



# **BIG \* SKY**

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## **Big Sky Chamber Board Meeting Minutes** **March 13, 2018 | 8:30am**

**Present:** David O'Connor, Sarah Phelps, Brandon Bang, Britt Ide, Ken Lancey and Greg Lisk  
**Not Present:** Bill Simkins, Kevin Germain  
**Staff:** Candace Carr Strauss, Lori Wetzel, Caitlin Lundin  
**Public:** David Buckingham, Scott Johnson, Buz Davis  
**Call to Order:** 8:36am

### **Public Comment**

- Dave Buckingham as the new owner of Alpine Property Management, and a new Chamber member. came to introduce himself to the board and discuss his professional background. He worked in city management in both the military and civilian spheres particularly relating to issues of transportation, housing, water, community development, etc.
- Scott Johnson is a 30-year resident of Big Sky and came to join the board via the VACANT seat left by Paul Robertson. He previously served on the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Yellowstone County Board, and is excited to return.
- Buz Davis came to introduce himself as a candidate for the Resort Tax Board Elections. He is a longtime secondary home owner in Big Sky and a recent full-time resident. He is making his rounds visiting with all the organizations who receive funding from Resort Tax to better understand their missions. His specialty is working on partnerships that engage the community. He is self-employed so does not have an allegiance with any specific local business.

### **Approval of Minutes**

- A motion to approve the February meeting minutes was made by Sarah and seconded by Britt. With all in favor the motion passed.

### **Old Business**

#### **Transportation – Gallatin County/ Big Sky 2017 TIGER Grant Awarded!**

- The Big Sky community was awarded the transformative \$10.3 million Federal TIGER grant that will create 7 turning lanes along HWY 64, wildlife fencing, no parking signage along the side of the road, a pedestrian tunnel by Kircher Park, as well as increased buses for public transportation.
- The process will be formalized when Gallatin County receives and signs the contract from US DOT. This Big Sky Community Organization has already begun work on the pedestrian tunnel, so a meeting has been scheduled with all parties involved to discuss the impact with Resort Tax Funding Applications due April 30th. The roundabout in Belgrade for BZN was funded by a TIGER Grant so conversations will be had with officials there on the process.

### **Finance Committee Report**

- The board will approve the financials for the quarter in April
- Looking at the list of dropped Chamber memberships, it appears to be a normal ebb and flow for an organization like this. Some of the dropped members asked to be dropped a while ago and were never properly cleared out from our system. Two members dropped to lower levels because they felt that the membership was not satisfying their needs. We are working to address how to better serve the needs of our

membership. The final dropped membership was due to a personal disagreement with a Chamber decision, but it has been addressed by the board.

### **Big Sky Chamber Board Discussion**

- Nominating Committee Report
  - Sarah moved to have Scott Johnson fill the VACANT board seat which was seconded by Brandon. The board agreed that he will be a great choice because of his history on the Chamber board, the Yellowstone Country board, and his time spent as a community partner working on the employee housing front. The term will end in the summer of 2018, at which time he intends to rerun for the post. With all in favor, the motion passed.
- Drafted By-Law Amendment
  - The discussion about changing the By-laws to increase the number of board members to “up to 11” as well as allowing voting to be conducted electronically was tabled until the April meeting.
- Board Election for FY 19 in Addition to Chair, Elect announcement
  - The board needs a Treasurer, and new Vice Chair when Sarah becomes Chair. Brandon has agreed to stay on the executive committee and has been proposed to be vice chair. As Ken has been a member of the finance committee with an understanding of the complexities of the two organizations, he was proposed to be the Treasurer.
  - Britt motioned to appoint Ken as Treasurer effective immediately and to appoint Brandon as Vice Chair with the new fiscal year of July 1, 2018, which was seconded by David. With all in favor, the motion passed.

