

**Southwest Montana
General Board Meeting
November 21, 2024
Lewis and Clark Public Library, Helena**

Attendees: **SWMT Staff:** Sarah Bannon (Executive Director), Maria Pochervina (Public Relations Manager), Julie Schroder (Office Administrator); **Board Members:** Callie Aschim, Rachael Brug, Michele Carter, Becky DiGiovanna, Jocelyn Dodge (President), Kari Gagner, Kehli Hazlett, Bill Koch, Christine Koch, Jeanette Kopf (Treasurer), Kerri Kumasaka, Jacob McEachern, Andrea Opitz (Vice President), Gay Rossow, Vic Sample (Secretary), Chiara Shober, Jazlyn Young; **Tempest Technologies:** Linda Brown; Sarah Bolt; **Abbi Agency:** Haley Burgess, Darius Mandegary; **Lightning Bug:** Tia Troy; **Montana Historical Society:** Eve Byron

The meeting was called to order by President Jocelyn Dodge at 10:10am. Jocelyn welcomed everyone to the meeting. She announced due to the tour of the Montana Heritage Center, we would not do a community update round-robin. We did do a round-robin introduction of everyone at the meeting.

Public Comment:

Andrea Optiz did give the address of the Montana Heritage Center and parking instructions. She also asked on behalf of the Heritage Center that people attending the tour leave large packages and purses in their vehicles.

Call Center Report: Elaine Schnell was not in attendance; so, Sarah Bannon (Executive Director) presented the Call Center Report.

Travel Guide: Listings and Ads are due. 2025 Events are due by November 22, 2024.

ByLaws: President Jocelyn Dodge presented the bylaw changes recommended by the Executive Board. Kehli Hazlett moved to accept the ByLaws as presented; Jeanette Kopf seconded. The motion passed.

Tempest Technologies: Linda Brown presented the Tempest Technologies report. Due to time constraints Linda limited the information to a printed information sheet.

Abbi Agency: Haley Burgess reported that the Abbi Agency has been working hard on the rebrandings. Haley introduced Darius Mandegary, Abbi Agency Art Director. Darius presented 3 different branding concepts and received feedback on all 3. Darius will work on incorporating the feedback into the concepts.

Haley stated that the Abbi Agency would like to have the Travel Guide cover photo settled on by early January.

Lightening Bug: Tia Troy has been working on a total rewrite of the Travel Guide content.

Southwest Montana Board Information and Reports

Meeting Minutes October 24, 2024:

Becky DiGiovanna moved to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Kelhi Hazlett.
Motion Passed.

Financial Reports:

Sarah Bannon, Executive Director, gave the Financial Report. Kerry Kumasaka moved to accept the financial report as presented; Kehli Hazlett seconded. Motion passed.

Executive Director Report

Resiliency Plan:

Sarah Bannon reported that the Federal Resiliency Plan was accepted except for one item regarding Community Promotion. SWMT has to submit a report by December 25 on how funds are being spent.

SWMT Audit:

Sarah reported that the State Audit is asking for much more information than in the past. She is working with the auditor to get the audit complete.

Project Completions:

The project completion reports are due December 2, 2024.

Legislative Committee:

Sarah is on the legislative committee to track legislation being introduced during the 2025 session. There are over 900 bills the tourism committee is tracking. Since Sarah will need to be on Zoom Sessions that conflict with the SWMT meeting times, we will change our meeting time to 1:00pm to 3:30pm during the legislative session. Meetings will be held in central locations like Butte, Helena or Anaconda.

Augusta Trip:

Sarah Bannon, Vic Sample and Brian Obert (MBAC Executive Director) visited Tia Troy in Augusta to talk about their public rest room issues. Brian Obert is researching different approaches to resolving the issues.

ITRR:

Sarah reported that ITRR is working on a lot of research and is creating a database of all of the information.

Governor's Conference:

The Governor's Conference on Tourism will be held in April in Helena this year. SWMT still has funding for one more person. Those interested in attending the conference should contact the SWMT office and a random drawing will be made to fund another attendee.

PR Manager Report:

Maria Pochervina (SWMT PR Manager) distributed an update on all the activities she has been doing working on the website, travel guide, movie industry, membership letter and form, ITRR calls, Glacier to Geysers, Media Coalition, Legislature and CRM software.

The next meeting will on January 23, 2025 with location to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 11:44am.

