

TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 15, 2018
BIG SKY, MT

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Glenniss Indreland, Chair—Big Sky
Katie Grice, Vice Chair—Big Sky
Tami Burke—Glasgow
Jeff Ewelt—Billings
Rhonda Fitzgerald—Whitefish

Rachel Gregg—Missoula
Kim Holzer—Stanford
Bill McGladdery—Butte
Patricia McGlynn—Kalispell

Lindzy Roth—Kalispell
Alger Swingley—Great Falls
Sandra Thares—Great Falls
Steve Wahrlich—Billings

COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Dr. Kenneth Ryan—Poplar
Brian Sprenger—Belgrade

DEPT. OF COMMERCE (DOC) and MT OFFICE OF TOURISM & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (MOTBD) STAFF

Pam Haxby-Cote—Director, DOC
Sean Becker—Administrator, MOTBD
Jan Stoddard—Bureau Chief, Industry Services & Outreach
Kev Campbell—Business Development Specialist
Casey Lozar—Bureau Chief, Business Technical Assistance

Carmen Levick—Tourism Outreach Coordinator
Barb Sanem—Compliance Specialist
Lonie Stimac—Made in Montana Manager
Allison Whitmer—Film Commissioner

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018

CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS, NEW BUSINESS

Council Chair, Glenniss Indreland called the meeting of the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) to order at 9:00 a.m. Introductions of Council members, Montana Office of Tourism & Business Development (MOTBD) staff and the audience followed.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October 2-3, 2017 TAC Meeting Minutes
Steve Wahrlich moved to approve the minutes. Kim Holzer seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Livingston-Gardiner Shuttle—Leslie Feigel announced that there will be a shuttle buses to and from Yellowstone Park for employees and visitors. Tickets can be purchased in Livingston at: Travelodge, Yellowstone Pioneer Lodge, Super 8, Country Motor Inn, Visitor Center, Econo Lodge & Comfort Inn. Tickets can be purchased in Gardiner at: Chamber of Commerce and Best Western Hotel by Mammoth Hot Springs. Tickets can also be purchased from the bus driver. Bikes are allowed. Departures from Livingston at 7a.m. & 5 p.m. and from Gardiner 8:10 a.m. & 6:10 p.m.

West Yellowstone—Marysue Costello gave a brief update regarding the Custer/Gallatin Forest Plan and encouraged people to attend the upcoming public meetings.

Crown of the Continent—Sheena Pate with the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Project commented that it is the 10-year anniversary of the project and would like to thank the partners involved for making the project so successful.

Helena Chamber & CVB—Mike Mergenthaler said that he is looking forward to the June TAC meeting being in Helena and that he is working on a great event to showcase Helena in the summer.

Big Sky Chamber & CVB—Candace Strauss said that Gallatin County and the community of Big Sky recently received a \$10.3 million TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant award for road improvements on MT Highway 64 which is the main road in Big Sky. They will be adding left turn lanes at key intersections along Lone Mountain Trail. The money will also be used for the construction of a pedestrian tunnel, road signs, and other projects in the area including public transit between the Bozeman/Belgrade area and Big Sky.

TAC COMMITTEE REPORTS BY RESPECTIVE CHAIRS

Executive Committee—Glenniss Indreland, Chair

Glenniss gave a recap of the recent Executive Committee conference call held on April 5, 2018.

- TAC Meeting Schedule

Glenniss reviewed the dates for TAC meetings through 2019. All meetings will continue to be in Helena. Here are the dates for all upcoming meetings.

- June 11-12, 2018
- September 24-25, 2018
- February 4-5, 2019
- June 10-11, 2019
- October 7-8, 2019

- TAC Operating Policy

Glenniss said that the TAC Operating Policy needs to be updated to reflect the definition of a quorum for boards and councils. After consulting with Department of Commerce legal counsel, it was determined that per MCA 2-15-122, the TAC does not have authority to define a quorum. The statute states that “a majority of the membership of an advisory council constitutes a quorum to do business”. The executive committee recommended amending the language in section G of the TAC Operating Policy to replace the word “two-thirds” with “majority”.

