

## White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board Meeting Minutes

**Date:** February 23, 2017  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Bristlecone Convention Center - White Pine Room

**Members Present:** Shane Bybee  
Drew Skeen  
Marietta Henry  
Bruce Setterstrom  
Caroline McIntosh

**Staff Present:** Ed Spear  
Meg Rhoades

**Members Absent:** None

**Public Present:** Jane Eberhardy  
James Beecher  
Geri Wopshall  
Wayne Cameron  
George Chachas

Carol McKenzie  
Steve Stork  
Melody Van Camp  
Mark Bassett

Shane Bybee called to order the meeting of the White Pine County Tourism and Recreation Board at 10:00 a.m. on February 23, 2017 in the White Pine Room at the Bristlecone Convention Center. Drew Skeen led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**I. Public Comment:** George Chachas restated his concern about proper snow removal and requested more information on conventions and convention center use. He stated his concerns about the Railroad receiving tax money and not following open meeting law.

**II. New Business:**

**1. Approval for Board Member and Staff to Attend Rural Round Up April 26-28, 2017:**

Mr. Spear stated that in the past we have sent 2 staff and 2 board members but because we have an all new board more could go. Ed will be one of the speakers and his registration will be paid by the Territory. Marietta Henry stated she would like to go, Caroline McIntosh stated that she would be unavailable. Mr. Setterstrom and Mr. Bybee expressed their willingness to go as well.

**Motion:** Caroline McIntosh. To send up to 4 board members and 3 staff to the Rural Round Up that will be held in Elko April 26-28, 2017.

**Motion seconded.** Bruce Setterstrom. **unanimously approved motion carried**

**2. Selection of Board Attorney:** Mr. Spear explained that requests were sent to all of the law offices listed in the phone book and there were three responses. Mr. James Beecher introduced himself and presented his qualifications for being selected as the board's attorney. Jane Eberhardy also gave a presentation as to her qualifications. The resume from Scott Husbands with Woodburn & Wedge was recognized. Mr. Spear stated that

there is no requirement to be present at the meeting or to live in the area. Marietta Henry stated her concern with the proposal from Woodburn & Wedge being a higher fee and concern that if his presence was needed there may be additional fees.

**Motion:** Marietta Henry. To appoint James Beecher as the Board attorney.

**Motion seconded.** Caroline McIntosh. **unanimously approved motion carried**

### **3. Review of current strategic plan for White Pine Tourism and Recreation – Board**

**Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member McIntosh asked if there was a current strategic plan or if there is not if the Board would like to entertain discussion to create one. Board member Setterstrom stated that under this agenda item we cannot create a plan only review a current plan. He suggested that we have an agenda item to create one. Chairman Bybee suggested a committee of board and staff be formed and we proceed with a public workshop type meeting. Board member McIntosh stated that she felt we should make sure that we are in line with the goals of the Nevada Division of Tourism as that is where we receive our grant money from.

### **4. Creation and adoption of White Pine’s Discover the Facts quarterly report for White Pine County tourism statistics replicating the format of Discover the Facts published by the Nevada Division of Tourism.**

**<http://travelnevada.biz/statistics> – Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member McIntosh stated that she had been gathering information on the internet for what is already out there that quantifies what is going on throughout the state. She felt the format used by the Nevada Division of Tourism would be a great place to start to form our own report. Mr. Spear stated that some of the information in this report we already gather and it could be put into report format. Mr. Setterstrom stated that a lot of the information would need to come from the Hotel/Motel owners. Mr. Bybee said that we would need to create some forms to make it easy for the properties. Mr. Bybee suggested that this be added to the agenda for the committee that is formed.

**5. Creation of standardized report to summarize metrics for each event that WPT&R sponsors. Metrics to include: revenue by source, expenditures, room tax data on those weekends, and other event information. Data from previous years would also be included to measure year-over-year longitudinal growth. For example, the following items would be included for 2017 Fire & Ice:**

- Number of vehicles at the gate and revenue
- Number of ice sculptures created
- Detailed expenditures, including advertising
- Room tax for the event weekend
- Social media posts and metrics
- Vendors
- Other pertinent information, including winners, judges, etc.
- Data points from previous years

