



**REGULAR MEETING DRAFT: THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022, AT 3:00 PM**

Town of Jackson Council Chambers

[Link to Zoom Recording](#)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chairman Erik Dombroski called the meeting to order at 3.05 pm.

**PRONOUNCEMENT OF A QUORUM**

A quorum was established with six board members present; Erik Dombroski, Mary Bess, Joe Madera, Crista Valentino, and Willi Brooks in person; Brian Gallagher attended via zoom. Also present were Senator Mike Gierau, Councilman Mark Barron, contract staff Tim O'Donoghue, Kathryn Brackenridge, Sue Muncaster, and Bret Linsenmann. Board Chair Cory Carlson was not present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ACTION ITEMS**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Willi Brooks motioned to approve the May 12 Regular Meeting Minutes; Crista Valentino seconded the motion. No public comment. Motion passed 6-0

**APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

Willi Brooks motioned to approve Vouchers 3081- 3093 for a total of \$172,802.76; Crista Valentino seconded the motion. No public comment. Motion passed 6-0.

**APPROVAL OF COLLE MCVOY AGENCY OF RECORD CONTRACT**

Due to lack of complete information, this item was continued to a future meeting

**RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT**

Erik Dombroski spoke on behalf of the marketing committee and summarized the process which started 1.5 months ago with board approval of and release of the RFP. The marketing committee, along with Communications Manager Sue Muncaster and Executive Director Kathryn Brackenridge narrowed down the 8 written proposals to 4 who were invited to give oral presentations June 1-2, 2022. The marketing committee chose to recommend the contract award to the Teton County-based company TMBR. The decision was made based on TMBR's understanding of local conditions and direction the JHTTB is heading, overall site design and functionality, TMBR's working relationship with JHTTB Advertising Agency of Record Colle McVoy, cost and pricing structure, understanding of management, marketing, and stewardship, ability to work with local partners, and robust analytical capabilities presented.

**Brian Gallagher motioned to award the website development contract to TMBR and directed our attorney to draft a contract. Crista Valentino seconded the motion.**

**Public Comment:**

Senator Mike Gierau expressed his concerns about the process of choosing TMBR and stressed the importance of this award due to its expense. He questioned whether legal advice from the County Attorney on the RFP process was adequate. He was concerned “about the process the JHTTB went through” and that the public was not adequately engaged and informed. He says he watches carefully how lodging tax revenue is spent because he helped pass the bill at the state level. He said he was concerned that the recommended award goes to TMBR because the owner [Brian Modena] of TMBR was a former JHTTB Board member [term ended June 2021]. Specifically, he was concerned about the “optics” of an award this size going to a former board member. His advice was that only if the Board was confident in the process should they move forward with the award.

Steve Meadows, a former JHTTB board chairman, shared concern over the process and budgetary total [\$400,000 is in the draft budget for 2022-23; the TMBR proposal was for \$180,00]. Meadows echoed Gierau’s concerns about the “optics” in issuing the contract to a former board member. He pointed to other recent decisions, specifically the award of 1 million dollars to the Friends of the Bridger Teton for visitor management in the national forest, and suggested this type of spending is potentially out of line with state statute and could threaten the lodging tax on a statewide level. He advised the board that tourism promotion is the primary responsibility despite “education” being added to the State of WY statute as appropriate use of lodging tax funds. He reminded the board that he was one of the people responsible for lobbying for the 40-60 split in the collection between the JHTTB and Town/County and does not believe the current board is operating within the statute. He suggested creating a policy about former board members applying for JHTTB-funded projects to avoid optics of favoritism and suggested starting the RFP process over.

Teton County Commissioner Mark Barron said he was concerned about Teton County/Town of Jackson losing lodging tax monies for infrastructure and visitor mitigation projects if the lodging tax is taken away due to perceived missteps of the Board. He did not feel the budget for the website was warranted, nor did he support a fulfillment portion of the website. He did not feel the process was publicly transparent and did not support awarding the process to a former board member, and recommended tabling the decision to award the contract. Alex Muromcew was concerned about the \$400,000 budget and the fact that this is an election year.

Erik Dombroski responded that the \$400,000 is a “placeholder” but that the contract suggested would be much less than that amount. In addition to the actual site, the budget allows for new media assets (photo, video, written content). The customer fulfillment portion is not something the Board will be moving forward with at this time, but the Board only wants to ensure the new site can accommodate this feature in the

future. Brian Gallagher clarified that the TMBR contract estimate was \$150,00 to \$170,000.

