



GPRTA MINUTES

Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association Board
April 3, 2019
Beaverlodge Town Office

In Attendance: Johnathan Clarkson, Don Whiteford, Karna Germsheid, Cyndi Corbett, Tom Burton, Sandi Neville, Sean McCallum, Ed Smith and staff James Leppan, Jenn Vos & Breanna Gouschuk.

Absent: Bill Smith, Clyde Blackburn, Mark Butler Jenkins, Barb Shannon, Linda Side

1. Johnathan called the meeting to order at 5:59 PM

2. Approval of Agenda:

Moved by Karna Germsheid – Carried

3. Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Sandi Neville – Carried

5. Financial Report (Treasurer) – As of February 28, 2019, we had \$217,267.51 in our checking account.

Accounts Receivable:

Our accounts receivable at the end of February was \$44,361.82, this includes mostly membership billing. The City of Grande Prairie amount of \$14,692.13 for the VIC contract was received at the beginning of March. The MD of Greenview for \$17,667.56 and Nitehawk for \$4,087.13. In February, we have new members and they are Richmond Dry Cleaners, Seekers Media, Peace River Cabins, Wild Blue Yonder, and Bear Creek Folk Festival.

Accounts Payable:

As of February 28, 2019, accounts payable was \$14,545.86 which includes Q99, Big Country, Impact Print & Promo, and Receiver General.

Motion made by Don Whiteford to approve the financial report, seconded by Ed Smith – Carried

6. GPRTA President's Report – Johnathan Clarkson advised that his report will be covered by James's Ed Report.

He's had a few meetings since being back from holidays and learning about the DMP kickoff that he was unfortunately absent for. We've works on the By-Laws in our sub-committee meeting and will circle the amendments via email. We'll be officially announcing that there will be changes to the public on May 2, 2019. We also had a DMF meeting this week. We're looking into a GPRTA Summer Cruiser to help with events, Road Trip Wednesday's, etc. The DMF is looking to sponsor. We're also doing a \$15,000 sponsorship to the Grande Prairie Stompede and looking into an additional \$5,000 sponsorship for a Tarp. The GPRTA team was at the Food & Beverage Expo with DMF members. Next year, we'd like to include GPRTA board members next year at the booth as it was extremely busy. We did lose 2 DMF properties and have learned that they are starting their own DMF. The GP Sport Connection, City, and

County have partnered to create a bid for the 2022 Alberta Winter Games. Waiting to hear if that will proceed. Staff are working hard on the upcoming Gala style AGM at the Podollan Inn & Spa.

7. Executive Director Report (period March 1- March 31)

Meetings/Events:

March 1- Meeting at Rotary with Rotary Campground committee (re Rotary campground joining DMF) Staff meeting
March 4- Staff Meeting
March 5 - DMF Meeting (Four Points)
- GPRTA board meeting (Podollan)
March 6- Phone meeting with Jackie Clayton (DMF, memberships etc)
- Phone meeting with Johnathan Clarkson & Jim Barr re Summer campaign
March 7- Meeting with Mieke (IAT)
- Tourism Map meeting – Sports/Wellness/Culture – Kent, Katie, Karen
- RDDMS board meeting
March 8- Rotary Meeting
March 9- Art Battle GP
March 11- Hiring meeting with Jenn/Crystal
- Meeting with Earl (Hitech) re Digital Display
- Meeting with Len (CIA – kick off & working together)
March 12- Website meeting w/Jenn and Marcus
-Krista Kayser second interview
- William Vavrek – content meeting
March 14- F&B expo run through
Last kick-off meeting
March 15- NWC Kick Off event – centre 2000 (9-12am)
Padrinos meeting – NWC
March 18- Labour Development Meeting (BSN – Wembley)
Alberta Culture Days meeting
March 19- Marketing for Non Profits (Cyndi)
Grant writing course (Jenn/James)
March 20- Grant writing course (Jenn/James)
March 21- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
March 22- Industry Hour – ATB Food Expo (DMF booth)
March 25- Bid committee meeting (Don attended on my behalf); Bylaw committee meeting (Don hosted on my behalf)

News/notes:

For the first week of March, GPRTA held down the fort for the Chamber as they were away at a course and had some staffing issues. We covered the reception area but also took messages and directed people as appropriate.

Bear Creek Folk Festival have returned to GPRTA as members – contra deal with passes in lieu of their guide advertisement and their “executive” membership fee. This mutually beneficial arrangement helps us promote them using their passes throughout the next few months leading up to August.