Glenniss said that the Executive Committee also discussed what constitutes a TAC meeting saying that the law defines a meeting as the convening of a quorum, whether corporal or by means of electronic equipment, to hear, discuss, or act upon a matter over which the agency has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power. While some situations are defined clearly, there are some gray areas also. A few examples were given such as if a majority of the TAC is on a telephone call, and the call is discussing tourism, then that is a meeting that should be noticed. Alternatively, if a majority of TAC members show up to a conference on tourism, the argument could be made that the members are not *convening*, but rather coincidentally at the same place. However, if all the TAC members sat at the same table during the conference, an argument could be made that TAC was *convening*. One last example, if TAC is staying at a hotel and in the morning all the members are in the lobby getting coffee and donuts before a meeting starts, that is probably not a meeting. In short, it is a spectrum of variations and Glenniss asked that the TAC be mindful of these things when they are together.

Rhonda Fitzgerald moved to approve the recommendation to change the wording in the TAC Operating Policy defining a quorum from “two-thirds” to “the majority”. Kim Holzer seconded. Motion passed.

- Lodging Tax Collections

If you have been looking at the statewide lodging tax collections, you will notice that there are some challenges in Eastern Montana. Glenniss said that the Industry Services & Outreach Bureau is looking at ways to assist with strategies to determine needs for destination development and potential audiences. She asked that if any of the Regions, CVBs or other tourism partners had ideas to please funnel them to Jan Stoddard at JStoddard@mt.gov.

- Budgets for Regions/CVBs

After the preliminary projections are sent out and marketing plans and budgets are submitted and approved, there are often adjustments made due to actual collections. Glenniss said that the Executive Committee would allow the Marketing Committee purview to review and approve such budget adjustments within the period of the actual marketing plans so that changes can be made timely and more efficiently.

- Enforcement of Timely Submission of Financial and Evaluation Reports

Glenniss commented that the lodging tax funded programs have been through a legislative audit and that there are processes and best practices that need to be better followed. She said that the language in the Region and CVB contracts and provisions for compliance in the Rules & Regulations outlines when things are due, and that the TAC will be more strongly enforcing those deadlines. If a deadline is missed, the first step will be to send a certified letter to the executive director and board president of the Region or CVB organization. The next step would be a reminder phone call and if necessary, withholding of funds and up to a 10% fine. She said that hopefully it would not come down to needing to withhold funds or impose a fine but reiterated that the contract is a legally binding agreement and that everyone is obligated to fulfill their contract.

Research Committee—Rhonda Fitzgerald, Chair

Rhonda gave the recommendations of the Research Committee for FY19 research projects for a total of \$858,000. Those projects are as follows:

Ongoing Projects—

- Quarterly Nonresident Visitor Analysis
- 2018 Economic Impacts and 2019 Outlook
- Tourism and Recreation Monitoring
- ITRR Data Mining (includes transportation zone of influence/attractions)
- Panel Studies
- Survey Kits
- Emerging Issues

One-Time Projects—

- What are repeat visitors looking for on a return trip?
- Indian Country cultural and heritage tourism
- Economics and characteristics of alpine skiing in MT
- Motorcycle touring
- Using tourism to recruit new business
- Tourism's impact on rural communities
- Community tourism development case study—Gardiner (after development)

Rachel Gregg moved to approve the recommendation of the committee. Bill McGladdery seconded. Motion passed.

Marketing Committee Updates—Katie Grice, Chair

Audits

The Marketing Committee recommended final approval for the following audits:

Glacier Country (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$0.00.

Tami Burke moved to approve the recommendation. Bill McGladdery seconded. Motion passed.

Southwest Montana (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$109.33.

Steve Wahrlich moved to approve the recommendation. Lindzy Roth seconded. Motion passed.

