



**BIG \* SKY**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Big Sky Chamber Board Meeting Minutes**  
**January 22, 2018 | 8:30am**

**Present:** David O'Connor, Britt Ide, Brandon Bang, Ken Lancey, Sarah Phelps, Bill Simkins  
**Not Present:** Kevin Germain, Greg Lisk, Paul Robertson – Resigned due to relocation  
**Staff:** Candace Carr Strauss, Lori Wetzel, Heather Gottschalk  
**Call to Order:** 8:32am

**Public Comment**

- Dan Clark and Tara Mastel with the MSU Extension Local Government Center introduced themselves and explained they were present to listen.
- Denise Albrecht introduced herself. She is the democrat running for the House District 64. She came to listen and hear the issues facing our community.
- Pat Flowers introduced himself. He is running for the Senate District 32. He is here to listen to the immediate concerns in the community of Big Sky and learn all he can.
- David Madison from the Lone Peak Lookout introduced himself to those he hadn't met and explained he was present to cover the meeting for the paper.

**Approval of Minutes**

- A motion to approve the December meeting minutes was made by Brandon and seconded by Sarah. With all in favor, the motion carried.

**Finance Committee Report**

- With Paul Robertson's departure from Big Sky and resignation from the Board, the Treasurer position is VACANT. In the interim, Candace and Lori will handle the Finance Committee's report.
- A motion was presented to approve the amended budget which removes fiscal sponsorship of the CVB from the Big Sky Chamber. Lori and Barb Sanem with MOTBD, worked diligently to insure the smooth transfer of fiscal sponsorship to VBS with a close-out audit performed without issue.
- The motion to approve the amended budget was made by Britt and seconded by Sarah. With all in favor, the motion carried.
- David began a conversation about upcoming Resort Tax Board elections. Deadline for candidates seeking election is February 12<sup>th</sup>. The deadline for Resort Tax funding applications is April 30<sup>th</sup> with the election of two new board members on May 8<sup>th</sup>. This will make it difficult to educate new board members of the financial changes with the two organizations.
- The Chamber's next Non-Profit Leadership Roundtable on Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> will be focused on assisting organizations with their Resort Tax Board funding requests, giving the community plenty of time to work with what they learn before submission. This program is sponsored by First Security Bank and Audi.
- Candace remarked how Lori is doing a fantastic job with the new Accounts Receivables process and chamber member benefits. The Chamber is getting automatic payments integrated into the current system as recommended.

**Transportation**

- The Transportation Committee is newly formed and getting acquainted with the goals and initiatives related to the committee. The TIGER Grant was submitted with awards being announced in May. Only 6% of submissions are funded. In the event funds are received, Brian Springer, from Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport has offered his assistance since it was a TIGER grant that funded the roundabout at the airport.

- The BZN Int'l Airport has set an 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive passenger record at nearly 1.2 million passengers during 2017. The largest in the state. Further, American Airlines' expanded service in the past year will start to show impacts in this year's numbers.
- HB473 I BRSA is the gas tax that passed last legislative session that puts \$.06/gallon on unleaded gasoline and \$.02/gallon on diesel. The dialog is important for the board to be a part of, so that the community can be properly educated on the impact this will have on the tourism economy.
- The Transportation Committee will research the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Grant opportunity. The timeline on this opportunity is fall, and if received, granted in January.

### Housing

- 1100 people responded to the survey which quantifies the issue to the community. Next steps are that Wendy Sullivan will be conducting stakeholder interviews in market in the next few months prior to completing the updated assessment and recommended action plan.
- The Down Payment Assistance Program (HRDC) is being finalized and fundraising has begun with the hopes of getting some families into homes soon. Glacier Bank's goal for the Gallatin Valley as a whole, is \$1 million.

### Strategic Planning

- Brandon requested furthering the conversation related to the government affairs discussion/strategic initiative of the Big Sky Chamber. A date to have Dr. Eric Austin from the MSU Burton Wheeler Center who has been facilitating this discussion will be set to address this and to wrap up the process.

### Big Sky Chamber Board

- The Chamber currently has a vacancy with Paul Robertson's departure from the market and resignation from the board (Paul's letter of resignation was distributed) and David will be stepping down as Chair of the board in June.
- A discussion on board composition and a layered succession plan followed.
- David made a motion for Sarah, the current Vice Chair, to be Chair-elect with him stepping down to Past Chair. The motion was seconded by Britt. With all in favor, the motion carried.
- A discussion on the length of term for the Chair followed.
- Britt made a motion to appoint Sarah as board Chair as of July 1<sup>st</sup> for a three-year term, which coincides with the new fiscal year.
- A discussion followed about the transition of board chairs.
- The amended motion by Britt nominated Sarah for a three-year term independent from her original term on the board. Seconded by David, with no more discussion and a unanimous vote, the motion carried.
- The discussion of board composition was tabled to next month's meeting.
- The Executive Committee will act as the nominating committee to fill the current VACANT seat.

### Economic Outlook

- The Chamber will be hosting the BBER's 2018 Economic Outlook on Wednesday, January 31, 2018 from 8:00am-1:00pm at Lone Peak Cinema. The first time for this event to be held in Big Sky, the live broadcast from Bozeman was made possible thanks to our sponsors, Avitus Group out of Billings and the MSU Hospitality Management & Culinary Arts Programs, along with a Media sponsor, *Explore Big Sky*. The economic forum will forecast the projected outlook throughout the state and bring it down to a local level. The Chamber is offering the tickets for \$25.00 which will include lunch. In Bozeman, where 450+ attendees are expected at The Commons, the price is \$50.00.

- The main topic is the Impact of Higher Education on MT so that could affect the turnout, but the Chamber will be showcasing the connection to MSU's Hospitality Management & Culinary Arts Programs through their sponsorship which does directly affect the Big Sky Community.
- In the future, the Chamber would like to look at hosting the live event here, in Big Sky.

#### **MT Chamber Business Days at The Capitol Recap**

- David and Candace attended the event in Helena. The takeaway was that tourism and its economic impact is grossly underrepresented and our industry will need to reinforce the messages of Voices of MT Tourism and Tourism Matters to MT moving toward the 66<sup>th</sup> Legislature.

#### **MT Infrastructure Coalition (Darryl James, ED)**

- The Big Sky Chamber is currently a member of the MT Infrastructure Coalition. 2018 National Infrastructure Week is May 14-21, so we will look to this group to coordinate communications around infrastructure challenges state-wide during this time.

#### **Intellectual Property Policy**

- The Chamber does not currently have an intellectual property policy, but it will look to create one that current/new employees will sign.

#### **CEO Report**

- Candace attended the GoWest Summit in Salt Lake City, Utah. It demonstrated the importance revealed by the DNA study for Big Sky to focus on bringing the "right" tourists here for the right reasons.

Candace will be sending out the materials for Executive Session electronically.

#### **Adjourn**

A Motion to adjourn was made by Sarah and seconded by Brandon. With all in favor the motion passed, and the board adjourned at 10:12am.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Heather Gottschalk  
Marketing Director

#### **IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BOARD MEETING**

10am – 12noon           BIG SKY (COMMUNITY) COUNCIL: Facilitated discussion with Dan Clark,  
MSU Extension Local Government Center