CAP update – as a centre for the Cultural Access Pass, the VIC has received 5 new citizens and provided the pass and information accordingly.

We are attending Spring Training this year as VIS (not VIC) – up to five staff – Jenn will sub for me, Crystal, Krista and two summer staff. May 6-8. Breanna, myself and Sheila will cover the VIC. Summer season May 13-Sep.2. We will have roaming services available for the season through Travel Alberta, and VIC services we are still looking for funding.

Our VIC is fast becoming the go-to for custom gift baskets. This month we have made baskets for Rotary, Storm, County and IAT. The chamber has signed us up to create baskets for their long-term members too.

Our gift shop is supporting the Dino Museum by purchasing some overflow stock to the value of \$1500 for our gift shop. We will use the items to promote the Museum and add to our custom gift basket options. Our DMF has also agreed to support the Museum with sponsorship of their Paleo for a day campaign, some marketing and advertising for the Summer, and have already pre-approved DMF table for their annual ball. On May 30 I will throw my name in the hat and run to be on the board.

Two campaigns for coop marketing were completed for this fiscal (ending March 31). We received 75% of the \$13,000 spend on our website / content creation, plus \$28,000 for 50% of the #SkiNorthAB campaign. Both evaluation reports still to be updated with metrics.

Our kick off on March 15 of our DMP (Destination Management Plan) was a very successful event. We had excellent buy in from our partners and started the annual project off with a bang. We are developing a steering committee currently and working on the first stages. Expecting an update at our AGM May 2. We took the opportunity to interview some local community members who attended – a veritable “who’s who” – thanks to CIA, co-sponsored by our DMF. Tom Burton mentioned how he brought up his concern of the NWC Team’s missing of Regional in their report.

March 23 GPRTA and DMF were involved in the ATB Food Expo. Very successful with some areas of opportunity for next year, for sure. Staffing was a challenge. DMF sponsored the booth and co-created a cheesecake giveaway. GPRTA had games and prizes, thanks to all involved. GPRTA is a member of the VSB and they are a member of our organization. There is great value in our collaboration. Jenn and I attended a grant writing course which was very worthwhile. We will also be able utilize their programs to find other potential grants worth applying for, and any other training sessions. If there is an area as a board or membership, we would like them to create a workshop for, they are willing to do so.

Had a meeting with Robin White (City) and Candace (Centre for Creative Arts) about AB Culture Days grant. We will be applying for the next campaign in June (first one was due April 5). We will write letters of support for each-other. GPRTA’s approach will be regional. We confirmed our digital display “Elite” with Hitech March 12. Expected 4-6 weeks’ time, hopefully for our AGM. Thanks to \$7,000 grant from VSIF.

We were successful applicants for the STEP program – approx. \$8000 for two summer students. We haven’t thus far been able to find good candidates. Interviews continue. New hire Krista (replaces Sheila) settling in nicely. Looking for up to three part-timers for Summer and then reduce to 2 after. Attended DMO meeting Feb 28 – not a lot allowed to talk about with election up coming. Holding pattern until new tourism info comes out after election.

February 28, I attended a DMO meeting. I’m not allowed to say anything due to the upcoming election. It was a good meeting. Next week, I’m at the CDME training program in Banff. I was able to speak to someone that has previously attended this training at the DMO meeting, and he explained that it’s expanded his working group into the U.S. because our organizations face similar problems in various areas. We’re moving to a point where all Executive Directors will likely require the CDME training.

We fulfilled a bag request for the VIC for 200 packages for April 5. 200 more to follow June 13th – Trampoline & Tumbling Parent Association.

Events coming up:

April 2- DMF meeting

April 3- GPRTA Marketing committee; GPRTA board meeting

April 9-12 - CDME

April 13 - Introduction to Board Governance

This workshop is designed for board members of nonprofit societies, focusing on understanding your roles and responsibilities. Topics include: - Legal Responsibilities - Board Governance - Risk Management - Organizational Planning - Financial Responsibilities - Building a Strong Team - Effective Meetings - Creating an Effective Organizational Structure Hosted by the City of Grande Prairie and presented by the Alberta Culture and Tourism Board Development Program (BDP). Cost: \$25.00 per registrant Date: Saturday April 13, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm Location: Ernie Radbourne Pavilion in Muskoseepi Park For assistance with registering, please call 780-538-0451. This course includes a catered lunch. Registrants must be a current board member of a registered nonprofit society. Space is limited, we request no more than two board members per organization.