Belgrade CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$87.43.
Kim Holzer moved to approve the recommendation. Patricia McGlynn seconded. Motion passed.

Bozeman CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$0.00.
Jeff Ewelt moved to approve the recommendation. Steve Wahrlich seconded. Motion passed.

Dillon CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$39.28.
Steve Wahrlich moved to approve the recommendation. Alger Swingley seconded. Motion passed.

Great Falls CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$87.61.
Bill McGladdery moved to approve the recommendation. Rachel Gregg seconded. Motion passed.

Kalispell CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$866.46.
Bill McGladdery moved to approve the recommendation. Kim Holzer seconded. Motion passed.

Livingston CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$64.90.
Lindy Roth moved to approve the recommendation. Patricia McGlynn seconded. Motion passed.

Miles City CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$36.17.
Steve Wahrlich moved to approve the recommendation. Bill McGladdery seconded. Motion passed.

Missoula CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$420.98.
Tami Burke moved to approve the recommendation. Rachel Gregg seconded. Motion passed.

Sidney CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$1,492.48.
Patricia McGlynn moved to approve the recommendation. Bill McGladdery seconded. Motion passed.

West Yellowstone CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$0.00.
Rachel Gregg moved to approve the recommendation. Lindy Roth seconded. Motion passed.

Whitefish CVB (FY17): Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$677.38.
Jeff Ewelt moved to approve the recommendation. Patricia McGlynn seconded. Rhonda Fitzgerald abstained. Motion passed.

Big Sky CVB (July 1, 2017—December 31, 2017; FY18): The organization responsible to administer the Big Sky CVB lodging tax funds has transferred from the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce to Visit Big Sky. Beginning January 1, 2018, Visit Big Sky took over the administration of the lodging tax funds distributed to the Big Sky CVB. The remaining Cash on Hand of \$118,020.27 has been transferred to Visit Big Sky to continue supporting the approved FY18 Big Sky CVB Marketing Plan budget. Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$118,020.27.

Tami Burke moved to approve the recommendation. Alger Swingley seconded. Glenniss Indreland abstained. Motion passed.

June Marketing Plan Presentations

Katie gave an overview for the June 2018 marketing plan presentations saying that they would be done the same way as last year setting up trade show style with each Region being set up with their respective CVBs. Each organization will give a brief presentation with focus on new updates, what worked over the past 12 months and what didn't work as well as providing a one sheet "fast facts" to hand out.

Region and CVB Rules & Regulations

Katie said that the initial review of the Rules & Regulations is underway and at this time they are working on making the table of contents more concise and focusing on making the document flow better.

MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (MOTBD) UPDATE—MOTBD Staff

Montana Office of Tourism & Business Development (MOTBD) updates were given. If you would like to receive the Friday Flash newsletter, please email Carmen Levick at CLevick@mt.gov.

TRIBAL TOURISM REPORT—Casey Lozar, Bureau Chief—Business Technical Assistance Division

Casey gave a brief update on the new Tribal Tourism Region which was created through SB309 in the last legislative session. This bill allocated \$100,000 of the lodging tax funding to the development of tribal tourism across the state. He said that based on feedback from the joint meeting between the STED (State Tribal Economic Development) Commission and the TAC last fall, he and his team have been working closely with tribal tourism and other partners to develop a plan to spend those funds. He said that the short-term priorities are to update the Seven Lodges tribal tourism guidebook and updating the tribal tourism website.

VOICES OF TOURISM UPDATE—Dax Schieffer, Director

Dax gave an overview of the work and mission of Voices of Montana Tourism. They are focused on education and outreach to talk about the economic impact and the importance of tourism in Montana. For more information please visit <http://www.voicesoftourism.com/>.

UPCOMING TAC MEETINGS

- June 11-12, 2018—Helena (Helena Regional Airport)
- September 24-25, 2018—Helena (Great Northern Hotel)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.