

Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council

Casper Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

**ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2017-11:30 AM
CASPER, WYOMING**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Erik Aune called the annual meeting of the Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council to order Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at 11:45 a.m. at the Casper Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. Roll was called which determined the presence of a quorum.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Kevin Hawley, City of Casper
Cindy Aars, Town of Edgerton
Jim Ruble, Town of Evansville
Debbie Peterson, Town of Midwest
Erik Aune, Town of Mills

Absent: Shawn Johnson, City of Casper (*Excused*)
Renee Penton-Jones, Natrona County
Vacant, Natrona County
Vacant, Town of Bar Nunn

Also Present: Brook Kreder, CEO
Kathy Henion, COO
Shawn Houck, Adbay.com
Brad Murphy, Casper Events Center
Tim Monroe, Wyoming Business Report
Anna Wilcox*, Wyoming Eclipse Festival

CONSENT AGENDA: Moved by Mr. Hawley. seconded by Mr. Ruble and carried without dissent to approve the consent agenda as presented. (Exhibit 1)

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Nominating Committee Members are Brook Kreder and past Chairman Reeda George. Ms. Kreder presented the Committee's slate of officer candidates: Chair-Renee Penton-Jones, Vice Chair-Erik Aune, Secretary - Kevin Hawley and Treasurer - Jim Ruble. (Exhibit 2)

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Mr. Aune asked Secretary Hawley to conduct the election for Chair and Vice Chair. Mr. Hawley offered the Nominating Committee's candidate for Chair Renee Penton-Jones and asked if there were further nominations for Chair; there were none. Mrs. Penton-Jones was unanimously elected Chair. Mr. Hawley offered the Nominating Committee's candidate for Vice Chair Erik Aune and asked if there were further nominations for Vice Chair; there were none. Erik Aune was unanimously elected Vice Chair. Vice Chair Aune thanked Mr. Hawley and offered the Nominating Committee's candidate for Secretary Kevin Hawley and asked if there were further nominations for Secretary; there were none. Kevin Hawley was unanimously elected Secretary. Vice Chair Aune offered the Nominating Committee's candidate for Treasurer Jim Ruble and asked if there were further nominations for Treasurer; there were none. Jim Ruble was unanimously elected Treasurer.

DEPOSITORY RESOLUTION: There was discussion of fund depositories. Moved by Mr. Hawley, seconded by Mrs. Aars and carried without dissent to approve Bank of the West, Hilltop National Bank and Wyoming Government Investment Fund as depositories of Natrona County Travel and Tourism Council funds. (Exhibit 3)

SIGNATURE RESOLUTION: Currently two signatures are required on checking accounts and authorized signatories are Council officers and the CACVB CEO. Moved by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Ruble and carried without dissent to require ~~two~~ signatures and to authorize current officers and the CEO as signatories on checking accounts. (Exhibit 4)

2017/2018 BUDGET: The Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council, a Joint Powers Board, was formed to provide for promotion of travel and tourism within Natrona County and to administer for that purpose, the expenditure and distribution of lodging tax revenues. The proposed budget is based on the best financial information currently available. The 2017/2018 proposed budget is based on anticipated funds available in the amount of \$1,387,584; projects new revenues of \$1,387,000 from four percent (4%) tax on overnight accommodations (lodging tax). The balance of revenue is \$584 from interest on funds. Expenditures totaling \$1,387,584 are focused on accomplishing the goal of generating more overnight stays. The Notice of Public Hearing and the proposed 2017/2018 budget were reviewed. Vice Chr. Aune asked if there were any public or Council comments; there were none. Moved by Mr. Hawley, seconded by Ms. Peterson and carried without dissent to approve the 2017/2018 budget as presented. (Exhibits 5 & 6)

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Ruble reviewed the financial reports ending May 31, 2017 with CACVB vouchers 05-7053 to and including 05-7094 totaling \$112,964.59 and CSA vouchers 05-1114 to and including 05-1125 totaling \$8517.70 for total vouchers of \$121,482.29. Treasurer Ruble also reviewed financial reports ending June 30, 2017 with CACVB vouchers 06-7095 to and including 06-7143 totaling \$130,114.57 and CSA vouchers 06-1126 to and including 06-1145 totaling \$30,672.03 for total vouchers \$160,786.60. Moved by Mr. Hawley, seconded by Mrs. Aars and carried without dissent to accept financial reports ending May 31, 2017 with CACVB vouchers 05-7053 to and including 05-7094 totaling \$112,964.59 and CSA vouchers 05-7053 to and including 05-7094 totaling \$8517.70 for total vouchers of \$121,482.29 and financial reports ending June 30, 2017 with CACVB vouchers 06-7095 to and including 06-7143 ~~thru~~ \$130,114.57 and CSA vouchers 06-1126 to and including 06-1145 totaling \$30,672.03 for total vouchers \$160,786.60. (Exhibits 7 & 8)

