

**Minutes of Wrangell Convention & Visitors Bureau Meeting
Held on November 15, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Call to order at 12:03pm.

2. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Caitlin Cardinell, Brenda Schwartz-Yeager, Mya Delong, Chris Bunes, Erin Galla

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Kate Thomas, Matt Henson

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

The election of officers was left off of the agenda. Schwartz asked for the agenda to be amended to include this item.

M/S Schwartz/Bunes move to amend agenda to add election of officers to New Business after item 'd'.

Approved unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Approval of the WCVB May 24th, 2023, regular meeting minutes.

M/S Bunes/Galla move to approve the regular meeting minutes of the WCVB from May 24th, 2023, meeting.

Approved unanimously.

5. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Mayor Patricia Gilbert thanks the CVB for their continued efforts to grow and promote tourism. She stated that the board might consider looking at the concept of "summer bird" (as opposed to winter bird) as a marketable idea. Mayor Gilbert also inquired on whether concern over large cruise vessels has died down or if staff is still fielding comments.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Marketing Coordinator gave an oral report of recent travels and vendor meetings.

Director delivered an oral report of department business.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of the 2024 Travel Wrangell Marketing Plan

M/S Bunes/Schwartz move to approve the 2024 Travel Wrangell Marketing Plan as presented.

Schwartz stated that she is happy with everything in the plan but does not agree with the Travel Behavior in the secondary demographic. She stated that the way the behaviors are written eludes to more of a cruise ship passenger and not the independent travel we are seeking. Schwartz recommended that staff revise to state the following:

- Independent travel or family/small group experiences.
- Prefer well known experiences and guided tours.
- Find their inspiration through various media publications from business or direct marketing efforts.

Buness agreed that this would broaden the current language and would better target the travel the board is looking to attract.

Approved unanimously.

- b. Approval of the Travel Wrangell Marketing Plan Appendix A, detailing Media and Advertising Outlets.

M/S Buness/Cardinell move to approve the Media and Advertising Outlets as presented.

Schwartz stated that she wanted to make sure that ATIA cooperative marketing opportunities, digital and printed, were listed and something that staff is considering. Henson stated that all ATIA marketing opportunities are listed in the appendix and indirectly referenced in the marketing plan. Schwartz also stated that she would like to see staff attend an adventure expo or trade show as another opportunity to target that primary demographic referenced in the marketing plan.

Delong stated that she would like to see the CVB potentially provide cooperative marketing opportunities to local business or a collaborative effort with the Chamber of Commerce to promote these types of opportunities. Thomas stated that this addressed in the tactics of the marketing plan and referred to as Joint Venture Marketing.

Approved unanimously.

- c. Approval of the Marketing Projects for 2024.

M/S: Buness/Galla move to approve the 2024 marketing project list.

Schwartz stated that she thinks there is more than plenty to tackle with the presented project list.

Approved unanimously.

- d. Discussion of the Global sustainable Tourism Council criteria for destination management.

Thomas provided an introduction to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's criteria that was presented at the ATIA convention in Fairbanks. The GSTC criteria has become a general standard for destinations to reference across the globe. These standards will be referenced and used to craft Wrangell's tourism management plan as well as other southeast Alaskan communities' plans.

Buness stated she had concerns for staff's capacity to accomplish all goals laid out within the GSTC criteria and wants to make sure realistic expectations are set for what the CVB is trying to

accomplish. Buness also stated the criteria is impressive and the fact it is used worldwide is motivating.

Schwartz stated that the CVB is in a strategic position to be developing our plan right now with the abundance of planning resources and our ability to integrate what we like into our framework.

Thomas stated that having a standard to start development is good but is aware that polices can look good on paper but are not practical when deployed. Utilizing the resources we have to develop our plan, a similar approach to how the TBMPs were developed, will be the best approach. This plan will evolve and grow over time but developing a baseline to address issues forthcoming as well as ensuring public buy in is important. Notable positives within the criteria are how it addresses visitor volumes and activities, engagement and feedback with the visitor, and stakeholder engagement.

Buness stated that she appreciates that the GSTC criteria also takes into account risk assessment.

Thomas stated that hosting a business workshop in December and engage stakeholders on what they are experiencing and what considerations they would like to us to keep in mind moving forward. Staff is also evaluating our sister community's plans to find the most applicable and practical approach to developing our own. Henson stated that while we are developing our plan, southeast Alaska is currently developing a regional strategy to put "handrails" around the cruise industry.

Thomas stated that with the growth of tourism, there is critical need build the structure so that those who may be on the fence about tourism are given a sense of security and stability with the likely changes. Schwartz echoed Thomas and stated that we have an opportunity to let people be heard in this process and let them know that there is a plan to make them more comfortable.

Thomas stated that there will be a town hall that will be promoted publicly, inviting many different stakeholders and demographics to participate.

- e. Election of officers (added through Amendment to the Agenda)

M/S Schwartz/DeLong move to appoint Erin Galla as chair of the Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Approved unanimously by polled vote.

M/S Galla/DeLong move to appoint Brenda Schwartz-Yeager as vice chair of the Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Approved unanimously by polled vote.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Adjourned at 2:09 pm. Next meeting time is TBD.

ATTEST: _____
Secretary

Chair