



Jackson Hole Travel and Tourism Board Regular Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2022

Link to the full recording of [Zoom Meeting](#)

CALL TO ORDER and PRONOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM 3:00 PM

Cory Carlson called the meeting to order. Mary Bess, Brian Gallagher, Joe Madera, and Willi Brooks. Crista Valentino attended via zoom. Erik Dombrowski was not present. Contract staff in attendance were Kathryn Brackenridge, Tim O'Donoghue, Britney Magleby, Sue Muncaster, and Bret Linnsenmen. Vice Mayor Jorgensen was also in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment in solid support of the Friends of Bridger Teton proposal was given by Chuck Harris, Jules Butler, Jordan Rich from Voices JH, M.Dittmer, Steve Markason, Ellen Falls, and Todd Stiles. Further comments in support were posted in the chat from Cynthia Bardman, Susan Marsh, and Madison Traviss.

ACTION ITEMS

Willi Brooks moved to **approve** [Minutes: 2/10/22 regular meeting](#), seconded by Joe Madera. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Willi Brooks moved to **approve** [Minutes: 2/11/22 special meeting: Board Retreat](#), seconded by Madera. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Brian Gallagher **moved to the approval of** [Vouchers 3040-3051 for \\$1,037,810.75](#), seconded by Chairman Carlson. Mary Bess pointed out a formatting error, misclassifying one entry. **Motion passed unanimously** with the correction approved by Bret Linnsenmen.

Request for Funding: [Friends of the Bridger-Teton Visitor Education and Responsible Recreation](#). Please go [23:30 in the Recorded Zoom Meeting](#) to watch the presentation and discussion.

After concluding the presentation asking the Board for 1 million dollars for Ambassadors for Responsible Recreation, Joe Madera asked clarification on a statement by presenter Scott Kosiba about why he felt like the Bridger Teton National Forest had a “lack of adequate support to date.” Kosiba explained that historically the BTNF had not had the luxury of funding in the same way that the National Park has had but seeing similar visitation levels. With no kiosks, where folks have to drive through and pay to enter public lands or pay fees at our dispersed camping areas, these sites are seeing the most challenges, and since so there's no obligation to pay, there's no revenue generated to address this issues. He explained that his non-profit Friends of the BT exists to address a “century or so of chronic underfunding and understaffing” and fill in the gaps. The total operating budget for the organization was \$410,000 in 2021.

Chairman Carlson asked Kosiba to expand on the goal for this initiative to be self-sustaining in the future. Kosiba said the most significant initiative with the potential to generate revenue for us is the kiosks at trailheads for donation via credit card, cash, or PayPal. Based on what they have seen in GTNP with Grand Teton Association and the National Park Foundation projects there is an appetite to give, which has been confirmed anecdotally by the current ambassadors to the public.

Mary Bess asked about the potential reach of the ambassadors, to which Kosiba replied that they are currently seeing upwards of a 1,000,000 visitors on the National Forest and along with the Cache Street Visitor Center and coordinating with Grant Teton Park Association with their mobile interpretive services at the mountain resort he thought “it's safe to say we have the potential to interact with hundreds of thousands” of visitors. Still, they do not have sufficient data (and it's a priority to collect more).

Willi Brooks asked for clarification from Attorney Keith Gingery about what items in the proposal fall into the boundaries of what the JHTTB can fund under State Statues. Addressing the entire budget for the project, Attorney Gingery reminded the Board the statute reads that Lodging Tax revenue "shall be used to shall be limited to promotional materials, television and radio advertising, printed advertising, digital content, social media, promotion of tours, staging of events, educational materials, other specific tourism-related objectives. Gingery said that "a lot of it is educational- an attempt to educate the public about our area, and then you have the pieces that go into that education." For salaries, he reminded the Board the JHTTB does that already with the Chamber of Commerce, so there's precedent for how the Chamber is providing promotion paying people that do it. Other questionable issues were leasing 20 vehicles at \$100,000 and rentals for a transmitter system. Gingery stated this was analogous to events sponsored by the JHTTB where funds are used to lease a stage or portapotties. Gingery said the last provision, "other specific tourism-related objectives," can be interpreted broadly.

Board Treasurer Brian Gallagher stated his support and comfort with the proposal from a legal standpoint. "We pay some salaries through our events and to the Chamber of Commerce, and we heard from all 4 of our State elected a few weeks ago who stated they supported the direction of this board and doing stuff like this." He would support this becoming a reoccurring expense for the JHTTB.