April 14-17 - ALHA

April 18- BSN Steering committee meeting

April 30- Tenant meeting

May 2- AGM - Podollan

8. Old Business:

- a. **Grande Prairie Guide Update (Jenn)** – Guide is coming along well. End date to submit ads is April 12, 2019. We should have them for the AGM. We're going to unveil the cover at the AGM. James mentioned that we will do a poster of the front cover.
- b. **Website update (James)** – The website is coming along. We've been provided an extension of the funding to extend into April because it was not completed. We essentially received \$23,000 for our website with 75% coming back to us. This is great because we originally only had \$6,000 set aside for it. The goal is to have ATIS integration, slideshow, and interactive at the AGM.
- c. **Trade Show / Conference Update (Jenn)** – We've attended the Food & Beverage Expo and the Shift Conference since our last board meeting. Ramona Rawlins attended the Shift Conference on behalf of the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum and GPRTA. We've invited her to attend our meeting to provide a report of the conference. The CDME, AHLA, Spring Training, Petroleum Show, Alberta Visitor Information Providers Conference, and Alberta Travel Industry Conference (TAIC) are all upcoming. James wants to have the Jeep ready for Spring Training as advertising. We're also looking into sponsoring an award at the TAIC conference to be able to speak on stage. We're also going to be submitting campaigns as award nominations.
- d. **AGM Update May 2 (Jenn)** – See Above
- e. **DMP Kick-off Report & Summary (James)** – See above
- f. **Marketing Update (Cyndi)** – March 19 I attended a marketing seminar on behalf of GPRTA at the William Joseph Communications building. The top thing from the seminar was to celebrate every success no matter the size. GPRTA already does most of the point covered.

Re-Cap of Past Events

March 15

DMP Kick Off

- Great response
- Filming by CIA Solutions

- Video coming soon!

March 23

Food & Beverage Expo

- DMF sponsored the event
- GPRTA staff present
- Received 750 ballots with postal codes for info for us. We plan to use the information to track where visitors are travelling from.

Upcoming Events

April 10

Our YQU with Q99

- AGM Discussion
- Karna will attend with Breanna

April 25

Chamber Mixer Showcase

- Jackpot Grill
- Going to have a booth
- Promote summer season activities
- Please send events to Breanna

May 2

GPRTA AGM

- Invitations sent out
- At the Podollan
- Photo wall
- Hashtag for evening?
- Looking for silent auction items

May 18

International Museum Day

- At Centre 2000
- Linking PJCDM, GP Museum, HDC
- GPRTA Summer Staff will be there to promote GPRTA and Smaller Museums
- If you know of a small museum within your municipality, please let them know to contact the museum. Breanna sent out information.

g. Bylaws Report Update (Karna) –

We're going to be circulating the amendments via email.

9. New Business

- Staffing Update (James)** – James already provided information above.
- Budget Update (pass amended budget)** – Johnathan asked the budget to be circulated and asked to make a motion to cast a vote via email to approve the amendments. James explained that some unknown numbers when the budget was originally passed have come in and that resulted is the ask for approving the amended budget. There was also changes to grants received and travel costs. The original budget was approved in December in 2018. Tom raised concerns about this process and asked if an interim budget or an official budget was passed in December. Johnathan answered that it was an official budget that was passed. Tom then explained that that's the budget we need to work off of and that there was no need to approve an amended budget. James then expressed concerns because the old budget was drastically different than the proposed amended budget, it was no longer an

accurate representation. It was decided that moving forward we'll be approving an "Interim Budget" moving forward to avoid this issue in years to come. The discussed concluded that we would be amending the budget internally on our books only to reflect the changes. No motion was required.

- c. **Shift Report (Dino Museum)**– No report.

10. Round Table Discussion:

Ed Smith: Nothing to report.

Tom Burton: The dissolution of Grande Cache has produced several challenges and obstacles. We're slowly overcoming these, and I believe that having Grande Cache will be an asset to have within the GPRTA Region. We have some hidden gems in that area that will help entice tourism. It would be great to create experiences there.

Sean McCallum - Thank you for lovely supper. We have some cool events happening in Wembley. We have "What's Up Wembley" happening tonight. "Touch a Truck" on May 24, 2019 for the kids to allow them to touch and explore the service vehicles of the town. June 21, 2019 we're having a water themed Wembley celebration. This will include celebrating the new water line and water park. Big party. There is also going to be an arm-wrestling competition in Grande Prairie on April 26/27. Mud Bogs will also be on Father's Day weekend.

Cyndi Corbett: Nu Vista is having an open house. Volunteer dinner coming up on April 11. Coffee with Council is coming back: 6:30 to 8:30pm at the library on April 17 (looking to have it every 6 months). Nothing else is coming up right now. On a side note, we're looking to have a soccer pitch built through the soccer association. The equipment has been donated.

As of April 1, 2019, I'm the new Deputy Mayor of Beaverlodge.

Breanna Gouschuk: If anyone has any upcoming events please let me know. We'll get those up on the event calendar and try to do a Facebook post. I was made aware that at the last meeting it was discussed if we could go over our membership paperwork. I'd like to point out a few key options. We have the Ambassador level for anyone that is looking to personally support (This level has since been deleted). Associate is basic, Commercial is an intermediate level that includes ATIS, Accommodation for the hotels, Executive provides a feature on the newsletter and an additional business for an additional \$50. The website event calendar is a free service, non-profits do still have to purchase a membership even if they're supported by a municipality.

Karna Gernsheid: Attended the Sport Tourism Congress in Ottawa and it's an event where you get provincial and national sport organizations and events rights holder together to promote their region's sport's facilities/ambitions to these events rights holders. We attend every year. An example is the Men's National Fastball Championships here this year. These players are most likely travelling with families so what else is there to do while their here? U17 World Challenge Games is looking to partner with the Storm for a hockey game in December at Revolution Place. Dawson Creek has a 5 year contract with Hockey Canada for these games. This provides great funds for the Storm and presents the opportunity to create packages that extend throughout the region like to Grande Cache.

We've also made the name change to Grande Prairie Regional Sport Connection and we're hiring an additional staff member.

We're having a sport conference to initiate more opportunities of sport tourism. Alberta North Sport Leadership Conference is the name and will take place in November of next year. We're going to be bringing in keynote speakers and create takeaways to bring back to their respective communities.

Don Whiteford: This is my last official meeting on the board. It's been a blast and pleasure to be on this board and I've been very impressed on how the board has grown over the past 6 years. I look forward to seeing everyone at the AGM and then I plan to take a few vacations.

There is possibility I might join the DMF board through the Rotary Campground and be elected onto the ALTO Awards committee.

Jenn Vos: I would like to set up quarterly billing for the meals that are now being served at the board meetings. Please email me privately if you have questions, concerns, and/or preferences. If you RSVP or do not note that you are not wanting dinner and do not show up, you will be billed.

James Leppan: One of the busiest years at the airport with 438,975 passengers and a 8.1% increase over 2017 even though flights have been reduced. 2018 saw one of the busiest years on record for the Grande Prairie Airport, with 438,975 passengers passing through its doors. This represents an 8.1% increase over 2017 and sits just behind 2014 which saw 445,685 passengers.

The 2018 average occupancy rate for Grande Prairie hotels was 65%, putting it third behind only Banff and Jasper for the highest occupancy rate in Alberta. This is also a significant increase from 2017 which saw an annual average occupancy rate of 49.5%.

Provincially, the occupancy rate increased from 55.4% in 2017 to 57.1%

Johnathan Clarkson: Only a couple days left of the winter season at Nitehawk. We're also close to finalizing our contract with Bear Paw between the city. Our restaurant is also doing well and has allowed us to keep people year-round. The cold weather cost us 18 days this year (19% of the season). We're excited for our upcoming summer season and all the programs we're going to be offering. Male and Female ride programs will be available for the older demographic. We also received all of our requested municipal support to tackle our capital projects (ex: LED lighting and a mud slide section, new campsite 5-year project (83 new sites)). The Doug Marshall Charity Classic Golf Tournament is also happening on June 6, 2019. \$110,000 was raised last year and we're looking to reach that bar once again. Doug Marshall was unfortunately bought out, so we won't have the same level on their involvement. We also have our Annual Comedy Night fundraiser on October 5, 2019. We usually raise \$50,000 at this event.

11. Next Meeting – May 29, 2019 at 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM Location TBA

12. Motion to Adjourn Meeting: at 7:36pm: -*Cyndi Corbett* - **Carried**