

Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council

Visit Casper

**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021
CASPER, WYOMING**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Ruble called the public meeting of the Natrona County Travel and Tourism Council to order Monday, September 27, 2021, at 11:33 a.m. Roll call determined the presence of a quorum.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Michael Cevasco, Town of Midwest
Jim Ruble, Town of Evansville
Sabrina Kemper, City of Mills
Kevin Hawley, City of Casper
Renee Penton-Jones, Natrona County
Tiffany Gamble, Natrona County
Brad Murphy, Town of Bar Nunn

Excused: Ken Thoren, Town of Edgerton
Steve Freel, City of Casper

Also Present: Brook Kaufman, CEO
Chelsea Combe, Marketing Specialist
Amanda Scherlin, Marketing Manager
Tia Troy, Lightning Bug Public Relations
Darren Rudloff, Rudloff Solutions
Chris Brown, WLRA/WTIC
Greg Hirst, Oil City News

III. Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mrs. Kemper and carried without dissent to approve the consent agenda as presented. (Exhibit 1)

OLD BUSINESS

IV. STRATEGIC AND DESTINATION PLANNING – DARREN RUDLOFF

Mr. Rudloff presented the collective findings of the interviews and stakeholder surveys. Strategic issues for the destination include economic development partnerships, community amenities and attractions development, transportation/connectivity, Casper Mountain and the North Platte River. Residents rate outdoor recreation as our top amenity, visitors rank outdoor recreation second only to hospitality. A presentation will be made to the steering committee on the 28th and a final presentation will be given (including a review of the final plan) October 18, 2021 at the Ford Wyoming Center.

V. **HANDBOOK UPDATES**

Ms. Kaufman has been working with the Executive Committee to update the employee handbook. Proposed changes include accruing vacation time in the first year, maternity/paternity leave, and dress code. The board gave a unanimous thumbs up on the changes which will take effect immediately. (Exhibit 2)

VI. **VISIT CASPER BUSINESS CHALLENGE – BROOK KAUFMAN/AMANDA SCHERLIN**

The application deadline for the first annual Visit Casper Business Challenge was Friday, September 24, 2021. Twenty-seven applications were received. After review of submissions, the Visit Casper board agreed to increase the seed money available to \$50,000. Judges will meet Wednesday, October 6, 2021, to vet the first round of applicants. Finals will be held Friday, November 12, 2021. The staff is pleased with the response in the first year.

NEW BUSINESS

VII. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – CHRIS BROWN**

Mr. Brown shared an update on Tourism Improvement Districts, the film incentive bill and the merger between WLRA and WTIC. He also emphasized the importance of electing tourism-friendly candidates in 2022.

VIII. **PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE – TIA TROY**

Ms. Troy updated the board on recent activity including the Meeting and Convention newsletter, the educational webinar series launched in response to COVID, recent MAT press releases and upcoming areas of focus. Look for enhanced efforts around family travel, winter, culinary, new and noteworthy and spring break in the coming months.

IX. **MARKETING UPDATE - AMANDA SCHERLIN**

Ms. Scherlin updated the board on developments with the film commission including FilmCasper.com and Reel-Scout. Visit Casper is close to launching the Local Ale Trail. Participants who visit all 5 breweries in the area will be sent a t-shirt. The Destination Optimization project with Miles and Google is progressing, 287 Google listings have been audited. The next step is to reach out to partners directly to start the update process. The goal with this project is to improve our community's information and imagery on Google.

COMMUNICATION REPORTS

X. **STAFF REPORTS** No questions. (Exhibit 3)

XI. **COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATION** None.

XII. **COUNCIL COMMENTS:** None.

- XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS None.
- XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION None.
- XV. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Monday, November 1, 2021. Location: Visit Casper Office.
- XVI. ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mrs. Kemper and carried without dissent to adjourn the meeting at 12:27 pm. Motion carried.



Jim Ruble, Chair



Renee Penton Jones, Secretary