

Southwest Montana
General Board Meeting – Comfort Inn - Butte
February 24, 2020

Participants: Gay Rossow, Becky DiGiovanna, Fay Najjar, Julie Shelton, Jody, Cargill, Jan Thorne, Glenniss Indreland, Dale Carlson, Candi Whitworth, Jessica Schick, Desiree Shogren, Katya Peterson, Debbie Carlstrom, Shawn Peterson, Becky Henne, Maria Pochervina, Mandy Wick, Jeanette Kopf, Dale Siegford, Jacque Lavelle, Jocelyn Dodge, Mark Fisher, Erika McGowan, Neala Siegle, Ray Marxer, Richard Krott, Ross Johnson, Bruce Binkowski, Andrea Opitz, Mary Johnston, Lydia Janosko, Mike Strang, Kerri Kumasaka, Julie Schroder, and employee Sarah Bannon

Executive Board President Becky Henne called the meeting to order at 10:41 am.

Minutes – Becky DiGiovanna moved that the minutes be approved as submitted. Kerri Kumasaka seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment – We went around the room and each person did a self-introduction.

Financial Report – Sarah had handouts for the financial report. As of 1/31/2020 we have \$28,308.66 in the checking account and \$226,965.56 in the money market account. The membership funds have \$35,014.30 in the account. Maria Pochervina moved that the financial report be approved as submitted. Dale Carlson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report – Sarah said much of her work is on the Marketing Plan, she is working with the committee on the tear off map and a survey. We will be dropping Butte and Helena maps from the tear off map. Travel Guides have been delivered.

Inquiry Report – Rebecca Schmitz was unable to attend; Sarah gave the report for the call center. Through 2019, we had 21,560 inquiries. So far in 2020 there have been 740 inquiries and 841 travel guides sent out in response. Most of inquiries came from Yellowstone Journal, Glacier Country warm season co-op, Southwest MT website, and Midwest Living. Most of the inquiries came from California, Texas, Florida, and Illinois. The four top interests were area history and ghost towns, wildlife watching, Lewis & Clark Trail sites, and regional lodging.

Virginia City Frontline Tour – Dates set for May 20, 2020 and June 3rd. The purpose of the tour is to help the frontline staff be familiar with Virginia City / Nevada City so they can recommend visiting to their travelers. The bus with 48 frontline employees will leave from Bozeman, or West Yellowstone, at 8:00 am; there will be all kinds of activities, great marketing opportunity for local businesses to highlight their business. SW Montana will pay for the bus for the tours. Free to frontline staff and the bus will return at 5:00 pm.

Cycle Greater Yellowstone – August 8-14, 2020. Maria and Sarah shared information concerning the bike ride which will feature 350 cyclists coming through the area. They will travel through Butte -- Jackson – Polaris – to Glen – Twin Bridges --Lewis & Clark Caverns and return to Butte. They need 100 volunteer support staff. Looking for sponsorships for the race. The Executive Board recommended \$2,500 sponsorship. Jocelyn made a motion to sponsor the Cycle Greater Yellowstone Race in the amount of \$2,500. Dale Siegford seconded. The motion and it passed unanimously.

Professor Rick Graetz, University Community Program was the speaker for this meeting. He is a professor at Western Montana Western, shared lots of fun and very interesting facts about Montana. 80% of the population lives within the 7 largest towns. The largest influx of new residents come from Colorado, Oregon and Washington come in 2nd and 3rd. The most important decade in Montana History was 1880 with copper and the railroad.

Preliminary Budget Discussion – Sarah stated that the outfitters account for 25% of the state tourism revenue. Further discussion on the budget.

Introduce new account executive – Neala Siegle was introduced as our new ad executive.

Website, Internet Updates – Shawn Peterson from Tempest Technologies gave a report. The top landing pages are ice fishing, ghost towns, rockhounding, calendar of events, Glacier to Yellowstone, Crystal Park. Schedule a meeting with the Website committee to redesign the website. (Scheduled for Monday, March 2, 2020 in Butte.) update on HD project – the Helena Airport TV has been having issues as well as the Lima rest stop. Shawn is working to resolve both issues.

Cooperative Marketing – Vote on Disbursement of funds Sarah brought forth the members that have applied for Cooperative Grant funds.

Virginia City Chamber	\$3,250	Vigilante Trail itineraries
Anaconda Chamber	\$1,423.80	Brochure distribution
Sculptures in the Wild	\$3,465.81	Brochure, rack card, Distribution
Powell County Chamber	\$2,000	Nat Parks Ads
Jefferson County	\$2,450	Halloween Events
Boulder Area	\$2,325	Tourism Brochure
Accelerate Anaconda	\$8,800	Brown Signs
Ryan Hannahoe	\$1,062.50	Observatory Festival
Townsend	\$4,500	Fall Festival
<u>Kelly Cutler</u>	<u>\$ 787.50</u>	<u>Theatre Road sign</u>

Total of \$30,064.61

After much discussion and with the Executive board recommendations, it was agreed to give the following amounts.

Virginia City Chamber	\$2,750	Vigilante Trail itineraries
Anaconda Chamber	\$1,423.80	Brochure distribution
Sculptures in the Wild	\$2,750	Brochure, rack card, Distribution
Powell County Chamber	\$2,000	Nat Parks Ads
Jefferson County	\$2,450	Halloween Events
Boulder Area	\$2,325	Tourism Brochure
Accelerate Anaconda	\$2,750	Brown Signs
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For a total of \$21,048.80 The \$21,000 is the original budget of \$13,000 + \$ 8,000 from the community/corridor grant.

With next year adding in more requirements. Completion reports to be done by the grantee, \$2,000 maximum request per grantee. Dale Siegford made a motion to accept the above listed amounts. Kerri Kumasaka seconded. Passed unanimously.

Elections – Julie Shelton took the floor and gave the slate of officers.

President – Maria Pochervina
Vice President – Jocelyn Dodge
Secretary – Kerri Kumasaka and Julie Shelton
Treasurer – Julie Schroder

Since there were no other nominations a motion to close nominations was made by Ray Marxer. Dale Siegford seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Motion to accept the slate of officers as presented was made by Ross Johnson Seconded by Faye Najjar. Motion Passed unanimously.

Other Business – We will be redesigning the tear-off map. Also, we will be updating the website. Anyone interested in participating on the committee please let us know. We will meet in Butte Monday March 2, 2020 for our next meeting.

Next meetings – March 2020 meeting will be in Deer Lodge on March 24 at the Broken Arrow Steakhouse, April 23 will be at Cargill Ranch in Whitehall, September 17th at Boulder Creek Lodge October TBD, and November TBD. These dates are subject to change depending on holidays and school schedules.

A motion was moved to adjourn the meeting. Jocelyn seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.