IV. OLD BUSINESS

WYOMING ECLIPSE FESTIVAL UPDATE: The Wyoming Eclipse Festival (WEF) begins in 30 days. Anna Wilcox, WEF Executive Director reported they are currently working to secure a downtown satellite parking area and credentials for National media covering the eclipse. Time, NBC, CBS, Fox, BBC, ITV (a London network) have been in contact with the WEF office. PBS and **IMAX will** be in Casper filming the eclipse. WEF staff is working with the City of Casper and Casper Police Department on a new parking plan and finalizing the bus contract. The National Weather Service Wyoming affiliate will be providing current weather updates throughout the festival. Volunteers, particularly groups or organizations, are needed to assist guests at Park & Ride

locations. Information packets and a CTA class will be made available to volunteers. Downtown businesses are getting updates with current information. The police and fire departments are working on 10-second safety message videos. Second Street will be the only street closure. There continues to be discussion of making the square around David Street Station a no-traffic area. A press release will go out the end of this week. No anticipated cell phone issues are being reported at A-Team meetings. All emergency response agencies will be using a separate system and all 911 calls are prioritized.

MARKETING UPDATE: Mr. Houck reviewed June 2017 tourism report and projects Adbay.com has been working on. Mr. Houck reported website unique views were down 20% and pageviews were down 12.5%, which he attributed to no marketing campaigns in place. *Casper Compass* subscribers increased .2% and the open rate increased .5%. Top impressions were created by the NIC Fest with 9160 video views and the CNFR with 25,932 impressions. Of the 30,000 non-resident fishing licenses sold in Natrona County, 10,000 were polled. The summary of fishing survey responses to date was reviewed. Mr. Houck reported the Colorado Front Range is still a strong market and the Salt Lake area is new and growing. Mr. Houck reported he believes a correlation between marketing efforts and tourism visits is indicated by consumer hotel page views. The 2016 summer campaign tracked intent to travel with questions: such as, "Plan to travel to Yellowstone?", etc. Mr. Hawley asked if demographic information is available on the website now. Mr. Houck reported this information is captured, available and used to plan marketing efforts. (Exhibit 9)

RESCIND 01/24/17 MOTION REGARDING 2016/2017 BUDGET: Meetings marketing was within the budgeted amount making the Council's January 24, 2017 motion reallocating budget funds from staff expense to meetings marketing unnecessary. Moved by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Hawley and carried without dissent to rescind the Council's January 24, 2017 motion regarding reallocation of budget funds from staff expense to meetings marketing.

CASPER MOUNTAIN BIATHLON CLUB GRANT FUNDS: The Casper Mountain Biathlon Club approved grant application listed event dates of Jan. 8 - April 4, 2017. The project report was received June 26, 2017 with event dates of Jan. 1 - May 9, 2017. When contacted, the different ending dates was accredited to the addition of the International Paralympic Spring Training Camp. This camp was attended by the South Korean Paralympic Team and a couple American athletes who stayed in Casper following the April event to continue training on Casper Mountain. The Council thoroughly discussed grant project report and deadline criteria. Moved by Mr. Hawley, seconded by Mr. Ruble and carried to not fulfill the previously approved grant to the Casper Mountain Biathlon Club because the report was not submitted by the deadline. Mr. Aune voted nay. Thorough discussion followed. Council asked Ms. Kreder to relay the context of their discussion and that this was a difficult decision. Mr. Aune asked to amend his vote to aye. (Exhibit 10)

CASPER SOCCER CLUB GRANT FUNDS: The Casper Soccer Club's approved grant application for the Spring Jam April 8-9, 2017 was received June 10, 2017. Council requested grant application forms be revised to include acknowledgement that grant project reports are due within 60-days following the event. Moved by Mr. Ruble, seconded by Ms. Peterson and carried without dissent to deny payment of the Casper Soccer Club's \$2000 grant for the Spring Jam held April 8-9, 2017 because the report was not submitted by the deadline. (Exhibit 11)

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Diane Shober, Executive Director of the Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) and Chris Brown President/CEO of Wyoming Association of Government Affairs Network (WAGAN) were in Casper to meet with industry leaders and legislators regarding options for removing WOT from the general fund. They are visiting communities around the state and their findings and recommendations will be presented to the Wyoming Legislative Joint Revenue Committee in September.

