank Welty suggested that a meeting be set up between the Town of Shoshoni and legal representatives to discuss.

MARKETING PLAN: Helen Wilson presented the WRVC’s Marketing Plan for FY 2023/2024.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: County Commissioner Ron Fabrizius asked if the WRVC does any advertisements in the Denver International Airport. Helen Wilson explained that in the past, the pricing has been very high, but will look into it.

Representative Pepper Ottman thanked the WRVC for the hard work of the Board of Directors and staff.

Owen Sweeney explained that the WRVC provided information to the municipalities months before the budget hearings (April 7).

Julie Buller announced the Riverton Community Event that takes place Friday, May 26 from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Wind River Heritage Center, which is the new location of the WY Riverton Chamber and Visitor Center.

Hal Herron mentioned that it was interesting to hear the concerns about tourism at the Dubois Town Council Meeting. (Dubois is struggling to find employees to keep up with the busy season and increasing number of tourists.) Frank Welty added that while Dubois lives on tourism, help has been hard to find ever since the forest industry closed down. He also stated that business owners in the Town of Dubois depend on tourism.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Hoefle.