

Gold West Country
General Board Meeting – Old Works in Anaconda
April 27, 2011 Minutes

Board Members: Fay Najjar, Dan Kane, Julia Brewer, Casey Ferguson, Carol Eichler, Desiree Shogren, Marlene Hoylater, Julie Shelton, Ellen Baumler, Paul Marsh, Dan Kane, Anna Provost, Pat Hansen, Pamela Kimmey, Mike Strang

Members and Guests: Becky Gay, Jim Yeoman, Connie Daniels, Paula Annisex, Roy Millegan, David Williams, Connie Strang, Trina Peterson, Crystal Kelly, Lauren McDelderry, Rhea Armstrong, Karen Schulz, Julie Johnson, Tenlee Atchinson, Adam Vaulthier, George Everett, Rebecca Schmitz, Suzanne Elfstrom, Shawn Peterson, and Jo Genzlinger and Director Sarah Bannon

At 10:30 a.m. President Mike Strang called the meeting to order. Fay Najjar from Anaconda welcomed everyone and Jim Yeoman, president of the Anaconda Chamber thanked Gold West Country and its members for all their hard work. Dan Kane from Old Works Golf Course welcomed us to Old Works Golf Course (rated #1 public golf course in Montana.) Connie Daniels, Anaconda Deer Lodge County Planning Director was happy to have Gold West Country here and mentioned that several things are going on in the area.

Julia Brewer moved that the minutes be approved as submitted. Anna Provost seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Sarah had a handout for the financial report. We have \$36,701.39 in membership funds. In our state funds we have \$6,924 in our state funds and \$111,202.35 in our money market. We have all our money for the rest of the fiscal year. Marlene Hoylater moved that the report be approved. Ellen Baumler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Sarah gave an executive director report. Project completion reports are done for 09/10. The region/CVB meeting took place and a major discussion is on request for proposals and procedures. Gold West Country is currently out for the call center.

Mike explained how the executive board has had the marketing plan and has been reviewing it and had lots of discussion on it. The whole plan is 38 pages long. He passed out a signup sheet for the marketing committee and for the website committee.

Rebecca Schmitz gave us a report from MARS STOUT, our call center. So far, in 2011, MARS STOUT has mailed 4,043 Gold West Country guides. We have received 2,615 inquiries at the call center through Good Housekeeping, Reader's Digest, Gold West Website, Sweet Palace service leads and in house referrals. Calls are from California, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, and New York. Interests were in history and ghost towns, wildlife viewing, rock hounding, Lewis & Clark, and family activities. Pamela Kimmey asked how this compared to last year. Rebecca said that inquiries are up a bit over a year ago.

Several of us went to the Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation. Suzanne said that the opening keynote was very good. Travel should be up this year but gasoline and shopping industry might still be tough. Anaconda was singled out as doing a great job of following the Montana Brand. Philipsburg was commended at getting through to many front end people all over the state. Mike said a lot of good information was given on the social media at the conference.

Pat Hansen gave a report on the Yellowstone Trail. The road from Plymouth Rock to the Puget Sound started with the dream of a man who got stuck in hole with his vehicle. This formed the Yellowstone Trail Association. Trail Day came about when each community would work for a day on the trail and have a celebration as well. In 1913 the road was

completed to Minneapolis. In 1914 the road was completed in western Montana. Through Gold West Country the road was completed in 1915 and 1916. Pat suggested we do a rally or a Trail Day Event or set up some kind of celebration. Roy Millegan from Whitehall was going to take the information back to the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce for discussion.

George Everett from the Montana Folk Festival said everything is on track. They will have the full line-up of performers next week and the brochures will be available then as well. Information is on the website and Facebook as well – MontanaFolkfest. Volunteers are needed so anyone interested please go to the website www.montanafolkfestival.com.

Shawn Peterson from Tempest had handouts on projects with the website. A mobile website will be developed in three stages. The website has been redesigned to accommodate this and is incorporating the Montana Brand. We were updated on social media and Heidi O'Brien will help with the twitter page and work with Jolynn on facebook, blog, and twitter. You can forward tweets to goldwest@tempesttech.com. We will have a contest go on with prizes being two nights lodging at Fairmont, two rounds of golf, two – one hour massages and swimming passes.

He will incorporate Native American historical information on the website. We are to gather any information that may be of help and send it to Tempest Technologies.

Shawn had a handout for our bicycling site and plans for implementation. We will have a custom mapping system using Google Map technology and trail geodata to present the Gold West biking information. We will also be able to use this information for future project on hiking, scenic drives, loop tours, etc. The user will be able to view the trail, viewpoints with descriptive information, photos and maybe videos.

Suzanne Elfstrom from Partners Creative handed out a budget with both the proposed numbers for fiscal year 2012 and with this year's numbers for comparison. She went through the budget and the numbers for comparison. Our budget this year is \$306,103. Most of the funds are set up to go to the advertising, administration, travel guide, telemarketing, and the website. The travel guide will include some Native American history and the listings will be more work since the Montana Office of Tourism download will need extra manipulation.

Suzanne handed out a Trip Advisory Click-Through report. Our click through rate is above industry standards. So far we have 228 click throughs of 130,928 impressions for a .17% rate.

The national banner advertising is going March – April. The partners are Virginia City and Butte. The Get Lost in Montana information will be going off to Mercury. And Anaconda is advertising on the direct e-newsletter.

George Everett moved that we accept the budget and marketing plan as reviewed with the executive board amending it if we need to drop the budget by 10%. Casey Ferguson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

For the legislature, Tenlee said that the bill for the license plates for the parks went well. We are waiting to know more on HB 316 and HB 317 will turn out.

Under other information, Casey talked about the summer kickoff in Anaconda regarding the branding on May 12th. People can RSVP on line.

Paul Marsh moved that the meeting be adjourned. There was a second and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.