

Wind River Visitors Council (WRVC) Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 25, 2025
Lander Library, Lander

PRESENT: Anne Even – Lander; Dave Furman – Dubois; Charene Herrera – County; Hal Herron – Riverton; Bryce House – Riverton (left at 12:05 p.m.); Krista Lobera – Lander; Suzanne Osegueda – Dubois; Helen Gordon – Hudson (arrived at 10:06 a.m.); Erika Yarber – County

ABSENT: None

WRVC STAFF: Helen Wilson, Alex Watts

GUESTS: Jay Merritt – Shoshoni; Frank Welty – Dubois; Liz Furman – Dubois; Mayor Pat Neveaux – Dubois

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

REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA: Dave Furman moved to revise Item 10 on the Agenda, changing *Executive Session (Legal Matters)* to be discussed as part of the open meeting. Erika Yarber seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Hal Herron then moved to approve the revised Agenda. Bryce House seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF JULY 24, 2025 MINUTES: Hal Herron moved to approve the July 24, 2025 minutes. Helen Gordon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Hal Herron requested an update from Helen Wilson regarding the inclusion of maintenance costs for the electric sign in Dubois' TAD report, as well as the \$12,268 issued to Ring Lake Ranch for "Advertising for Summer 2024 Program." Helen contacted the Town of Dubois to obtain further information. The Town of Dubois responded that the electric sign costs were included because those expenses occurred prior to receiving the request to exclude them.

Helen explained that while Ring Lake Ranch is undoubtedly a tourism asset, the expenditure appears to fall outside the intended scope of TAD funding. She noted that the purpose of TAD is to promote the community as a whole and encourage overnight stays that benefit the broader visitor economy. In this instance, the advertising seems directed toward promoting the ranch's own offerings rather than a community-driven

tourism effort.

Helen will follow up with the Town of Dubois for additional clarification on the specific use of these funds. She will also reach out to Destination Dubois, the town's advisory committee for TAD funds, to explore opportunities for greater involvement and to assist in addressing TAD-related questions prior to funding approvals.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Helen Gordon presented the Treasurer's Report. During the report, Hal Herron inquired about the Statement of Activities in the Financial Report, and Helen Gordon and Helen Wilson provided clarification.

Hal Herron moved to approve the Financial Report. Dave Furman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Helen Wilson provided an update on lodging tax collections. She reported that one Riverton property had been categorized in the Department of Revenue's system as outside city limits during fiscal year 2024 to 2025. Helen has requested that the Department provide the amount that was incorrectly categorized so the Wind River Visitors Council's records can be corrected.

Helen shared updates on Continental Divide Trail Awareness Week, which was a success, and provided a brief report on the WRVC's podcast.

She attended the Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO) and participated in a session highlighting The Phoenix, a signature cocktail/mocktail created in Arizona. Inspired by the concept, Helen is planning to organize a mocktail/cocktail competition for Wind River Country.

Helen also updated the Board on the website redesign, which is underway, and presented the banner ad that will appear at Denver International Airport from November 10 through January 4.

She provided an update on the Destination Development Program and reported on the Semiquincentennial County Committee's project, noting that the committee was awarded \$10,000 from the America 250 grant and an additional \$7,467 from the LOR Foundation.

She presented the redesigned industry and consumer newsletters and provided an update on the public relations firm's participation in the Travel and Words conference, where Wind River Country stories were pitched to travel writers. Helen shared recent

media coverage resulting from PR efforts, including features in The Washington Post, Northwest Travel and Life, 50 Plus Marketplace News and Real Food Traveler.

FALL HOSPITALITY & TOURISM SUMMIT: Helen Wilson reported that a Board Member expressed interest in attending the Fall Hospitality & Tourism Summit, which will take place in Riverton this year. She asked if the Board would like to use funds from the Board Discretionary Funds account line to cover registration costs for Board Members who wish to attend.