Joe Madera echoed the public comment about the award to a business operated by a former board member and was concerned about “how this looks to the community.” Madera questioned why other board members (outside the marketing committee) were not included in the process. Madera did not believe the process was followed correctly and did not believe the board could award to a former board member. Mary Bess stated there was no process to prevent the board from awarding a contract to a former board member and suggested pausing the award until this was resolved. Willi Brooks stated he recalled that all board members were invited to be involved in the process during the Board Retreat [Feb 11, 2022], when a decision was made to pursue a new website.

Dombroski explained that the purpose of committees within the board is efficiency and to share the workload. The JHTTB process in the past has been committees make decisions and then a recommendation is made to the entire board for a vote. Recently the JHTTB had the entire board included in the RFP process for the creative agency of record, but Dombroski said this was out of the normal and is open to welcoming everyone in the process. Dombroski also clarified that whether an applicant is a Wyoming company is in the scoring criteria, but whether an applicant was a former board member was not, so it was not taken into consideration; the 5-point preference for Wyoming companies was to the benefit of TMBR. Madera stated that the recordings of the oral proposals should have been shared with the entire board before a vote was made and that the “optics” of a perceived conflict of interest should always be at the forefront of board decisions. Madera felt the board should stop bringing up the amount of work committees do.

Brian Gallagher stated the job of the board is to allocate funds efficiently to meet objectives and award to the most qualified applicant and that the implication there was a malicious intent re: conflict of interest “was absurd.” Gallagher felt there was widespread community support for the website. Brooks stated he believed Modena’s track record on the board and the quality of work of his local staff “is second to none” and that it would be to the benefit of the community to use Modena’s knowledge of JHTTB and direction the board is heading to create a better visitor experience. Brooks suggested that anyone who wanted to be involved in the process should do so from the beginning. The board discussed whether the issue at hand was with the “process” or the “award.”

Crista Valentino clarified that the scoring matrix prioritizes local knowledge and keeping monies in Wyoming and is meant to be an “objective” tool. She asked the marketing committee if they felt their decision was made on this objective basis and budgetary responsibility, and if so, “optics” or subjective criteria should not be relevant. She supported awarding based on facts and figures but supported opening the process up and sharing the scoring with the public for another month. Gallagher said the RFP was posted months ago, and anyone who wanted to be involved could have been. Madera felt the recommendation should have been released to the rest of the board sooner than yesterday. Commissioner Barron approached the board out of order and

stated that all board members should have seen the full applications before voting or “they weren’t doing their jobs.” Kathryn Brackenridge stated that Chief Deputy County Attorney Gingery was always kept abreast during the process and pointed to a Google doc with scoring that could be shared publicly. Gallagher asked for clarification on whether next steps were starting over with the RFP process or more time for the public and full board to review the process.

**Gallagher withdrew his original motion; Madera made a motion to continue the discussion to the next monthly board meeting, seconded by Bess.**

Gallagher asked that the motion allows for a special session so he could vote before the end of his term, to which Valentino expressed her support. Discussion ensued about two open board positions and whether they would be filled by the July meeting.

**Gallagher motioned to table the item for a meeting before June 30, seconded by Brooks.** Commissioner Barron questioned, “Whom does the board serve.” Dombroski replied that three weeks was plenty of time to make this decision. Discussion ensued about how the information would be shared. Senator Gierau expressed concern about the optics of deciding before Gallagher leaves the board. Communications Manager Sue Muncaster stated she felt that building the website before the end of the Sustainable Destination Management Plan findings could potentially further threaten public trust in the SDMP process. Steve Meadows said the fact that the matrix did not have a conflict-of-interest consideration was a concern, as was the optics of rushing the process. Commissioner Barron commended the board on their good work but stated again his concern about deciding before a board member is off the board. Valentino clarified her comments supporting a vote before two empty seats on the board was not to satisfy Gallagher, but instead to get all the feedback of current board members familiar with the process. She also reminded the Board that Madera and Gallagher’s seats might be empty at a July meeting, and neither could vote. Madera suggested that as a public member, Gallagher could still be involved in the marketing committee decision. Bess suggested that the board discuss the conflict of interest before a vote on the website is made. Online comments included “Jason,” who felt decisions being made were threatening JHTTB funding. Kari Cooper agreed and asked if the public could be involved in the vetting process. **A vote was taken and failed 2 – 4 with Dombroski and Gallagher in favor, Bess, Brooks, Valentino, and Madera opposed.**

Erik Dombroski made a plea to continue the approval for one month at a maximum and said the actual site would take nine months or more to become serviceable. Valentino suggested studying the bylaws for any mention of the conflict of interest, possibly re-evaluating the scoring matrix, and/or reviewing the scoring. She questioned whether a date for the decision was necessary, leaving the option for a special meeting open. Madera said he supported a date for the meeting in the motion and added that a discussion of the bylaws should include conflict of interest verbiage. Gallagher said Chief Deputy County Attorney Gingery should determine if there is a conflict of interest.