**Event reports would also be included within the White Pine’s Discover the Facts publication. – Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member McIntosh said that what she is trying to propose is that all of the events are actually measured to see if people are staying here, for how many days and which events are doing well. How are we as a Board supporting these events and how can we bump up the attendance of these

events? One of the things that she was overwhelmed to learn at the City's Tourism Committee's meeting was that Cave Lake State Park saw 216,000 visitors in 2016. Great Basin National Park's numbers have been steadily growing as well, 90,000 in 2013, 110,000 in 2014, 120,000 in 2015 and 140,000 in 2016. She feels knowing these statistics is important. She referenced that we have great anchor points for tourism such as the railroad, museums, and state and national parks. Mr. Spear stated that a lot of this will go back on the properties to give us the information. We cannot legally require them to give us this information. The events that receive Aid to O money from the Board are required to fill out an event outlay report which covers some of the questions raised by Board member McIntosh. Mr. Spear cautioned the Board that a lot of events can't be measured strictly by increase in room tax. Mr. Bybee asked if we can request the properties give us their revenue for specific dates if we were to provide them with a form stating the dates ahead of time. Board member Marietta Henry stated that she felt the reports needed to be online with a box for comments. Bruce Setterstrom asked if we need to hire someone to format this and Mr. Spear said yes. Mr. Bybee explained that there would be a need to have someone build the forms and set up an e-commerce site and would require outside help. Ms. McIntosh said that she felt that we should have a standardized form for our own events so that we can publicize the information. Mr. Setterstrom stated that this was another agenda item and suggested a special meeting.

#### **6. •Review the contract for the current annual audit provider**

##### **•Issue an RFP for the annual audit services**

– **Board Member Caroline McIntosh** Caroline McIntosh stated that she felt with a new board there may be the need for some changes. Mr. Spear explained that the contract is a yearly contract and that the previous contract has already been completed. The new requests are scheduled to go out in March. Mr. Spear explained that the contract used to be for multiple years but several years ago the Board decided to go to a yearly request. Mr. Bybee felt there may be an opportunity for cost savings if a multi-year contract were requested.

**Motion:** Caroline McIntosh. To send out our RFP and advertise it in the local newspaper and to advertise for up to 3 years.

**Motion seconded.** Bruce Setterstrom. **unanimously approved motion carried**

#### **7. List of all trade shows/meetings attended by staff/board members, including dates and locations for FY16, expenditures for each show/meeting, and actual outcomes in effectiveness in increasing tourism in White Pine County. List of proposed shows/meetings for FY17.**

– **Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board Member McIntosh said that she attended the Pony Express Territory Meeting and the dinner with the Go West Summit FAM group and found a lot of value in those and all the exposure we are receiving from those groups. Mr. Spear explained that we put that information together for our grant evaluations each year. It is a lot of work pulling that all together. He expressed concern over how you measure the success of the consumer shows. Mr. Setterstrom stated that the only measure we really have is the number of pieces handed out. Mr. Bybee reinforced that he agreed that would be hard to track. Ms. McIntosh stated that she was wanting a monthly update in every packet so the Board could react to the information as it happened. She suggested installing iPads in some of the properties to try to get feedback. Mr. Setterstrom stated that he would like to see us partici-

pate in the Clark County and Elko County Fair. Mr. Bybee said this seemed to be another item for the special meeting agenda.

**8. Current list of proposed upgrades needed including possible expansion of Bristlecone Convention Center**

•**Monthly report detailing usage of BCC meetings, conventions, special events, and revenue for each event. Monthly report to be included in expanded board packet each month.**

•**Updated calendar of events held at the BCC and upcoming scheduled events for the year included in the board packet each month. – Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member McIntosh said that she appreciated the consistent cleanliness of our current facility. She felt we needed to have a short, medium and long term view of plans for the facility. Mr. Bybee stated that he knew there were already plans to improve the north side of the building. He said that he felt one of the biggest issues that he feels needs to be addressed is the possibility of making our kitchen a cook in kitchen. It is too difficult to cater with the current facility. Mr. Setterstrom requested this be another agenda item. Mr. Spear explained that we do have a CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) that is approved by the Board every year. One of the major projects is the parking lot expansion which has been postponed several times. Chairman Bybee suggested instead of looking at adding a walk in cold storage that a cold storage trailer be purchased. He said this would be an item for the budget. Meg Rhoades asked for clarification as to if he wanted the item on the special meeting agenda and he said yes as it pertains to the strategic plan. Board member McIntosh stated that she would like it to be on more than just the kitchen but on the entire facility. She also wanted to have a report on usage and upcoming plans in the packets each month. Mark Bassett said he was looking at using the same private funding option that the Elko Convention Center used to do there expansion. Mr. Spear said that he looked into this funding option when Elko was looking at funding their expansion that way. The process involves deeding property to the equity firm and a very long amortization. It would tie up funds for a very long time and he is not sure that the ownership of the property is transferred back in the end. Board member McIntosh said she would like to have it looked into.

**9. •List of all grants submitted including granting source(s) during last two years**

•**List of all grants received during last two years**

– **Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member McIntosh would like a list of all of our grants in every packet. Mr. Bybee clarified that it would be a report of both pending and awarded grants month to date in each packet.

**10. •Provide summary of all social media utilized by WPT&R, including metrics for each type – Board Member Caroline McIntosh:** Board member McIntosh complimented our website and wanted to know the metrics of our social media accounts. It was explained that at this time we have Facebook.

**11. On a Monthly basis, publish a list of activities being held at the Convention Center along with all conferences and or seminars for that respective month. Information to include: Name of Event, Date(s) of Event, Number of Attendees, and purpose of Meetings, and where the group is physically from (if not local). This will be publicized**

through the Ely Times, as well as listed on the White Pine Tour and Recreation website. – **Vice Chairman Marietta Henry:** Board member Henry stated that she would like to see us publicize the events that are using the convention center. The list would include the name of the entity, number attending and where they are from if it is out of the area. Mr. Setterstrom asked how much notice is given on bookings. Mr. Spear explained that it varies. Mrs. Henry stated that she would like to see it in the newspaper. Mr. Spear expressed concern about publicizing someone's private event. The Board agreed that some events would need to be listed as private event.

**Motion:** Caroline McIntosh. The Bristlecone Convention Center publicize a list of activities held at the convention center along with conferences and seminars for that respective month and they include the information here with the Name of Event, Date(s) of Event, Number of Attendees, and purpose of Meetings, and where the group is physically from (if not local). This information is to be publicized monthly in the newspaper, on the website and in the board packets.

**Motion seconded.** Bruce Setterstrom. **unanimously approved motion carried**

**12. Provide a listing of seminars/conferences being attended by the Staff and or Board of Directors'. This listing will include the name, location of event, and brief description of the purpose of the Seminar/Conference, along with projected number of attendees.**

**This will be publicized through the Ely Times, as well as listed on the White Pine Tour and Recreation website.**

**Note: Upon return from the seminar/conference, a report will be provided to the Board, stating the number(s) of contacts made, and projected upcoming conferences scheduled in Ely as a result of our attendance.**

– **Vice Chairman Marietta Henry:** This is to provide an analysis of the events that we are attending. Mr. Bybee stated that he feels this should all be a standard form that we submit with the information on the use of the convention center, to the newspaper. Board member McIntosh asked if a subcommittee, possibly headed by vice chairman Marietta Henry, could be created to work with the newspaper to create a form for this information to be reported to them.

**Motion:** Caroline McIntosh. To create a committee to come up with a format that includes a representative from the Ely Times, our Board and staff as far as agenda items 11 and 12 that can be published that receives input from the paper and the staff etc. That all stakeholder understand what the purpose of this is and to make it as simplified and as informative as possible.

Bruce Setterstrom asked if a committee could be formed with the item as it is on the agenda. Board Attorney James Beecher stated that items 11 and 12 could be moved on separately at this time but the information could be combined into one form when the committee was formed. He stated that the formation of the committee needed to be agenzed as the public was not noticed that a committee would be formed. Chairman Bybee asked that the motion be rescinded.

**Motion:** Caroline McIntosh. That we approve item #12 as the listing of seminars and conferences being attended by staff and members of the board as written.

**Motion seconded.** Bruce Setterstrom. Chairman Shane Bybee asked if this was on the same schedule as item #11. Bruce Setterstrom added on the same cycle as # 11.

**unanimously approved motion carried**

**13. Apply for Grant Funding for White Pine Ticket Website – Chairman Shane Bybee:**

Mr. Bybee explained that he and his family used the website getaway.com to book their recent vacation. This site gives the option of paying for your vacation in payments plus an administration fee. He felt that this could be a good option for the White Pine Chamber to generate revenue and help cross sell the community. Mark Bassett handed out a flyer from the Durango Silverton that had a similar program.

**Motion:** Bruce Setterstrom. To continue the development and apply for grant funding for the White Pine Ticket.

**Motion seconded.** Marietta Henry. **unanimously approved** **motion carried**

**14. To Develop Comprehensive Social Media Strategy – Chairman Shane Bybee:**

Mr. Bybee would like to expand our social media to Twitter, Instagram, and Periscope. Mark Bassett talked about the success he has had at the railroad with boosting posts for minimal amounts of money. Mr. Bybee would like us to possibly work with the high school on an internship program but also to send staff to training. He would like to see funding in the next budget for this. Chairman Bybee said that he would entertain a motion to roll forward with this and keep doing the investigation and he will bring back more information as he develops it.

**Motion:** Bruce Setterstrom. "I'll make that motion."

**Motion seconded.** Drew Skeen. **unanimously approved** **motion carried**

### III. Old Business

**1. White Pine Golf Course Update:** Mr. Bybee said that Randy Long was out of town and there had not been a meeting recently.

**2. Approval of January 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes:**

**Motion:** Bruce Setterstrom. To approve the January 19, 2017 meeting minutes.

**Motion seconded.** Marietta Henry. **unanimously approved** **motion carried**

**3. Review of the Financial Report:** Ed Spear explained that February 2017 came in slightly above 2016. The ending fund balance will be showing higher than expenditures for a while because of the way the tax increase for the city is structured. He would like to see us move forward on some of the capital improvements we need to do.

**Motion:** Bruce Setterstrom. To approve the financial report as presented.

**Motion seconded.** Drew Skeen. **unanimously approved** **motion carried**

**4. Approval to Ratify Bills:** Chairman Bybee asked if there were any questions on the bills. There were none.

**Motion:** Marietta Henry. To ratify check numbers 22463-22529, totaling \$108,568.14.

**Motion seconded.** Bruce Setterstrom. **unanimously approved** **motion carried**

**6. Correspondence:** None.

**7. Nevada Northern RR Director's Report:** Mark Bassett stated 109 is back in service. Engine 93's boiler project is in progress. The railroad was mentioned on The Big Bang Theory, that coupled by the National Plan Your Vacation Day promotion, the railroad had a single day of sales that was higher than the sales in the month of February 2012. January was not a good month in the gift shop. Current inventory value is \$40,001.16

**8. Executive Director's Report:** Mr. Spear reported that the last two months have been very busy with both consumer shows and trade shows. He had reduced the shipment of materials to Lakeland but was almost out by the end of the first day. Mr. Spear would like to look at doing some television advertising with the Pony Express Territory. Mr. Spear has written grants for this upcoming cycle to produce those. Mr. Spear said that there are several improvements in the convention center that he would like to complete this upcoming fiscal year.

**9. Staff Report:** Meg Rhoades spoke about the amount of information that was handed out at the consumer show that staff and Board member Setterstrom attended the last two months. She also explained to the Board that it takes several years of meeting with a tour operator at the trade shows to get them to add us to their itineraries. In the packet was a copy of three new itineraries being market by LT Tours whom Lori Drew has met with over the last several years at Go West. These itineraries are guaranteed departures leaving Las Vegas two days a week. They have already been marketed at JTB (Japanese Travel Bureau) for the Japanese market and will be marketed at the upcoming ITB which is the largest travel show in Europe. Meg explained that White Pine County Tourism has also been involved with the Great Basin National Park Astronomy Festival from the first time the event took place. We have heavily marketed the night time skies and this year both covers of the state visitors guide and the new state map are wonderful pictures of the night time sky at Great Basin National Park. Ed Spear introduced Bunny Hill as the new part time office person.

**10. Board Member Reports:** Caroline McIntosh stated that she attended the Pony Express Territory meeting in Eureka and she wanted to compliment Ed and Lori and the staff on how much they do to promote our area and the whole territory. She also attended the dinner with the Go West FAM and complimented the staff on how well that was handled by everyone. She has been attending as many tourism meetings as she can. Bruce Setterstrom stated that at the consumer shows he has attended that the comment he gets the most is "I drive through there but I never knew all this stuff was there". Drew Skeen said that he enjoyed working with Lori at the Morris Murdock Travel show in St. George, UT. He complimented her on how polished she was and said that the train is very definitely our main draw. Shane Bybee thanked the staff, Bruce Setterstrom and Drew Skeen for working the consumer shows and doing a great job to help get the word about Ely out. He talked about the project that Jonathon Dishong is undertaking with his nonprofit group Simplistic Solutions. They are working to take over and repurpose the Old Ruth Club and make it a community center/library/museum. He also stated that he felt the FAM dinner was a great success and that he sat with two German

journalists that loved the area and would be back to spend some time to learn about the area and write about it for several German tour guide publications.

**IV. Public Comment:** Mayor Melody Van Camp stated that the museum will now be open 7 days a week from 10:00am – 4:00 pm. Carol McKenzie said that there used to be someone in Lund that did the horseback riding but they decided to stop because it was too much work.

**V. Adjournment:**

**Motion:** Bruce Setterstrom. To adjourn the meeting.

**Motion seconded:** Marietta Henry. **unanimously approved**      **motion carried**

**Minutes submitted by: Meg Rhoades**

**Minutes approved by:**

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**Name**

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**Date**