The Board was asked who was interested in attending. Dave Furman, Helen Gordon, Hal Herron and Suzanne Oseguera requested General Admission tickets, and Erika Yarber requested a Reception Only ticket.

Erika Yarber moved to approve the use of Board Discretionary Funds to purchase the tickets as outlined above. Charene Herrera seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

BOARD LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM: Helen Wilson reported that the Wind River Visitors Council has been registered for the Board Leadership Symposium. The event is intended for the Executive Director and two members of the Executive Team, preferably including the President. Helen Gordon had previously expressed interest in attending.

Dave Furman moved that Helen Gordon, Krista Lobera and Helen Wilson attend the symposium. Bryce House seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

BOARD TRAINING WITH BOB HARRIS: Helen Wilson reported that the Board training with Bob Harris is scheduled and will be held on April 23, 2026.

AUDIT DISCUSSION: Helen Wilson provided an update on the Wind River Visitors Council audit, noting that it is nearing completion. As part of the process, she was asked whether she was aware of any noncompliance with laws or regulations related to the organization's activities. Helen requested a vote to confirm the response explaining that the Council is in the process of revising its Joint Powers Agreement to ensure full compliance with state statute. The revision will align the Council's budget procedures with the Uniform Municipal Fiscal Procedures Act, as required by Wyoming law.

Helen Gordon moved to approve the response to be provided to the auditors. Charene Herrera seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

LEGAL MATTERS: Dave Furman reported that the Wind River Visitors Council's attorneys met with attorneys representing the governing bodies to discuss proposed amendments to the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA). He noted that no substantive objections were raised, although the attorney for the Town of Dubois expressed some concerns. A second meeting with the attorneys is scheduled for October 1.

Dave addressed a perception that the Wind River Visitors Council is in favor of litigation and clarified that no one—including the WRVC or its attorneys—supports pursuing legal action. He distributed copies of the proposed JPA prepared by the WRVC's attorneys and explained that efforts to update the agreement have been ongoing for several years.

During their review of the existing JPA, the attorneys identified inconsistencies between the budgeting procedures described in the agreement and those required by statute. Wyoming law mandates that the WRVC follow the Uniform Municipal Fiscal Procedures Act, while the current JPA also references the Special District Act. The proposed revisions remove references to the Special District Act to ensure consistency with state law.

Dave emphasized that the WRVC is a cooperative board working with member municipalities to promote tourism and has no intention of litigation against its member entities. Bryce House reported that he and Hal Herron recently met with Mayor Hancock and encouraged Board Members to meet with their respective municipalities to maintain open communication. He added that the meeting helped address several misconceptions and improved mutual understanding.

Dave also reported receiving a letter from the Mayor of Dubois requesting his removal from the WRVC Board due to a perceived conflict of interest regarding management of Tourism Asset Development (TAD) funds. Dave stated that he has not managed TAD funds and believes the allegations are vague. He referenced the First Amendment to the JPA, which requires Board Members to take an oath of office similar to that of elected officials and provides that members may be removed only for cause by the governing bodies of the participating entities through agreed-upon procedures. He noted that the Dubois Mayor does not have independent authority to remove him from the Board.

The Dubois Town Council considered the Mayor's request and deferred action pending consultation with its attorney; the matter is expected to be on the October 8 agenda. Dave noted that he will be unable to attend the October 8 meeting for medical reasons and asked the WRVC Board to consider having its attorneys prepare a memorandum

defining “for cause” and/or attend the meeting.

The Board requested time to consider potential costs. Helen Wilson suggested scheduling a special meeting on Friday, October 3 to vote on whether to have the WRVC attorneys prepare a memorandum defining “for cause” and to determine whether they should attend the October 8 Dubois Town Council meeting to present on the matter.

RESIDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY PRESENTATION: Dr. Dan McCoy from the University of Wyoming presented the results of the Resident Sentiment Survey.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Helen Wilson introduced Jay Merrit as the incoming Board Member representing the Town of Shoshoni.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Board, Helen Gordon moved to adjourn the meeting. Charene Herrera seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.