



**Tourism Board of Director's Meeting  
Wednesday, September 23, 2009  
Riverton Holiday Inn  
Taggart Three  
1:00 p.m.**

**Board Members Present:** Clay Miller, Dave Hanks, Matt Driskill, Gene Bryan, Kari Cooper, Bruce Grosbety, Jim McCaleb, Dave Rader and Renee Penton Jones

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Tourism Staff Members Present:** Diane Shoher, Alan Dubberley, Vicki Morris, Curtis Lund, Angi Harper, Kristin Phipps and Lori Hogan

**Guests Present:** Bill Schumacher, Barnhart, Inc.; Paula McCormick, Wind River Visitor's Council

- I. Chairman, Clay Miller, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.
- II. The meeting minutes from August 19, 2009 were presented for approval. Motion was made by Jim McCaleb to accept the minutes as presented, Bruce Grosbety seconded; the motion passed unanimously.
- III. Contracts:
  - A. Action Required:
    - i. Rocky Mountain International – Amendment One ~ the purpose of this amendment is to add \$16,126.50 to the existing contract for an eight day Scandinavian Sales Mission to Norway and Sweden can be conducted, January 27 through February 3, 2010. The contract total will increase from \$265,448.92 to \$281,575.42 as a result of this amendment and shall expire June 30, 2010. Motion was made by Gene Bryan to accept this contract amendment as presented, Kari Cooper seconded; the motion passed unanimously.
  - B. Information Only:
    - i. Clayton Savage ~ the purpose of this contract is to endorse Clayton Savage, a bull rider from Casper, through the 2009 PRCA Patch Program. Clayton shall represent Wyoming during the National Finals Rodeo (NFR) in Las Vegas, Nevada this December. The total payment under this Contract shall not exceed \$10,000 and is set to expire December 31, 2009.

- IV. Signage Grant Funds ~ Tourism received 22 applications for 2010 signage, and the review committee approved a total of ten projects totaling of \$100,165. Kari Cooper reported the Mayor of Jackson, Mark Barron, extended his appreciation of this program! Motion was made by Kari Cooper to accept the signage projects as presented, Matt Driskill seconded; the motion passed with Dave Hanks abstaining from voting.
- V. Director's Report ~ Diane Shober:
- A. Cowboy Marketing Program ~ Diane addressed the Board and reported that as a result of the Governor's directed 10% budget cut the Cowboy Marketing Program is scheduled to be eliminated in 2010. However, members of the Board expressed they feel rodeo is an essential part of Wyoming's heritage and Cowboy interviews are a huge bonus in promoting the state. Gene Bryan asked if it would be feasible to restructure the overall program in an effort to retain this program. Diane is scheduled to attend an Agency Head meeting on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and will have better insight of budget projections. Diane also stated that Tourism still monetarily supports the College National Finals Rodeo, Xtreme Bulls and the National High School Finals Rodeo. The overall direction of the Board is for staff to present options for the program at some level as long as it doesn't impact overall advertising efforts. Diane will report to the Board in January regarding the status of the budget and the program.
- B. FY11-FY12 Biennium Budget Review ~ Diane updated the Board regarding the standard and exceptions budget that was presented for review and approval during the August 2009 meeting. Since then, a better idea of the dollar figures for the exceptions request is known. Costs for the SE Wyoming Welcome Center have dropped substantially since 2005, when the project began. The exception request submitted to the Budget Office on September 4, 2009 was \$1.7 million less than the amount approved by the Board in August 2009. Two weeks ago, Diane and Alan were members of the selection committee and heard verbal presentations from proposers for the Architectural and Engineering (A&E) Design firm for the welcome center. Anderson Mason Dale was the successful proposer and has been awarded the contract. Diane will keep the Board apprised of progress, particularly as it relates to budget.
- C. 2010 Campaign Update:
- i. Winter 2009-2010 ~ Winter advertising is set to begin in late October and run through late March 2010. The projected 2009-2010 winter budget is \$523,049, which will include winter advertisements on baggage claim carousels at Chicago O'Hare Airport. Due to a high Return on Investment (ROI) another Direct Mail campaign is scheduled for the winter season by sending 40,000 post cards to registered snowmobile permit holders from last year.
- ii. Spring 2010 ~ spring advertising is scheduled to begin in March 2010 with an effort of targeting the "Family Vacationer," "Free Birds" and "Active Adventures." The campaign will start later and extend further into the travel season. Using the foundation formulation for Spring Summer 2009, the plan will have only minor modifications.

