

# Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council

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## Visit Casper

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020 ~ 11:30 PM  
CASPER, WYOMING

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Penton-Jones called the public meeting of the Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council to order Tuesday, August 25, 2020, at 11:31 p.m. at the Visit Casper office. Roll call determined the presence of a quorum.

II. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Tiffany Gamble, Natrona County\*  
Renee Penton-Jones, Natrona County  
Jim Ruble, Town of Evansville  
Erik Aune, Town of Mills  
Michael Cevasco, Town of Midwest\*  
Brad Murphy, Town of Bar Nunn  
Kevin Hawley, City of Casper, *via telephone*  
\*Entered the meeting late

Excused:

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

Also Present: Brook Kaufman, CEO  
Luke Gilliam, Business Development Manager  
Amanda Scherlin, Marketing Manager  
Katie Moerke, Executive Assistant

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

## OLD BUSINESS

IV. **FUTURE MARKETING PLANS/COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Ms. Kaufman informed the Board of the CARES Funding Natrona County Travel & Tourism Council received to offset the cost of COVID-19 recovery efforts. The \$421,581.00 allocated by the state through the Wyoming Office of Tourism will need to be spent by December 20, 2020, any remaining funds must be returned. The organization has retained Rudloff Solutions to help administer the funds and ensure compliance.

V. **EVENT UPDATE**

Ms. Kaufman updated the Board on the status of AOPA, the Fall Classic soccer tournament, International Round-up (IRU) and the Outdoor Writers Association of America. It is likely that some of these events will be postponed due to the impact of the coronavirus.

## NEW BUSINESS

### VI. 2020/2021 BUDGET AMENDMENT

Ms. Kaufman presented an amended 2020/2021 budget to include the \$421,581 in CARES funding. Moved by Mrs. Penton-Jones, seconded by Mr. Murphy and carried without dissent to amend the 2020/2021 budget to \$1,678,758.70. Motion carried. (Exhibit 2)

### VIX. PROUD TO HOST THE BEST

Mrs. Penton-Jones shared how Proud to Host the Best (PHB), the Wyoming High School Activities Association (WHSAA) and the Casper Event Center (CEC) are working together to rework state volleyball while adhering to CDC guidelines. WHSAA is restructuring the tournaments to reduce exposure to the coronavirus which includes the need for additional days at the CEC. These changes will increase the cost of hosting the event. Mrs. Penton-Jones anticipates that PHB will need to raise between \$200k to \$220k this year to cover expenses for all the tournaments, a \$50,000 increase over the prior year. Ms. Kaufman and Mrs. Penton-Jones will present the impact of the state high school tournaments to City Council September 22, 2020. Mr. Murphy shared that Spring tournament are on as scheduled.

### VII. ADVOCACY EVENT

Ms. Kaufman gave information about the Legislature Briefing that will be held at the Central Wyoming Fairgrounds Industrial Building Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. CJ Box will be the keynote speaker, he is also chairman of the Wyoming Office of Tourism board. He will speak about the current condition of the travel and tourism industry in the state, Ms. Kaufman will share data and research on what is happening in Natrona County.

## COMMUNICATION REPORTS

### VIII. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Gilliam shared that the group tour show he attended in French Lick, Indiana, last week was a good experience. Although Casper has not historically pulled a lot from this market segment, Mr. Gilliam made many solid connections and received over 60 leads. In conjunction with Western Leisure, Visit Casper is hosting a group tour training workshop for tourism partners Wednesday, September 2, 2020, to influence how Casper can capitalize on the group tour market in 2021/2022. (Exhibit 4)

### IX. COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATION

No questions.

### X. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Aune stated that the visitors we are receiving right now are much different than in the past. Mr. Hawley re-enforced the importance of the CTA™ certification/program and how it can change whether a person stays or returns to our destination.

Ms. Kaufman shared that other DMO's have found themselves in a tough spot without strong financial policies in place. She expressed that although Visit Casper is fiscally sound, she would like some help reviewing the organization's financial policies to be sure we are protected in the future. Mr. Ruble offered to assist with review of the policies.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None.

XIII. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday, September 22, 2020. Location: Visit Casper Office

XIV. ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Mr. Ruble, seconded by Mrs. Penton-Jones and carried without dissent to adjourn the meeting at 12:14 p.m. Motion carried.

  
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Tiffany Gamble, Chair

  
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Kevin Hawley, Secretary