



Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Sunday, January 29, 2023
Little America, Cheyenne, WY

Tourism Board Members Present: Mike Keller (Chairman), Tony O'Brien (Vice Chairman), Quintin Blair, John Johnson, Ken Barkey, Charisse Haws, and Mark Tesoro. Not in attendance: Budd Betts; attendance via Zoom: Shawn Parker.

Staff Members Present: Director Diane Shober, Michell Howard, Lexi Mitchell, Haley Mach, Becky Oswald, Blake Ward, Keith Turbitt, Haley Freeman, Sara Borgerding, James Scoon, Sarah Reed, Jim Wollenburg, Amy Larsen, Lisa Osvold, Angelina Cisneros, Dionne Roccaforte, and Kristy Simola.

Guests Present: Darci Bandi, Abby Rennie, Victoria Simmons, BVK; Sara Winters, Lesley Rowball, Madden; Mitch Knoth, Miles; Helen Wilson, Wind River Visitors Council; Helen Gordon, Wind River Visitor's Council Board; Taylor Phillips, Wildlife Fund Board.

- I. Chairman, Mike Keller, called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.
- II. The meeting minutes from October 19, 2022 were presented for approval. Quintin Blair motioned to approve the minutes; John Johnson seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Financials**
 - A. **Year to Date Budget Summary** - Senior Accounting Manager, Dionne Roccaforte, presented the year to date financials as of December 31, 2022. Tony O'Brien motioned to approve the financials as presented; Quintin Blair seconded; motion passed unanimously.
 - B. **Statewide Lodging Tax Collections** – Senior Accounting Manager, Dionne Roccaforte, presented the Statewide Lodging Tax Collections report as of December 31, 2022. John Johnson motioned to approve; Ken Barkey seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Contracts**
 - A. **For Approval**
 - i. **Birdsall, Voss and Associates, Inc a.k.a BVK – Amendment One** – The purpose of this Amendment is: 1) add an additional \$2,705,435. From the Economic Development Administration (EDA) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant program; Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation State Block Grant and 2) extend the expiration date to September 30, 2025, to allow BVK to complete the deliverables. This is a budgeted item in Brand Studio. Tony O'Brien motioned to approve; Mark Tesoro seconded; Shawn Parker opposed; motion passed unanimously.
 - ii. **Miles Partnership LLP – 2023 Official Travel Guide (OTG) – Amendment One** – The purpose of this Amendment is to add an additional \$20,000 to the 2023 Wyoming Official Travel Guide (OTG) contract for increased printing and paper costs. This is a budgeted item in Brand Studio. Quintin Blair motioned to approve; Shawn Parker seconded; motion passed unanimously.
 - iii. **Miles Partnership LLP – 2024 Official Travel Guide (OTG) / Ad Sales** - The purpose of this contract is to create, produce, and distribute the 2024 OTG, produce the digital version of the Travel Guide to be made available on travelwyoming.com, and present OTG supported marketing plans that create new content for evaluation in biannual independent research. It will also lay out the foundation to support WOT's owned channel advertising opportunities to maximize partner exposure and referrals while generating revenue share to offset OTG production costs. This is a budgeted item in Brand Studio. John Johnson motioned to approve; Ken Barkey seconded; motion passed unanimously.



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- iv. **Team Wyoming** - Endorsement of seven (7) Team Wyoming professional rodeo cowboys through the 2023 Professional Rodeo Association (PRCA) patch Program. Total of seven (7) contracts shall not exceed \$85,500: \$17,600 more than last year. This is a budgeted item in Global Partnerships. Tony O'Brien motioned to approve; Quintin Blair seconded; motion passed unanimously.

