

Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council

Visit Casper

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2022 CASPER, WYOMING

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Ruble called the public meeting of the Natrona County Travel and Tourism Council to order Tuesday, July 26, 2022, at 11:35 a.m. Roll call determined the presence of a quorum.

II. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Jim Ruble, Town of Evansville
Sabrina Kemper, City of Mills
Tiffany Gamble, Natrona County
Steve Freel, City of Casper
Brad Murphy, Town of Bar Nunn
Renee Penton-Jones, Natrona County (Zoom)
Ken Thoren, Town of Edgerton
Mike Cevasco, Town of Midwest *
Cole Montgomery, City of Casper *

Also Present: Darren Rudloff, Interim CEO (Zoom)
Roxy Skogen, Skogen & Cometto & Associates
Luke Gilliam, Business Development Manager
Amanda Sewell, Destinations Experience Coordinator
Angie Volzke, Creative Coordinator
Terri Weinhandl, Executive Assistant
Tia Troy, Lightning Bug Public Relations (Zoom)
Gena Jensen, National Historic Trails Interpretive Center
Tammi Chappell, Hampton Inn & Suites
Greg Hirst, Oil City News

*Joined the meeting in progress

III. Moved by Mrs. Gamble, seconded by Mr. Freel and carried without dissent to approve the consent agenda as presented. (Exhibit 1)

OLD BUSINESS

IV. **EXECUTIVE SEARCH UPDATE**

Two candidates were brought to Casper in June to meet with the Visit Casper team, the NCTTC board and community partners and stakeholders. After interviewing both candidates, reviewing staff and community input, and much discussion, the Executive Board decided to continue with the search for a new CEO. The Executive board will re-engage with Winner Partners in a couple of weeks with a follow-up meeting to begin another search for a replacement CEO.

The Executive Board has retained Darren Rudloff from Rudloff Solutions as interim CEO

V. **SELECTION/ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS**

Mr. Ruble explained that without the presence of a CEO, the normal nominating committee process will not be followed for the selection/election of board members for the FY 22/23 year. Each of the existing Executive Board members has agreed to remain in their respective positions for another year. The term is for one year from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

With the board's approval, a new process will be followed:

- The Chair will ask for nominations for the board positions.
- Nominations will be made and must be seconded.
- A motion to close nominations must be made and seconded.
- The Chair will call for a vote.
- Repeat for each board position.

Moved by Mrs. Kemper and seconded by Mr. Murphy and carried without dissent to approve the voting process as presented.

Secretary

- Mr. Ruble opened the nominations for the Secretary position.
- Mrs. Gamble nominated Renee Penton-Jones.
- There were no other nominations.
- Mrs. Kemper seconded the nomination.
- Mrs. Penton-Jones accepted the nomination for an additional term.
- Mr. Ruble asked for a motion to close the nominations.

Moved by Mr. Thoren and seconded by Mrs. Kemper and carried without dissent to close the nominations.

- Mr. Ruble then took the vote for the Secretary position, asking all those in favor of Mrs. Renee Penton-Jones retaining the position of Secretary for one more year, say "Aye"
- Vote was unanimous.
- Mrs. Penton-Jones abstained from voting.

Treasurer

- Mr. Ruble opened the nominations for the Treasurer position.
- Mrs. Gamble nominated Brad Murphy.
- There were no other nominations
- Mrs. Penton-Jones seconded the nomination.
- Mr. Gamble accepted the nomination for an additional term.
- Mr. Ruble asked for a motion to close the nominations.

Moved by Mr. Freel and seconded by Mrs. Kemper and carried without dissent to close the nominations.

- Mr. Ruble then took the vote for the Treasurer position, asking all those in favor of Mr. Brad Murphy retaining the position of Treasurer for one more year, say “Aye”
- Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Gamble abstained from voting.

Vice Chair

- Mr. Ruble opened the nominations for the Vice-Chair position.
- Mrs. Kemper nominated Tiffany Gamble.
- There were no other nominations.
- Mr. Montgomery seconded the nomination.
- Mrs. Gamble accepted the nomination for an additional term.
- Mr. Ruble asked for a motion to close the nominations.

Moved by Mr. Cevasco and seconded by Mrs. Kemper and carried without dissent to close the nominations.

