

# Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council

## Casper Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

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PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017 ~ 11:30 AM  
CASPER, WYOMING

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Reeda George called the public meeting of the Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council to order Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at 11:49 a.m. at the Casper/Natrona County International Airport. Roll call determined the presence of a quorum.

II. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Kevin Hawley, City of Casper  
Renee Penton-Jones, Natrona County  
Anna Rosburg, Natrona County  
Reeda George, Town of Bar Nunn  
Jim Ruble, Town of Evansville  
Erik Aune, Town of Mills

Absent: Shawn Johnson, City of Casper (*Excused*)  
Cindy Aars, Town of Edgerton (*Excused*)  
Debbie Peterson, Town of Midwest

Also Present: Brook Kreder, CEO  
Kathy Henion, COO  
Shawn Houck, Adbay.com  
Jennifer Sorenson, Atlantic Aviation  
Tim Monroe, Wyoming Business Report

III. Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mr. Ruble and carried without dissent to approve the March 28, 2017 minutes as presented.

IV. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Ruble reviewed financial reports and vouchers ending March 31, 2017. Moved by Mr. Hawley, seconded by Mrs. Penton-Jones and carried without dissent to accept financial reports ending March 31, 2017 and CACVB vouchers 03-6988 to and including 03-7015 totaling \$143,337.54 and CSA vouchers 03-1099 to and including 03-1105 totaling \$82,978.59 for total vouchers of \$226,316.13. (Exhibit 1)

V. **OLD BUSINESS**

**MARKETING UPDATE:** Shawn Houck with Adbay.com reviewed the April 2017 tourism report. (Exhibit 2)

**BUDGET UPDATE:** Ms. Kreder reviewed lodging tax receipts to date and projected collections. (Exhibit 3)

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**FREQUENCY OF COUNCIL MEETINGS/BYLAWS:** Ms. Kreder recommended Council meetings be held a minimum of six (6) times per year and reported members of the Executive Committee have indicated they would like to meet monthly. The bylaws state; "The Council shall meet not less than ten (10) times per calendar year and shall generally meet monthly." Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mrs. Rosburg and carried without dissent to revise the bylaws to state the Council shall meet not less than six (6) times per calendar year.

**NATIONAL TOURISM WEEK:** Ms. Kreder reported National Travel and Tourism Week is May 7-13, 2017. The Casper Area Convention & Visitors Bureau in conjunction with the Casper Area Chamber of Commerce will host a Stars of Tourism Breakfast Wednesday morning May 10 from 7:30 to 9:00 at the Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center. Presentations will include the economic impact of tourism, eclipse, Stars of Tourism awards and tourism education. Mrs. George will try to get a copy of a Phoenix, Arizona television station news clip and documentary reporting Casper as one of the most organized locations on the center line of the eclipse. (Exhibit 4)

**VII. COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS:**

*Staff Reports:* Ms. Kreder reported more than 200 people participated in the Winter Cowboy State Games. The Council asked how well the games are producing compared to expense. Tournaments were previously held for a two-week period two times per year, winter and summer. The tournaments are currently being scheduled throughout the year. The National Congress of State Games requires a minimum of ten tournaments per year. Ms. Kreder reviewed the CACVB "Snapshot". There were no additional questions regarding staff reports. (Exhibits 5, 6, 7 & 8)

*Community Liaison Reports:* There were none.

**VIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS:** In response to Mr. Hawley, Ms. Kreder reported the Garden Creek Volleyball Club has not contacted her after she informed them the grant funds would be awarded if the date of the 2017 tournament was changed. Ms. Kreder will reach out to them regarding the 2018 tournament.

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were none.

**X. UPCOMING MEETING DATE:** The next Council meeting is Tuesday, May 23, 2017 and will convene at 11:30 a.m.

The Public Meeting recessed at 12:29 p.m.

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mrs. Rosburg and carried without dissent to go into executive session at 12:30 p.m. to discuss confidential and contractual issues. Moved by Mr. Ruble, seconded by Mrs. Penton-Jones and carried without dissent to adjourn the executive session at 1:20 p.m

The Public Meeting reconvened at 1:33 p.m.

- XII. Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mrs. Rosburg and carried without dissent to approve minutes of the March 1, 2017 executive session as distributed.

XIII. **STRATEGIC PLANNING:**

Marketing update: Mr. Houck with Adbay.com presented a snapshot of the 2016/2017 year in marketing. Adbay has 15 staff people. Adbay won three SIA awards last year for work on CACVB projects: the Wild at Heart leisure print campaign, FishCasper tv spot and BikeCasper website. The *Weekends for the Wild at Heart* summer campaign was targeted to a market within driving distance and received 13 million impressions, which was 18% of all impressions. The *Route to Yellowstone* campaign received over three million impressions with viewers spending an average of five minutes per page. The 2016 FishCasper campaign ran from March 20 to May 30. FishCasper research data needs to be updated as views have peaked/plateaued. The target audience is men, aged 49+, living along the front range of Colorado. New ventures undertaken include: branding, articles, maps, photos, visitor guide and the new VisitCasper.com website. The CACVB participates in: official *Wyoming Travel Journal*, *Yellowstone Journal*, spring/fall inserts, Rocky Mountain International, Cowboy State Games, Eclipse Casper, Yellowstone landing page, Wyoming Office of Tourism seasonal refresh. John keeps Adbay.com busy with Casper Sports Alliance (CSA) projects; i.e., Cowboy State Games brand, multiple events on Facebook and digital campaigns. Adbay has provided the Certified Tourism Ambassador program support via the logo, e-newsletter and video. They have been busy with digital and seven photo shoots. The Adbay.com team is ready to go with Google mapping. Ms. Kreder thanked Mr. Houck for the update.