**Erik Dombroski motioned to continue the award of website design until the next regularly**

**scheduled board meeting [scheduled for July 14], which Madera seconded.** Senator Gierau stated he was not accusing the Board of a conflict of interest, simply that he wanted a longer time for himself, the JHTTB Board members, and the public to review the scores and the process further. Gallagher confirmed this disallows a special meeting. **A vote was taken and the motion passed 5 – 1, with Brian Gallagher voting against.**

#### **FUNDING REQUEST: RENDEVOUZ EVENT MANAGEMENT**

Kristan Clarke-Burba presented a proposal for two media events in fiscal year 22-23. Her Budget and Presentation can be found via this link and includes examples of articles written after attending fiscal year 21-22 events. She will focus on promoting new experiences beyond Jackson Hole (lesser-known areas) and educational experiences for guests. The \$40,000 ask reflects 25% of her total budget. **Madera motioned to approve the funding request in the amount of \$40,000; Bess seconded the motion, which passed 5-0 with Erik Dombroski recusing himself from the vote due to a conflict of interest.**

#### **FUNDING REQUEST: CHAMBER OF COMMERCE – DOWNTOWN VISITOR AMBASSADORS**

Anna Olson proposed adding a seasonal summer position to be an ambassador on the Town Square to manage visitor information, flex space, and parklets. The Town of Jackson has expressed support for the job. The salary for the position is \$16,284, which would be split between the Chamber and the JHTTB; \$8142 is the requested amount. Olson confirmed that they would do their best to keep track of the number of people contacted and report out at the end of the season. The position, once hired, has a 14-week schedule through the end of September. This funding request is in addition to the \$550,000/annually that the JHTTB funds the Chamber of Commerce for visitor services. **Bess motioned to approve the \$8142 request for the downtown ambassador, seconded by Madera. The motion passed 6-0.**

#### **FUNDING REQUEST: GWU/DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN INCREASED THE SCOPE OF WORK**

Seleni Matus presented the details of a for \$81,651 to increase their scope of work and timeline for delivery of the Sustainable Destination Management Plan (SDMP). The increase would cover additional research and data analysis, efforts to include more input from marginalized populations, increased outreach and communications and extending the project timeline through the end of December 2022. Brooks motioned to approve \$81,651 for the increased scope of work for the SDMP, seconded by Bess. The motion passed 6-0.

#### **APPROVAL FRIENDS OF BRIDGER TETON CONTRACT**

Friends of BT Contract

**Brooks moved to approve the contract as presented, seconded by Valentino.** Madera asked for “metrics of success” which he expected to be regular and in-depth for the high dollar amount of the contract. Kathryn Brackenridge said Scott Kosiba from Friends of the BT would be making monthly updates to the board. A discussion ensued

that all funded projects should present KPIs and that these should include information beyond spending. **The motion passed contingent upon including regular updates and tracking measures of success. 6-0.**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **TREASURER'S UPDATE**

No revenue updates were presented. The 22-23 Budget was due to be presented to the Joint Information Meeting Monday, June 13.

**AMENDED BYLAWS** – This item was tabled to a future meeting for discussion due to the length of the current meeting and the absence of County Attorney Gingery.

Draft of amended Bylaws

Resolution to amend Bylaws

### **RENDEZVOUS FESTIVAL RECAP**

Jackson Hole Mountain Resort's Jess McMillan shared an exciting video that recapped the energy and fun of the event. She reported the first event in over three years was challenging to put on but, by all measures, was successful with an estimated 3000-4,000 on the Town Square and 6000 at Teton Village. She said it felt like a community celebration more than a visitor event. Because it was during spring break, many employees were gone, and they had to bring in workers from out of the area. Destimetrics data showed a bump in hotel stays. Joe Madera clarified that events of this size require full board approval (as opposed to just the events committee).

Recap slide deck

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Sustainability Committee  
none

Events Committee  
-A mandatory meeting for any events receiving JHTTB funding was scheduled for all applicants on Thursday, June 16.

Marketing Committee  
none

## **MATTERS FOR THE BOARD AND CONSULTANT**

**ADJOURN 5:08 pm**

Willi Brooks

Respectfully Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary

DocuSigned by:

*Willi Brooks*

FCDA7F14EE9D4EB...

Date Approved by the Board July 14, 2022, as evidenced by the Chairman's signature below and attested to by the Board Secretary:

Attested: *Cory Carlson*, Chair Cory Carlson

DocuSigned by:

*Cory Carlson*

3F29DB68E8D1401...

8/4/2022

Date \_\_\_\_\_

DocuSigned by:

*Willi Brooks*

FCDA7F14EE9D4EB...

Willi Brooks

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

8/4/2022

Date \_\_\_\_\_