- D. Travel Leadership Summit Update ~ Diane reported that the recent summit in Washington, DC was a successful trip. Meetings with Wyoming's elected officials proved positive, as all are supporters of the travel industry and Travel and Promotion Act. Thank you to all participants!
  - E. Governor's Conference Agenda/Board Meeting ~ Diane reported the 2010 conference will be held at Cheyenne's Little America February 21-23. A Monday night legislative reception is planned and a Big WYO lunch will conclude the conference on Tuesday. The Board will meet on Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. Arrangements are pending and the Board will be kept apprised.
  - F. Advertising Agency RFP ~ The Advertising Agency RFP was emailed/mailed to 50 companies. The RFP closes on October 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 p.m. at which time all proposals will be picked up and sent to the selection committee. Scores are due to Vicki Morris on October 19<sup>th</sup> and a conference call will be held at 10:00 a.m. October 20<sup>th</sup> to select the finalists for oral presentations. Oral presentations are scheduled November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at Cheyenne's Little America Hotel. Details to follow.
  - G. Research RFP ~ This RFP is scheduled to close on October 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. A conference call will be held November 9<sup>th</sup> with members of the selection committee to select the successful company or companies. Proposers were given the option of bidding on a single portion or the entire RFP, so it is possible to have more than one successful company. No oral presentations are planned for this RFP.
- VI. Deputy Director's Report:
- A. Fulfillment Update ~ Alan Dubberley has been working to contract with another agency to assume current fulfillment duties. Alan is working on different angles for international fulfillment as inserting fees are high and postage is increasing approximately 7%. The Board will be kept apprised once an agreement is reached.
  - B. Wifi ~ Zoom LBS was the successful proposer for the Wifi RFP. Zoom is scheduled to complete the Wifi installation at the Sheridan and Cheyenne Welcome Centers next week. Alan is pleased with the quality of service from Zoom and will keep the Board apprised of this project.
- VII. NEPA ~ Gene Bryan reported that he sent a response regarding the Winter Use issue on behalf of Tourism. Tourism's concern is the uncertainty of travelers and that they will not make advanced plans awaiting a ruling, leading to park concessionaires not hiring enough staff for the winter season. Gene also reported that a Montana judge has ruled that the grizzly bear should be relisted on the endangered species list, and that water levels in Boysen, Buffalo and Big Horn Canyon are still high.
- VIII. Public Comments ~ there were no public comments.
- IX. Old Business ~ Matt Driskill reported the Tourism Public Information Office sent a California journalist to Devils Tower and the journalists loved the area and was amazed as to how much there was to do!
- X. New Business ~ Clay requested a synopsis from each Board member as to area business:

- Bruce Grosbety reported Teton Village had a good summer with “value” being the key to their success as “third and fourth night free” values were offered. Visitors did cut back on river rafting and restaurant purchases, while the hotel spas suffered the most.
- Renee Penton Jones reported Casper was at a low 50.8% occupancy rate! There are 1,700 hotel rooms in Casper and 900 are new. However, October is looking better and 2010 group business is looking strong.
- Dave Rader reported that Carbon County did not have a strong summer as the lodging tax was off as much as 20%. June was slow while July and August proved better, and campground attendance was strong.
- Dave Hanks reported there are five new hotels in the Rock Springs area. Flaming Gorge reported a record camping year filling campgrounds that haven’t been filled in recent years. Rock Springs restaurants, bars and convenience stores took a big hit. Younger families are moving in taking the average age from 49 to 23.
- Clay Miller reported that June was a weak month for Paradise Guest Ranch. The *Wall Street Journal* published an article advising visitors to book at the last minute for the best deal, which may have ultimately hurt the overall business. Clay reported that some ranches were down as much as 50%; however, ranches that proactively marketed were only down between 10% and 20%. The Chicago and Minneapolis markets were strong at Paradise, while UK visitation was down as much as 30% possibly due to the exchange rate.
- Jim McCaleb reported May and June were the most dismal months in 30+ years as Yellowstone National Park was behind in advanced reservations until the second week of June. Although, September is looking to improve and Jim believes the park’s end season will save the beginning.
- Kari Cooper reported that airline traffic was down in May, June and July, but August proved higher than any other month, and this September is looking better than last September. Dude ranches and float companies are reporting down as much as 30% as many visitors are cutting back on the extras. Sales tax for the town of Jackson is down 24%.
- Matt Driskill reported this was a great year for the RV industry in the Devils Tower area with his KOA numbers up over last year.
- Paula McCormick, Wind River Visitor’s Council reported the area is within \$400 of last year. Dude ranches reported soft but last weekend people couldn’t find a room in the area.

XI. Executive Session ~ there was no need for an Executive Session this meeting.

XII. Adjourn ~ Renee Penton Jones moved and Matt Driskill seconded that the meeting adjourn at 4:13 p.m.