Ms. Kreder reviewed potential and perceived strengths and weaknesses regarding Natrona County visitors. Strengths include marketable resources, sporting events, strong community involvement. Weaknesses: meetings/conventions, which is improving. Council would like to develop short- and long-term plans to retain events/meetings/conventions/leisure travel if different venues/facilities are necessary and develop convention center potential. Better transportation and Internet services are needed.

To overcome less than favorable first impressions into the Casper area from the Interstate and west entrance, it was recommended a task force be organized to address signage, visitation, sweeping, picking up litter, planting trees. Persistence was stressed as was the possibility of utilizing current zoning regulations and contacting WYDOT. To change people's perception of the wind, it was suggested a positive connection with the wind be created; i.e., generators, etc.

Marketing areas/segments to focus on include fishing, hunting and sports. Working with the Wyoming Game & Fish to profile non-resident license buyers was suggested. Concern was expressed as Montana and Idaho license sales are far greater than Wyoming, due in part to the cumbersome purchase process for non-residents. Spring fishing is a strain on resources. Excess inventory of hunting licenses is non-existent; however, marketing efforts to increase length of stay, increase spending and convert to guided hunts would be beneficial.

There was discussion of outdoor recreation facility deficits. To attract people to designated trails, it is necessary to first build a culture and awareness of the trails.

Marketing Natrona County as a reservoir community would be beneficial. It was reported motorized trails/areas has a much larger industry market.

A marketing program based on return on investment (ROI) and measurable information was recommended.

Research options include: ADARA, which places a pixel on ads and tracks if someone shows up/books in area. Challenge – represents 60% of hotels and most of airline traffic. Arrivalist technology measures the way network-enabled devices change locations after being exposed to a sequence of media exposers (tracks devices), which does not correlate to the number of visitors. Results come from 10% of market.

Aligning the budget with a strategy and budget concerns should be addressed. Areas of concern include: overall condition of community is not conducive to welcoming visitors, board leadership/participation (Chair George will contact Council members individually), reducing the number of council meetings, utilizing an executive committee and follow-up.

It was suggested Council members contact County Commissioners and City Councils regarding the lack of facilities.

Council members stressed the necessity of not spending funds on events attended/participated in by a minimal number of visitors; i.e., 20 people. Marketing efforts need to wait until infrastructure is built or negative credibility will be created. It was suggested the Council focus on the bigger goal; think about different ways to market, not piece by piece, but overall events. Strong community support of an event is needed before marketing outside. It is necessary to plan an event from start to finish and grow the event locally. This will be the last year current race organizers plan the Casper Marathon.

An opportunity to encourage people coming to the Casper area to view the eclipse to return as repeat visitors should be utilized through planning and working to ensure visitors have a positive experience.

Community leaders able to listen to all situations and various views/opinions and create solutions should be encouraged to run/apply for available positions within the city/town councils and the Casper City Manager position. The Casper City Council is deciding whether a search company or an in-house search will be utilized to fill the vacant city manager position.

Council members would pursue additional events and tournaments including regional events; i.e., darts, hunting, fishing as the Casper area is a great central location within the state. Resources should be utilized to maximize ROI. Research is needed to determine which current events are creating a positive ROI and provide vocal versus monetary support; i.e., fat biking.

Key performance indicators (KPI) and the evaluation process should be reevaluated to optimize staff and streamline operations. It was recommended a subcommittee receive this information.

Ms. Kreder is looking for the Council to become more focused on ROI as it is important to understand where funds go and their effect.

Board objectives include creation of a Legislative Committee to develop legislative strategy, TBid funding, creation of a zoning coalition and addressing the necessity of a conference center. In-house objectives are tourism education, DMAP certification, driving ROI relevance and fiscal stewardship. Campaigns to expand are sports and being the business hub of Wyoming.

There was discussion of billboard usage. Three billboards are up, with two of those at the east gateway into Casper. Welcome Center signage is located near the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center on Poplar Street.

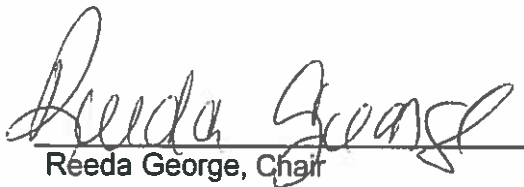
Ms. Kreder will create a CACVB leadership contingency plan with assistance from the incoming Chair and the understanding it is not a formal document. Council to review the contingency plan each year.

Several legislative bills regarding the lodging tax were introduced during the legislative session this year and lodging tax will be addressed by the Legislature again. The Council's stance on local option tax will be reviewed. Council engagement is critical. Mrs. Penton-Jones stated the Council has established goals, which are being pursued. Chair George stated the Council needs to have one voice/stance on legislative issues presented to legislative entities. Mr. Hawley is looking forward to addressing legislative issues, being proactive and a more active executive committee.

The current Casper Sports Alliance Board of Directors is comprised of CACVB staff. Ms. Kreder reported CSA is recruiting board members and would like a Natrona County Travel and Tourism Council member to sit on the CSA Board as well. Mrs. Rosburg was appointed to the CSA Board.

Reeda George and Brook Kreder were appointed to the Nominating Committee.

XIV. **ADJOURNMENT:** The public meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

  
Reeda George, Chair

  
Kevin Hawley, Secretary