Gallagher motioned to approve the funding request from the Friends of the Bridger Teton for \$1,000,000 out of the fiscal year 2023 budget. It was seconded by Brooks, who stated his full support. Mary Bess said she thought the project had far-reaching benefits for both locals and visitors and that face-to-face is essential when dealing with folks new to Nature. Crista Valentino and Carlson added further support; Joe Madera stated he was hesitant due to the "sticker shock," didn't support the total amount, and would like to remove salaries, vehicle leases, and transmitters.

Treasurer Gallagher spoke about the budgetary aspect related to fiscal year 2,023. Revenues for the current year are \$1,000,000 higher than projected, with \$700,000 unallocated, leaving approximately \$6,000,000 in "reserves." Gallagher felt there was little benefit to the community with that money in reserves. Any money spent will get an immediate return on investment if one fire is prevented.

Bret Linnesenmen echoed Gallagher regarding resource availability and brought up the question for Kosiba "how much of the \$1,000,000 would be spent before June." Discussion ensued that 1/4 of the total budget might be spent in June, and Kosiba stated they had the support of the Bank of Jackson Hole to carry them through the beginning of JHTTB's fiscal year 2023, which starts in July. Linnesenmen reminded the Board they need to record expenses when incurred.

Gallagher restated the motion to fund the Friends of Bridger Teton Ambassadors for Responsible Recreation Proposal for 1 million dollars and allocate 25% out of FY 2022 and 75% out of FY 2023, seconded by Brooks. Town of Jackson Vice Mayor Jorgensen phoned in to voice his support. **The motion passed 5-1 with Joe Madera voting in opposition, Gallagher, Brooks, Valentino, Carlson, Bess in favor, and Erik Dombrowski not present.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Jackson Hole Central Reservations Update: David Kingston presented a [snapshot of air credit sales for January 2,022 and the fiscal year, May 1- Jan 1, 2022](#). Sales were down considerably. General Manager Bridget Murphy was also present. Joe Madera asked for confirmation that due to low sales Cen Res would not need JHTTB funding set aside in FY 2022. Treasurer Gallagher

was uncomfortable with Kingston's comments that demand has to do with low snow as all indicators are up for winter visitation. The inventory available on Central Reservations needed attention and re-evaluating the business model. Inventory producers that traditionally provide lodging that could be packaged with activities and air credit have not been participating. Carlson suggested working with international wholesalers.

UPDATES

Treasurer's Update: Brian Gallagher reported December revenue came in at 50% above our previously high watermark in 2019, and January came in 46% above January 2019. JHTTB is \$1,000,000 in topline revenue over our projections through the first seven months of our fiscal year.

Marketing Committee Update: The Sustainable Destination Management Planning (SDMP) process is well underway. The resident tourism sentiment survey has 2,490 responses from this community with a 76% completion rate in two weeks; they have only captured seven surveys in Spanish with a lower completion rate of 29%. Strategies to better engage with our bilingual community are underway.

Events Committee Update: Britney Magleby announced the Event Committee has been working hard on event applications and will report to the Board in April. Jess McMillan gave a Jackson Hole Rendezvous Festival update was given by who said there was an uptick in Destimetrics and VIP ticket sales, so they were confident in the success of the event. They are focusing on security and working with the Town of Jackson on logistics.

Sustainability Committee Update: March 14 - 19 is the first community-wide public engagement surrounding the sustainable destination management planning process. Public events will be streamed live via Facebook for anyone who can't make it in person. The Board was encouraged to attend as many events as possible.

SDMP Community Information Meetings: IN PERSON and FACEBOOK LIVE

Jackson, WY: Tuesday, March 15, 2022, Snow King Resort Ballroom at 6:30 pm

Teton Valley, Idaho/Driggs, ID: March 16, 2022, Driggs Senior Center at 6:30 pm

MATTERS FOR THE BOARD AND CONSULTANT: NONE

Joe Madera made a motion, and the meeting was **ADJOURNED at 4:38 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted: Willi Brooks, Secretary _____

Date Approved by the Board April 21, 2022, as evidenced by the Chairman's signature below and attested to by the Board Secretary:

Attested: Cory Carlson, Chair _____

Date _____

Willi Brooks, Secretary _____

Date _____