### **Strategic Planning Process - Update**

- The Executive Committee met with Dr. Austin to move the strategic planning process forward. The Big Sky Chamber’s role in the community was identified as being a mix of catalyst, convener, and champion on a myriad of issues. In a lot of ways, we are bringing the community together to have the important conversations around infrastructure and from there making things happen, like the TIGER Grant.
- These ideas have been distilled down into four buckets that we can use as a strategy screen to determine if projects or ideas fit the mission of the Big Sky Chamber. Having these ideas clearly laid out will help us to identify ourselves in the community and to decide how best to invest our resources.

### **Big Chamber 2018 Black Diamond Awards Dinner & Annual Members’ Meeting**

- The new date for the Chamber Awards Dinner is Tuesday, June 26<sup>th</sup> at Buck’s T-4 to honor Dave’s work as the board chair. NorthWestern Energy is a Sustainability Level Sponsor (\$2,500). A sponsorship packet is being created to send out in search of additional sponsors.
- A discussion was had around a keynote speaker for the event that will excite the community and help to put the work of the Chamber in the spotlight.

### **Affordable/ Workforce Housing**

- BSCHT/HRDC presented the findings from the housing survey they commissioned back in November. The biggest data point of note is that 50% of our workforce commutes in from Bozeman/Belgrade which is significantly different from previous study which quoted 83%. This is due to federal data used
- The Housing Trust as an independent committee working with the HRDC is an example of the catalyst, convener, and champion role of the Chamber. The housing trust was created by the Chamber and then given a life of its own to have important conversations likes this. We hope to foster more independent growth for this committee and others like it.

## Energy

- NorthWestern Energy is hosting a community forum to discuss the siting of the mid-mountain substation at WMPAC on Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.
- The Big Sky Chamber supports the need for a third station but does not have an opinion on where it should be placed.

## Water

- The Big Sky Sustainable Water Solutions Community Forum gathered great minds from multiple areas of expertise to discuss the many challenges facing Big Sky around water. An area being debated is the use of groundwater discharge for snowmaking, which technically is no different than using it for golf course irrigation.
- Another area of discussion was the septic permits in the Canyon some of them dating back to the 40s. The idea of including the Canyon into the Big Sky Sewer and Water District would open up a lot of development possibilities but would also create all new issues like having to pump the effluent water uphill to the meadow ponds.

## New Business

### Membership Department

- A new Director of Membership Sales has been hired. RJ Klotz will begin on May 7th after graduating from MSU. He has experience starting his own 501(c)(6) non-profit membership organization. In the meantime, he will be working to learn Chamber Master and creating a list of prospective members.
- Caitlin will now add work on the operational side of membership to her duties. This includes marketing, and coordination of Business After Hours, Ribbon Cuttings and other events and programming.

### BSRAD FY19 Resort Tax Application (Due April 30<sup>th</sup>)

- Candace is working to sit with all the candidates and incumbent members of the Resort Tax Board to explain the way that our organization works with Visit Big Sky and the complexity of their intermingling including a management agreement to contract out employees from one organization to the other.

### Joint Gallatin – Madison County Commission Meeting (April 4<sup>th</sup>)

- Candace is collecting agenda items to present for the Joint County Commission meeting agenda.

## CEO/Staff Reports

- VBS Update
  - The Governor’s Conference on Recreation and Tourism will be held in Big Sky April 15 – 17. VBS will host 5 FAM Tours giving conference attendees a taste of Big Sky that will end in networking events. Our members will be invited to these networking events to represent the community.
  - Visit Big Sky will also host the Pre-Awards Dinner Reception with the theme of “Green Room”.
  - The Visit Big Sky website will be delayed until July at the earliest.
- The Corner Property
  - There is renewed interest by other parties in TCP. We, meaning the Big Sky Chamber, VBS and the Gateway Foundation are still interested in purchasing this property, however without large financial backing in addition to our investment, this does not look like a possibility.

## Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Sarah and seconded by Britt. With all in favor, the motion passed, and the board adjourned at 11:02am.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Caitlin Lundin