V. Directors Reports

A. Business Operations –

- i. Lisa Osvold, Director of Strategy and Business Operations, informed the board that she completed the SWOT analysis for each WOT department and the results were discussed at the Leadership Retreat. This helped the leadership team gain a better understanding of WOT's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and identify areas for improvement. She expanded on the fact that the leadership team will be reading the Leadership Challenge over the next few months and incorporating the five core practices into their day to day.
- ii. During the 2022 Budget Session WOT was appropriated \$1.5M out of the Wyoming tourism and reserve projects account to support renovations and enhancements at Wyoming welcome centers and the Quebec 01 state historic site. The intent of this appropriation is not only to increase visitation and improve the visitor experience to the NE and SE Welcome Centers and the Quebec 01 historic site, but also to inspire visitors to travel to other parts of Wyoming, therefore, Bear River Visitor Center and the Sheridan Visitor Center will be included in the endeavor. WOT will focus on adding signage and updating interpretive displays.
- iii. The Research Request for Proposal (RFP) was released and provided the following timeline for the project. She announced that Quintin Blair has agreed to serve on the review committee. The full committee is still being finalized.

RFP Release Date	January 25, 2023
Closing Date for Questions	February 10, 2023 2:00 P.M.
Response to Questions Returned	February 17, 2023 2:00 P.M.
RFP Submission Due Date	February 28, 2023 2:00 P.M.
Tentative Award Date	March 2023
Tentative Work Begins Date	March 2023

B. Brand Studio –

- i. Michell Howard, Director of Brand Strategy, announced Keith Turbitt as WOT's new Creative Assets Manager and Hailey Mach as the new Public Relations Manager. She explained that Piper Cunningham, in her new role as Communications Senior Manager, is working on WOT's content strategy by identifying gaps in written content, video and photograph needs to ensure there is supporting content for WOT's national campaign efforts and to supplement WOT's owned media channels. The team will begin the process to create the 2024 Official Traveler Guide in the next month or so.
- ii. Sarah Kissko Hersh and Katie Briest with Percepture presented highlights on recent public relations accomplishments and upcoming initiatives.
- iii. Becky Oswald, Brand Integration Senior Manager, introduced Darci Bandi, BVK. Darci updated the board on WOT's winter campaign which began in October 2022 and features an adaptation of the Modern Explorer summer 2022 campaign. Ad effectiveness results for the 2022 campaign indicated visitors who were exposed to the campaign stayed longer and spent more money. Summer 2023's iteration features four new "modern explorers" from various areas around Wyoming. Next, Darci introduced creative examples of WOT's new Hospitality Campaign which brings awareness to hospitality careers and recreation



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opportunities, she also highlighted partnerships with Travel Zoo, two social media influencers and Ford's Bronco Wild Fund. Tony O'Brien proposed seeking opportunities for WOT to partner with local athletes such as Brandon Nimmo and Logan Wilson.

C. Global Partnerships –

- i. James Scoon, Director of Global Partnerships, announced the Destination Development program has been operational for one month and has awarded \$1.7M to Wyoming partners thus far. The WOT program works through the Wyoming Lodging Tax boards to offer financial support toward partners' existing programs that will strengthen their strategic planning. He also informed the board that as of January 1, 2023, WOT has been involved in conversations with the Department of Revenue and International Inbound Travel Association (IITA) on interpreting the dialogue on how tax is collected from International Online Travel Agencies (OTA) and International Receptive Tour Operators.
- ii. Jim Wollenburg, Strategic Partnerships Senior Manager spoke about two upcoming trade shows/missions he is attending. The first is in Mexico City through Brand USA. Sheridan Travel and Tourism will also attend. The second will be in Toronto and Calgary, Canada. Sheridan Travel and Tourism and Cody/Yellowstone Country will attend that show as well. The team will meet with tour operators and travel professionals to educate them on Wyoming travel and adventure opportunities.
- iii. Amy Larsen, Industry Relations Manager, highlighted two familiarization tours (FAMS) she is promoting as part of domestic marketing efforts. The first is Capturing Your Pioneering Spirit which follows the Oregon Trail through Casper, Wyoming and Journey Through Time which highlights the Big Horn Basin. WOT will have a booth at the upcoming motor coach tour shows ABA, NTA, and TAP and will include a pre and/or post fam for the latter two shows. The partnerships team also plans to do a winter FAM in 2023.

