

Town Council Public comment:

Monday February 5th

The JHCC hosted a National Economist to speak to our community on Thursday February 1<sup>st</sup>. She specifically examined the potential impact of global economic factors on Teton County and Jackson Hole businesses in the current year. The highlight reel of this presentation for our economy was that almost all sectors of the economy of our economy post pandemic have recovered with the exceptions of the retail, commercial and service sectors. Those areas are the ones that should be considered as needing the most help. In my over 47 meetings individually with the elected officials and staff in front of me today over the past 16 months, the one area I highlight in every conversation has been as strategic partners lets work together to address challenges and make strategic decisions related to improving revenues. I had the pleasure of attending your recent 2 days of retreat forecasting the strategy for the Town of Jackson on January 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. Much of the conversation related to budget shortfalls and the impending understanding that revenues will not be meeting needs estimated in the next 18 months. We represent almost 900 businesses that employ over 20 thousand people in this community, with the majority being small businesses. These are our friends & neighbors, residents, volunteers, front line workers, future elected officials and leaders and the individuals who daily contribute to the fabric of what makes us a community. In the conclusion of this economist presentation was that we should do everything we can in this environment not make it harder to open and operate small businesses in our community. By continually adding to the costs of what already exists as an incredibly expensive proposition to start and operate a business in our Town, we risk having our main sources of income controlled by those who lack a direct investment in our community's future. Let's look at policies and decisions that incentivize businesses and be cautious of decisions that create penalties and more barriers for business. We would also request a parking conversation that involves implementing the best use of for multiple community partners sooner than later as was also requested by at least 3 of your department heads as summer is just around the corner.

Thank you,

Rick Howe

President / CEO

Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce