

**TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2-3, 2015
HELENA, MT**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Amber Wood-Jensen, Chair—Butte	Matt Ellis—Missoula	Stan Ozark—Glasgow
Bill McGladdery, Vice Chair—Butte	Rhonda Fitzgerald—Whitefish	Lark Paz—Crow Agency
Mark Anderlik—Missoula	Kim Holzer—Stanford	Dude Tyler—Livingston
Cyndy Andrus—Bozeman	Glenniss Indreland—Big Sky	Steve Wahrlich—Billings
Dan Austin—Billings		

COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Bev Harbaugh—Jordan

MONTANA OFFICE of TOURISM STAFF

Jeri Duran—Division Administrator	Caitlin Hassler—Social Media Coordinator
Riana Davidson—Consumer Marketing Manager	Dan Iverson—Public Information Officer
Norm Dwyer—Web Designer	Marlee Iverson—Travel Trade Manager
Thurston Elfstrom—Digital Marketing Manager	Carmen Levick—Executive Assistant
Pam Gosink—Sales & Constituent Services Manager	Anna Marie Moe—Industry Services & Operations Manager
Nik Griffith—Public Relations & Multimedia Coordinator	Barb Sanem—Industry Program/Compliance Specialist

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2014

CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS

Council Chair, Amber Wood-Jensen called the meeting of the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) to order at 12:35 p.m. Introductions of Council members, Montana Office of Tourism (MTOT) staff and the audience followed.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no requests to make changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approval of October 6-7, 2014 TAC Meeting Minutes
Glenniss Indreland moved to approve the minutes. Mark Anderlik seconded. Motion passed.

ITRR UPDATE—Dr. Norma Nickerson

Norma Nickerson gave an overview of the 2015 economic outlook. A presentation of various research projects was also shown. For more information on research by topic or locations, please visit <http://itr.UMT.edu/>.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE—Bill McGladdery, Chair

Bill gave the recommendations of the Research Committee for FY16 research projects for a total of \$725,479. Those projects are:

- Continuation of the quarterly nonresident visitor analysis
- 2016 outlook and 2015 economic impacts
- Monitoring of tourism & recreation in MT
- Data mining of ITRR data sets
- Panel Studies
- Survey Kits
- Assessing Character of Place to Guide Geotourism and the Main Street Montana Project—(a case study of two communities)
- Testing the impacts of Glacier Park bicycling on statewide tourism—(current and future projections)
- Trends and community benefits of tourism as assessed through an analysis of resort tax collections and usage
- Main Street Montana Project research—(to be determined)

Bill McGladdery moved to approve the recommendation of the committee. Rhonda Fitzgerald seconded the motion. Motion passed.

MONTANA OFFICE of TOURISM (MTOT) UPDATE—Jeri Duran, Division Administrator

Montana Office of Tourism (MTOT) and Montana Film Office (MFO) updates were given along with the lodging tax revenue reports.

CONSUMER MARKETING UPDATE—Riana Davidson, Consumer Marketing Manager, MTOT

An overview of the “It’s Time” marketing campaign was given. The social media campaigns were also presented by Caitlin Hassler.

VISITMT.com WEBSITE UPDATE—Norm Dwyer, Senior Web Designer/Project Manager, MTOT

Norm presented the redesigned visitmt.com website.

TRIBAL TOURISM REPORT

—Heather Sobrepene-George, Manager, Indian Country Economic Development (ICED), DOC

Heather said that the MTOT tourism workshop held in Browning in the fall of 2014 was very successful in creating some momentum to build and improve economic development and tourism in the area. Since that workshop, the community has reopened the Browning Chamber of Commerce and the local business owners and residents are working together to build tourism in their area. Other outcomes from that workshop include plans to establish a new visitor information center, and working to create events such as a local arts market and farmer’s market that could draw interest from those traveling through that region. Heather also reported that Ray Gone with Ft. Belknap tourism group is working to develop a plains safari type of FAM tour in that area.

The ICED program provides a variety of grant funds. Currently, some of those funds will be utilized to upgrade RV parks and campgrounds in the East Glacier Park area. At the recent AIANTA conference, Heather said one of the key take-a-ways was the need for itinerary development and the importance of the tribes working with surrounding tourism businesses to ensure the visitor has an authentic experience.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE DISCUSSION

Jeri Duran gave an overview of the legislative bills regarding tourism issues that MTOT is following. Mike Garcia from Voices of Montana Tourism gave an overview of the work that Voices of Montana Tourism is doing to raise awareness for the economic impact of tourism in Montana.

MEETING RECESSED

TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2014

Amber Wood-Jensen called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. She thanked the reception sponsors for their hospitality.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marysue Costello: Marysue asked the TAC and MTOT to put some time and effort into working with MDT regarding rumble strips on the roads in Montana as it is a safety concern for bicyclists. She stated that bicycle tourism is a growing market and that rumble strips are an issue that needs to be addressed.

STATE PARKS UPDATE—Chas VanGenderen, Administrator, Montana State Parks

Chas gave an update on the Montana State Parks, including changes in the system, grant programs and the parks board strategic plan. Challenges such as funding and infrastructure for the parks were also discussed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS BY RESPECTIVE CHAIRS

Executive Committee—Amber Wood-Jensen, Chair

Discussion at the Executive Committee meeting included legislation, the Montana Main Street Project and the tourism award process for the Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation.

Amber said that site selection was also discussed at the Executive Committee meeting. She said that in an effort to streamline and make the process more simplified, the Executive Committee would recommend that the TAC decide where they want to go for their meetings and works with the Site Selection Committee to reach out to those communities to work out the logistics.

Rhonda Fitzgerald moved to approve the recommendation for site selection. Dude Tyler seconded. Motion passed.

Marketing Committee/Audits—Glenniss Indreland, Chair

The Marketing Committee recommended final approval for the following FY14 audits:

Southwest Montana: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$82.45.

Stan Ozark moved to approve the recommendation. Dude Tyler seconded. Motion passed.

Big Sky CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$84,195.06.

Bill McGladdery moved to approve the recommendation. Kim Holzer seconded. Motion passed.

Bozeman CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$0.00.

Dude Tyler moved to approve the recommendation. Mark Anderlik seconded. Motion passed.

Great Falls CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$0.00.

Steve Wahrlich moved to approve the recommendation. Matt Ellis seconded. Motion passed.

Helena CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$5,425.14.

Bill McGladdery moved to approve the recommendation. Kim Holzer seconded. Motion passed.

Kalispell: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$1,018.16.

Dude Tyler moved to approve the recommendation. Steve Wahrlich seconded. Motion passed.

Missoula CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$7,088.27.

Kim Holzer moved to approve the recommendation. Dude Tyler seconded. Matt Ellis abstained. Motion passed.

Sidney CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$10,686.90.

Mark Anderlik moved to approve the recommendation. Matt Ellis seconded. Motion passed.

West Yellowstone CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$0.04.

Stan Ozark moved to approve the recommendation. Steve Wahrlich seconded. Motion passed.

Butte CVB: Approval as submitted with uncommitted funds on hand of \$14,086.72.

Dude Tyler moved to approve the recommendation. Steve Wahrlich seconded. Amber Wood-Jensen abstained. Motion passed.

Retail Sales for the Regions & CVBs—Matt Ellis, TAC Member

Matt said that during the marketing plan redo for the Regions and CVBs, one of the topics that came up was whether or not they could use some of their funds for retail sales of merchandise with logos, etc. to help in promoting their area. Matt and Racene will work with the Marketing Committee to finalize some draft language for a possible change in the policy if the TAC approves this as a marketing expense and present it at the next TAC meeting.

Co-Ops/Joint Ventures—Glenniss Indreland, TAC Member

Glenniss asked for feedback on the new online system and how it is working in general, but specifically on the process of completion reports on the co-op program. Clarification was made that by definition, the partnerships with MTOT are to be called Joint Ventures not Co-Ops as it is lined out in the rules and regulations in the administrative rules for the Regions and CVBs. MTOT will work to get that term changed on the website.

Comment was made that while it has improved, one of the most difficult things in this process is getting the data for the completion reports from the vendors. Jill Shinn from Mercury CSC stated that the reports are currently done monthly the data should be getting out to the partners. She said that if there are partners are not receiving the information, to contact MTOT.

Community Outreach—Amber Wood-Jensen, TAC Chair

Amber said that the TAC members will be making more of an effort to attend the Region and CVB board meetings, MTOT brand workshops, etc. not only in their area, but also other areas when possible. She tasked the Community Outreach Committee (Kim Holzer, Lark Paz, Matt Ellis, Dude Tyler and Robin Hoover) to come up with some sort of calendar/schedule for the TAC to refer to so that they know when and where these meetings are scheduled.

UPCOMING TAC MEETINGS

- June 1-2, 2015—Comfort Inn, Shelby

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.