

Albany County Tourism Board
800 S. 3rd Street, Laramie WY 82070
Monday, October 21st, 2024
4:00 - 6:00 PM

Attendees: Sara Ghezzi, Sara Brown Matthews, Sara Haugen, Dayton Gooder, Matt Blakeman, Kera Malmberg, , Becky Maddox, Derek Jones, Andi Jaspersen, Pat Gabriel
Absent: David Lewis, Kaley Holyfield

Guests: Tom Wilhelm, Anna Castro, Ford Stoecker

1. 4:00 Call regular meeting of the Albany County Tourism Board to order.
 - a. Confirmation of quorum. Confirmed
 - b. Introduction of guests - noted in "guest" section.
2. Additions and/or corrections to the agenda.
 - a. None
3. Consent agenda
 - a. September minutes - linked in board packet.
 - b. Financial reports - linked in board packet.
 - c. General reports - linked in board packet.

Motion by Sara G, seconded by Derek J, that the consent agenda be approved and that each specific action on the consent agenda be approved as indicated. Motion passes.

4. Old business
 - a. Pickle Brawl - 298 participants from 7 states and all over WY. Workshop with pros. Senior day with more open competitions, growing every year competing with CO but continuous support for here in Laramie. Guests love the facilities at UW tennis center. Not able to track hotel stays due to new software.
 - b. Advertised to past participants via email. Estimated 231 room nights, 51 airbnbs, 16 campgrounds, 164 in hotels.
5. Grant and sponsorship requests
 - a. **Day of the Dead** 1st and grand, 11/2-11/3 Sat. & Sun- materials linked in board packet. Asking \$2,167 for marketing
Laramie Maine Street- event to bridge communities downtown through this event. Started with zero dollars and currently have \$1,500 BH energy, \$750 West Inc, Les Schwab; Movie theater to show Coco at the Gryphon Theater at no cost.

Highlighting Hispanic artists, partnered with elementary school - students to create skulls, 4th St Studios hosting flower making on 10/31, Mecha sponsoring warm up tent (hot cocoa and space heaters), Poppys with flowers, teaching a sugar skull making workshop

Prioritize hispanic vendors-Tacos El gordo, art & soul Pottery, Mexican delights,

The Bread Dealer and others. Professional Maricha band out of Denver

Marketing:

Targeted Laramie, Cheyenne, Ft Collins spotify ads in english and spanish

Radio and Laramie Boomerang and printed posters

Current instagram posts doing very well with likes and sharing

Sign in during the event to track out of town guests

All free of charge to vendors and guests

b. **Studebaker Meetup** - materials linked in board packet.

Asking \$300 for marketing

June 5-7th 2025 \$9 per person

WY has one chapter, event sponsored by Denver & Wy Chapter any profits divided between both clubs

Ad with Visit Laramie logo, one ad does not have logo

Newsletter goes to 23 different chapters

Studebaker meet is in PA, no other western meetups which would be great draw to Laramie

Marketing to magazines and other chapters

Meetup is more of a social gathering, driving out to Centennial, hosted events banquet and registration at HGI Laramie, partnered with Wyotech's annual car show

Enough time to go shopping; include Visit Laramie materials to registrants

Could be an annual event depending on turnout

Motion by Becky M, seconded by Dayton G, to approve the Day of the Dead grant application.

Motion passes to give \$2,167 for marketing purposes.

Motion by Becky M, seconded by Derek J, to approve/decline the Studebaker Meetup grant application. Motion passes. Give the Studebaker meetup group \$600 for marketing ads.

6. Financial updates

a. Lodging tax collections FY '25

b. Decision by Andi not to track the sales tax, narrowing it down to only track lodging tax

- c. Down this particular segment by \$16,000. Down due to having fewer UW football home games.

7. New business

- a. Staff benefits - Transitioning healthcare plan.

Motion by Becky, seconded by Dayton, to approve the proposed changes to staff benefits.

Motion passes.

Support decision from group healthcare plan and transition our healthcare plan to be a health stipend to each employee.

Tabled-Waiting on the State retirement plan to analyze more data on increases and vote at the next meeting.

- b. Revisit grants discussion - proposal linked in board packet. Andi- segment the application process and move to quarterly applications, the highest number of applications is March/May. Reviewed by the office and then finalists present at board meetings 4x a year. 50% of grant money will be distributed once approved and 50% at the end of the event/post board mtg with that 50% of the funds need to be outside of Albany County and provide receipts that money was spent in appropriate markets. They would need to keep track and prove they reached out to those different markets to receive the rest of the funds.

Will need to communicate with groups and teach them how to use tools to track this data. Will put out a press release explaining why these changes would be implemented. Applications would be updated. Consensus from the board that this is a good direction to move.

- c. Destination Development Funds concepts - 2020 - 2025 strategic plan linked in board packet.

300,000 ear marked for Albany COunty from WY office of tourism

After looking at strategic plan and discussions looking to change the way of pooling the funds

1. Strategic plan, community masterplan, board training-young strategies
2021 release heavily centered around covid worthwhile to complete now that we are further out from the pandemic. \$30,000 estimate
2. Depot Museum Staffing currently open Mondays and staffed by a volunteer. Hire part-time staff to keep the museum open 5x a week for 2 years and start to charge admission \$47,000 for 2 years. WYOT approved payroll for this one time.
3. Permanent bridge sign- discussing with the city to partner \$15,000 cover 2 signs production and installation
4. Replace awning and paint visit laramie building
 - a. Awning \$4,000
 - b. Paint estimate \$9,000

- c. Would like to put logo on the awning after it is rebranding
- 5. Design new website
 - a. About five years old need new visual identity estimate \$75,000
- 6. Total 175,000 with \$125,000 remaining approved by WY office of tourism
Andi cross referenced with the current strategic plan that these do support.

Andi will check with Philip with city of laramie on final installation of wayfinding signs is any other funding is needed. Thank you for all the research and thought into how you are using funds.

- d. Open house wrap up - It was great, good connections made. Great turn out-great job to the staff!
- e. Public comments
- f. None.

Motion by Becky M, seconded by Sara G, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes. The next ACTB meeting will be at 4:00 PM on Monday, November 18, 2024.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sara Ghezzi, Vice Chair. BOARD

APPROVED: SARAH BROWN MATHEWS CHAIR
Rebecca Maddox Treasurer