- Mr. Ruble then took the vote for the Vice-Chair position, asking all those in favor of Mrs. Gamble retaining the position of Vice-Chair for one more year, say “Aye”
- Vote was unanimous.
- Mrs. Gamble abstained from voting.

Chair

- Mr. Ruble opened the nominations for the Chair position.
- Mrs. Kemper nominated Jim Ruble.
- No other nominations.
- Mrs. Penton-Jones seconded the nomination.
- Mr. Ruble accepted the nomination for an additional term.
- Mr. Ruble asked for a motion to close the nominations.

Moved by Mr. Freel and seconded by Mrs. Gamble and carried without dissent to close the nominations.

- Mr. Ruble then took the vote for the Chair position, asking all those in favor of Mr. Ruble retaining the position of Chair for one more year, say “Aye”
- Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Ruble abstained from voting.

NEW BUSINESS

VI. FY 21/22 BUDGET AMENDMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Ruble opened the public hearing at 11:47 a.m. for the FY 21/22 budget amendment.

Roxy Skogen, from Skogen & Cometto, explained the need for the June 2022 budget amendment, namely that revenues were up so expenses needed to be increased to remain in compliance with state statute.

There were no public comments. Mr. Ruble closed the public comment period.

Moved by Ms. Gamble and seconded by Mr. Thoren and carried without dissent to accept the FY 21/22 budget amendment as presented. (Exhibit 2)

VII. FY 22/23 PROPOSED BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Ruble opened the public hearing at 11:58 a.m. for the FY 22/23 proposed budget.

There were no public comments. Mr. Ruble closed the public comment period.

Mr. Cevalco asked about the difference in the FY 21/22 budget and the proposed FY 22/23 budget. Mrs. Gamble reminded the board that Visit Casper received approx. \$577,000 in CARES funding in FY 21/22.

Both the revenue and budget are conservative. Moving forward, the board will need to approve a budget amendment due to an increase in lodging tax.

Moved by Mr. Freel and seconded by Mrs. Gamble and carried without dissent to accept the proposed FY 22/23 budget as presented. (Exhibit 3).

VIII. GRANTS

When Visit Casper and the City of Casper merged their grant programs into the Casper Area Impact Grant Program, the application period changed from twice a year to once a year. The FY 22/23 grant cycle application period closed May 15, 2022. Two applications for solid events that bring a lot of visitors to Casper were submitted late. Because this is the first year of the new/changed grant cycle, the grant review committee recommends awarding \$7,500 for the pool event and \$2,500 for the darts event.

Moved by Mr. Thoren and seconded by Mr. Montgomery and carried without dissent to accept the recommendation from the grant committee to award \$7,500 for the pool event and \$2,500 for the darts event as presented. (Exhibit 4)

Mr. Murphy abstained from voting.

COMMUNICATION REPORTS

IX. **STAFF REPORTS**
(Exhibit 5)

X. **COMMUNICATION REPORTS**

Tia Troy with Lightning Bug Public Relations provided a public relations update involving media outreach, the newsletter was emailed at the local, regional and national levels, and CNFR influencers.

Mr. Murphy said that influencers are a critical part of making the event what it is. The 2022 CNFR had a record attendance in ticket sales. 2021 was a record-breaking event and 2022 was up 20%.

COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATION

No comments.

XI. **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mr. Cevasco shared that Salt Creek Days will be August 13 and 14 in Midwest, WY, with a parade on Saturday and a lunch at town hall on Sunday.

Mr. Thoren commented on the staff sales and marketing report. He is happy to see Visit Casper involved with the Casper Marathon and the NHTIC 20th Anniversary Celebration.

XII. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Gena Jensen shared that attendance at the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center (NHTIC) has not slowed down. They have received awesome and positive reviews. She also shared that the NHTIC 20th Anniversary celebration will be August 9-13. Scheduled events include:

- Morris Carter will provide covered wagon trail rides
- Josh Kirk from the History Channel
- New film exhibit
- Dutch oven cooking
- Erica Flom fiddle playing

Tammi Chappell shared that the Hampton Inn & Suites occupancy was strong and the average nightly stay cost was \$289.

- May – September they were sold out
- October – November they are at 80%

XIII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

XIV. **NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:** Tuesday, August 23, 2022

XV. **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Mrs. Gamble, seconded by Mrs. Kemper, and carried without dissent to adjourn the board meeting at 12:30 p.m.



Jim Ruble, Chair



Renee Penton-Jones, Secretary