

**Southwest Montana
General Board Meeting – Boulder Creek Lodge and RV Park
September 23, 2021**

Participants, Anna Provost, Jacque Lavelle, Eve Byron, Victor Sample, Mary Johnston, Destiny Trotter, Patrick Fox, Linda Brown, Jocelyn Dodge, Maria Pochervina, Mike Strang, Ross Johnson, Becky DiGiovanna, Shawn Peterson, Rebecca Jones, Gay Rossow, Dale Siegford, Andrea Opitz, Tia Metzger: Sarah Bannon (SWMT Executive Director)

We were hosted by Patrick Fox at the beautiful Boulder Creek Lodge and RV Park.

Minutes -Rebecca Jones moved that the last meeting minutes be approved as submitted. Ross Johnson seconded the motion and it passes unanimously.

Public Comment – Events and activities in various communities were announced. Most people reported that their business did well over the summer.

Financial Report – Sarah shared the financial report. In the state account, as of 8/31/2021, there was \$151,710 in the checkbook and \$241,301 in the money market account. In the Membership Account, there was \$26,687. Most of the expenses for the membership funds were for the Recreate Responsibly Grant. Anna Provost moved to accept the financial report, Becky DiGiovanna seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Inquiry Report - Rebecca Schmitz from Experian had a report on the contact/call center.

1. Southwest Montana had 4,620 leads at the call center and sent out 7,624 travel guides.
2. Most of our leads came from Glacier Country warm season partnership, southwestmt.com, in-house referrals from the State Office of Tourism, previous years' copies of the Visit Southwest Montana guidebook, and the True West Magazine.
3. Recently, the top interests have been: History and Ghost Towns, Wildlife Watching, Lewis & Clark Trail, Local Lodging Options.
4. Top five states we had inquiries from are: California, Texas, Washington, Florida, and Montana.

Montana Historical Society Museum Update – Eve Byron gave us a great detailed handout and PowerPoint on the updates and renovations for the Montana Historical Society Museum. Much discussion ensued on the topic. Andrea Opitz reminded us that it only cost \$5 to get in the museum.

Travel Guide update – Sarah reported that mailings went out for the listings and full-page ads for the travel guide. We are working on updates for the travel guide.

Lima Rest Area Brochure Restocking – Mike Strang reported that over 400,000 people go through the Lima Rest Area a year. We need a new restocking person and we discussed payment for this. After much discussion Dale Siegford moved that we offer \$300 per month. Anna Provost seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Sarah is to work with Mike on this.

Recreate Responsibly – Sarah had printed material from the Recreate Responsibly Grant we got from the state. We had a rack card and a poster. We also did digital promotions with Windfall. Tempest Technologies incorporated information on the website and in the communities.

Marketing Update – Tia Metzger from Windfall Studio gave media performance report.

1. Southwest Montana had placements in Yellowstone Journal, Sojern, True West Magazine, Birdwatchers Digest, Facebook and Instagram ads and story ads. We had a total of 3,794,150 impressions/circulation at a cost of \$17,795. We had 2,933,946 impressions with 17,858 clicks, .61% click-through rate, and \$100 cost per click.

2. For Recreate Responsibly we had placements in Sojern, a Digital Programmatic Buy, and Facebook and Instagram Ads. We had a total of 3,199,150 impressions/circulation at a cost of \$19,377. Total impressions were 3,036,919 with 7,85 clicks and a click-through rate of .26%. the cost per click was \$2.43.

Tia also talked about joint venture with the state. Both Parents Magazine and Sojern were her recommendations and she would be in touch with Sarah.

Website, Internet Updates – Shawn Peterson from Tempest Technologies gave a report.

1. Shawn Peterson gave updated on the website and video capturing. We have Recreate Responsibly information throughout the website.
2. Tempest Technologies is capturing video for the “Taste of Montana” grant. This is a project we partnered with Central Montana on getting footage of four breweries and one distillery in each of our regions.
3. Tempest is doing an in-depth update of our website with new coding.
4. Tempest would like to get the events updated on the southwestmt.com website. Please send in photos with the events.
5. We are still in contact with the state on the film project. They are having some changes at the state level and we will be getting their updates soon.
6. Shawn showed video that was captured over the summer including the new Zipline out of Anaconda.

Next meeting – The next meeting will be on October 28 at Pintler Portal Hostel in Anaconda. (This meeting has been postponed until November 18 at the same place.)

We ended the meeting and had lunch at 12:15.