VI. Executive Director's Reports

Diane Shoher, Executive Director, reviewed the economic impact preliminary highlights from the 2022 Year in Review report which reflect a very stable growth economy for Wyoming. Executive Director Shoher continued to update the board on initiatives being reviewed in the Legislature's supplemental budget requests.

- A. Fiscal Year 23/24 Biennium Budget –** Executive Director Shoher mentioned the Joint Appropriations Committee approval of a \$600,000 increase to the MOU between WOT and the Wyoming Department of Transportation for the operation and maintenance of the Southeast and Northeast Wyoming Welcome Centers. A second MOU was approved between WOT and the Outdoor Recreation Office in the State Parks Division for \$400,000 for staffing and operations of that office.

Tourism Reserve and Project Account - \$1.5M will go to the Northeast and Southeast Welcome Centers and the Quebec State Historic Site for signage and interpretive updates. WOT plans to do a Request For Proposal (RFP) in the Spring to address this work. Another component in the Tourism Reserve and Project account is \$250,000 that will go to the University of Wyoming's WORTH (Wyoming Outdoor Recreation, Tourism and Hospitality) program providing a dollar to dollar match of funds raised. Seventy five percent of the funds collected will go directly to students in the form of either internships or scholarships. Twenty five percent will go into programmatic and administrative work.

- B. Legislative Session Update –** Diane Shoher, Executive Director and Mark Tesoro, board member provided an overview of the following bills currently up for legislation:
- i. HB74 – Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Establishes authority and proposes that the source of funding be from WOT's special project fund within the Wyoming Lodging Tax collections.
 - ii. HB92 – Wyoming Film Production Rebate. Creates a rebate program of up to 30% on Wyoming expenditures.
 - iii. HB166 – Lodging Sales Tax Exemption. Providing a sales tax exemption for lodging services provided by a licensed guide or outfitter; and providing for an effective date.



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- iv. SF169 – State Shooting Complex Task Force. Creating the state shooting complex development and oversight task force; providing duties of the task force; requiring reports; creating the state shooting complex account; providing appropriations; and providing for an effective date.
- v. HB218 - Jackson Hole Rodeo and Fairgrounds state historic site. Designating the Teton county fairgrounds as the Rylee McCollum Teton county fairgrounds state historic site; specifying restrictions; and providing for an effective date.
- vi. HB45 – Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Operation. Specifying requirements for operating an off-road recreational vehicle near an interstate; and providing for an effective date.
- vii. Bill 42 - A rights of way into and out of communities on state highways
- viii. SF17 – Requires specified insurance for off-road recreational vehicles and other safety requirements.

C. **Board Budget Retreat** – Diane Shober, Executive Director proposed the annual board budget retreat take place at the end of April or the early part of May. The purpose of the retreat is to plan out the 25/26 biennium budget which has to be submitted to the Governor's Office by August 31, 2023. Brittany Campbell will follow up with some date options.

VII. New Business – Charisse Haws, the Tourism Board's newest member, introduced herself and shared that she is excited to be here and is looking forward to learning from her experience on the board.

VIII. Old Business –

- A. Chairman Mike Keller stated he would like the board to resume with industry outreach efforts where board members would attend their designated district's lodging tax board meetings. Updates from these meetings would be given during regularly scheduled board meetings.
- B. The board agreed to supply a letter of recommendation for the second term reappointment of current board members John Johnson, Budd Betts, and Quintin Blair and the new appointment of Charisse Haws to the Governor for his consideration and confirmation.

IX. Public Comments –

- A. Helen Wilson, Executive Director of the Wind River Visitor's Council thanked WOT for their work toward the Destination Development program.
- B. Nate Brown and Taylor Phillips, Wildlife fund board members, introduced themselves and talked about the Wildlife Fund's Conservation Funding Model initiative.

X. Executive Session – No executive session was held.

XI. Adjourn – Upon conclusion of the meeting John Johnson motioned; Tony O'Brien seconded to adjourn at 3:58pm. The motion passed unanimously.