

Wind River Visitors Council (WRVC) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 27, 2023

Shoshoni Senior Center, Shoshoni

PRESENT: Helen Gordon – Hudson; Owen Sweeney – Lander; Frank Welty – Dubois; Hal Herron – Riverton; Ben Barto – Dubois; Joel Highsmith – Shoshoni; Krista Lobera – Lander; Erika Yarber – County; Julie Buller – Riverton (Left at 11:43 a.m.)

ABSENT: Kip Post – County

WRVC STAFF: Helen Wilson, Melanie Hoefle

GUESTS: Gary Weisz – Shoshoni; Mayor Sherry Oler – Hudson

CALL TO ORDER: President Owen Sweeney called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. A quorum was present.

REVIEW & APPROVE AGENDA: A request was made by Joel Highsmith to add a discussion about the WRVC's board meeting schedule, as well as a Wyoming shooting complex update to the Agenda. Hal Herron moved, and Krista Lobera seconded to approve the revised Agenda. Helen Gordon voted against; all others were in favor. Motion carried.

SWEARING IN OF TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS: Ben Barto (Dubois) and Erika Yarber (County) took their Oaths of Office and signed their Conflict of Interest documents in front of the Board of Directors.

APPROVAL OF MAY 25, 2023 MINUTES: Helen Gordon made a motion, and Joel Highsmith seconded to approve the May Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Helen Gordon presented the Treasurer's Report.

- A. The Board asked a few questions about the Financial Report, and Helen Wilson explained. The WRVC recently changed its coding and there were a few discrepancies in the Financial Report. Helen Gordon and Helen Wilson will work with Reddon, Koehn & Associates to fix these. Hal Herron moved, and Krista Lobera seconded, to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. The approval of the Proposed Budget by each Joint Powers Member is complete.

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH DARREN RUDLOFF (VIA ZOOM)/JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT DISCUSSION: Darren Rudloff discussed the Joint Powers Agreement. He pointed out that Fremont County's Joint Powers Agreement is different from all other counties in Wyoming. Under Wyoming law, most lodging tax boards prepare their fiscal budget for the next fiscal year, receive Board approval and have a public hearing. At that point, they are finished. Fremont County's Joint Powers Agreement requires approval of the proposed

budget from each of the governing bodies within the county, giving the governing bodies significant financial oversight. Darren suggested gathering other Joint Powers Agreements from throughout the state (specifically Sweetwater County and Carbon County) to compare. The Board discussed the difficulty of receiving 100 percent approval from each of the municipalities and the county within the timeline required to participate in state co-ops and other opportunities. Helen Wilson mentioned that the Wind River Visitors Council lost \$27,291.65 in state co-op funds, due to the delayed budget approval. The Board of Directors and Executive Director will be working towards amending the Joint Powers Agreement to change the unanimous approval by the governing bodies to a majority approval by the governing bodies, as well as clarify the process for revised budget approvals. Helen Wilson will work with the WRVC's attorney on the language of the amendment.

TAD REPORTS (DUBOIS, HUDSON, LANDER):

- A. Frank Welty presented the annual TAD Report for Dubois. Ben Barto recommended advertising at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas and suggested that the Wind River Visitors Council pay for a portion of his booth for this advertising. Helen Wilson expressed an interest in putting a display ad in their program.
- B. Helen Gordon presented the annual TAD Report for Hudson. Mayor Oler announced that although this year's Hudson Daze wasn't quite as successful due to weather and competing events, she has big plans for next year's event.
- C. Owen Sweeney presented the annual TAD Report for Lander. The Board asked how Brewfest and the Lander 4th of July celebrations went, and Owen stated that he thinks both events were successful, even with the rainy weather.

EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL MANUAL DISCUSSION: Hal Herron asked to table the discussion about the Employee Personnel Manual until the next board meeting due to new compensation committee input. Hal needs a little more time to put together a document to present to the full Board. Helen Gordon expressed her concern of continuing to delay this discussion, as Helen Wilson is not able to receive a bonus or a salary increase until it is finished, due to bonus and salary policies that are being put into the manual. Helen Wilson asked if the compensation committee could have the manual completed and approved by August 9 so that she can move forward with annual staff evaluations, which are also included in the manual.

MEETING SCHEDULE: Joel Highsmith moved to switch to a regular monthly board meeting schedule, and Julie Buller seconded. The Board discussed. The majority of the board expressed concerns about their lack of availability if the Board chooses to switch to monthly meetings. Julie Buller asked if particular meetings could be designated to specific topics. Hal Herron proposed that the vote be tabled so that everyone can take some time to think about this topic and to give each Board Member the opportunity to contact the organization they represent to determine whether they would like to see monthly meetings. The Board agreed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Helen Wilson presented the Director's report. She shared the progress of the Destination Development Program, the feasibility study's initial results and the lodging tax numbers. She also shared media featuring Wind River Country, website statistics and social media statistics.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Joel Highsmith talked about the state's shooting range complex project and the county's task force for that project.

Frank Welty talked about the difficulty of keeping enough employees at hotels and the lack of public transportation to and from Dubois.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Hoefle.