BOD CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORM: Conflict of Interest forms were distributed to Council members to update. (Exhibit 12)

UPDATES/REVISIONS TO THE **CACVB** EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK: Ms. Kreder reported the attorney recommended stronger employee at-will language be used in the Employee Guidebook. Moved by Mr. Ruble, seconded by Mr. Hawley and carried without dissent to approve revisions to the at-will policy in the Employee Guidebook as recommended in counsel memorandums. (Exhibit 13)

ECLIPSE FESTIVAL STAFFING **PLAN**: Ms. Kreder reported the CACVB office will be open and employees will be deployed throughout Casper at WEF information booths and Park and Ride locations.

AMOW STATE POOL TOURNAMENT: Ms. Kreder worked with Amusement and Music Operators of Wyoming (AMOW) and Casper Events Center staff to schedule the Wyoming State Pool Tournament at the Casper Events Center. The event is expected to generate 1500 room nights and approximately \$100,000 in food/beverage revenue. Mrs. Kreder reported the budget includes marketing and special project funds to retain events in Natrona County. Approved funds would be submitted directly to the venue. Moved by Mr. Hawley, seconded by Ms. Peterson and carried without dissent to approve allocation of special project funds not to exceed \$7500 to assist with Casper Events Center expenses for the 2018 AMOW State Pool Tournament.

VI. **COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS**

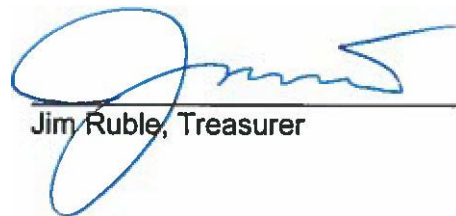
Staff Reports: Ms. Kreder reported lodging tax remitted for the past fiscal year was \$150,000 to \$170,000 lower than it should have been based on market occupancy and ADR. June 2017 was low due to two facilities making late payments. Ms. Kreder received notification the City of Casper approved the CACVB request for Visitor Center funding. There are two vacant Council member seats. The Town of Bar Nunn is open to interviewing candidates provided by the Natrona County Travel and Tourism Council. Ms. Kreder will be making presentations to their Town Council two times per year. The Natrona County Commissioners will be placing a public ad and have committed to having the position filled by late August or September. Mr. Aune volunteered to participate in Council brainstorming sessions for nominations. Ms. Kreder reported occupancy, average daily rate (ADR) and lodging revenue information in the attachment to her report are obtained from the Smith Travel Accommodations Report (STAR) Report. There were no additional questions regarding staff reports. (Exhibits 14, 15, 16 & 17)

Community Liaison Reports: Mr. Ruble reported the Casper Area Economic Development Association (CAEDA) recently confirmed five site selectors will be in Casper September 6-8, 2017 for a familiarization (FAM) tour of the Casper area. Mr. Ruble will keep the Council updated. Mr. Hawley reported Phase I of David Street Station is on track for completion August 15. Governor Mead will speak at the dedication ceremony August 16, the facility will be open to the public August 17 with eclipse festivities planned August 18-21. The contract for Phase II has been executed and contracted with \$.5 million removed from the scope of work until additional funding is raised. A completion date of May 2018 is anticipated. Amy Crawford has been hired as an event coordinator for David Street Station. She is working on upcoming events and scheduling a well-known music artist to perform at a big event the end of September.

- VIII. **COUNCIL COMMENTS** - There were none.
- IX. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - Mr. Houck reported necessary permits for Frontier Brewing Company have been obtained, a master brewer has been hired and they will be open for the eclipse. Mr. Monroe reported the Wyoming Eclipse Festival will be featured in Wyoming Business Report's *Annual Event Planning Guide*.
- X. Upcoming **Meeting** Date: The next Council meeting was scheduled Tuesday, September 26, 2017. The meeting will convene at 11:30 a.m. at the Casper Area Convention and Visitors Bureau office.
- XI. **ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Mr. Ruble, seconded by Mrs. Aars and carried without dissent that there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 1:24 p.m.



Erik Aune, Vice Chairman



Jim Ruble, Treasurer

