

# JACKSON HOLE **Travel & Tourism Board**

Friday, February 11, 2022, Special Meeting - 2022 Board Retreat  
9:00 - 5:00 Lupine Room, Cloudveil Hotel

Guest Facilitator: Sandy Schultz-Hessler

*“Change moves at the speed of trust.” ~ Stephen Covey*

## 9:30 **CALL TO ORDER, PRONOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM**

Board Chair Cory Carlson called the meeting to order. In attendance in person were Erik Dombrowski, Mary Bess, Brian Gallagher, Joe Madera, and Willi Brooks. Crista Valentino attended via zoom. Contract staff in attendance were Kathryn Brackenridge, Tim O’Donoghue, Britney Magleby, Sue Muncaster, and Bret Linnensen. The meeting was broadcast to the public on zoom but not recorded.

**Action Item: Contract Extension for SHE Corp:** Brian Gallagher made a motion, seconded by Erik Dombrowski, to extend the SHE Corp contract through March 10, 2022, contingent on approval by Attorney Gingery and not exceeding funds agreed upon in the original contract set to expire on March 1, 2022. Public comment: none. **Motion passed unanimously.**

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## **Retreat Notes summarized by facilitator Sandy Schultz Hessler**

### **Key Takeaways:**

- The unison love and passion everyone has for this special place. “We came for nature; we stayed for the community.”
- Everyone’s desire to gain broad community input around how people think of tourism, what’s working, and what could be improved.
- Strong alignment around the mission/positioning of “being dedicated to supporting our tourist economy within the balance of maintaining a strong community, economy, and environment.” Out of this positioning, TTB is evolving to include a more year-round view of tourism that includes support of community and management of the tourist ebbs/flows and visitor and resident experiences.
- Out of the current funds in reserve (~\$5M), the JHTTB is proposing to use ~\$1.5 incremental to last year's budget to:

- a) creating a more user-friendly, supportive website (~\$500k)
- b) increasing events funds (both community character and large events) to meet the community requests and JH TTB criteria (~\$600k);
- c) Increase contract advertising/social media (~\$100k) and
- d) aligning messaging/voice as one umbrella organization to the visitor.

### **Detailed Notes and Discussion Points:**

#### **Why are you here in Jackson Hole?**

- Inspired by the nature of the Tetons and local area
- Nature brought us here; Community keeps us here
- It's a physically challenging place due to isolation, weather, winter – thus, the strength of the community is even more critical.
- We all want to be here; It's not just work; it's life and a conscious choice.
- There is a “spirituality of place” here that is intangible but feeds our soul.
- There is a realness of people in the community; genuine connection; we go outside together and play.
- There is a reverence – beyond ego into our deeper soul
- Welcomeness & neighborliness – that is the Soul of the Valley

#### **Why do you put in the time to the JHTTB? What is your personal goal/vision?**

- Help create the balance of bringing people here and supporting a thriving community
- Help find the clarity between the benefits and challenges of tourism
- Help shape the direction of tourism for Jackson Hole, be part of the change/solution
- Help navigate the paradigm shift between just a shoulder season organization to a tourism manager
- To be in a position of influence around
  - priorities;
  - sense of commitment to honoring our love of Jackson Hole;
  - staying open-minded

#### **What Data would help allow you to best do your job for the JHTTB**

- Gain Local community feedback on how they feel about tourism
- Ensure broad participation
- Gain insights from all 14 elected officials
- Do correlations by key demographics (including how long someone has lived here)
- Expand education around this feedback study to ensure all cross-sections of the population are heard

- Find other models/learnings from Peer Communities around tourism challenges.
- Which Visitor Avatar (Target Audience) drives our answers?
- Clarity on ideal tourist definitions (high value, DEI, etc.)
- What are the market conditions of the world in the near future (politically & economically)?
- Develop a better understanding of “Carrying Capacity” and implications/relationships between tourism and housing, workforce, infrastructure, environment
  - What are our desired conditions?
  - What are our limitations on access?
  - How do we think about the impact on natural resources?

### **What does the JHTTB do?**

- Pragmatic Answer - Utilizes funds generated from the Lodging Tax to promote and attract visitation.
  - Initially focused on the off-season.
  - Ten years of growth; 30% growth in lodging tax in 2021
  - Now shifting to the more year-round role with a focus on the Visitor Experience, Vitality of the Tourist Focused Economy, Quality of Community and Preservation of our Natural Resources
  - Funding is managed through subcommittees (events, education, sustainable management, and marketing)
  - Driven by community ideas
- Mission/Vision Answers
  - Dedicated to developing a healthy tourism economy that preserves JH’s natural capital, enhances webbing of the community, and maintains a positive visitor experience.
  - Optimizes the balance between environmental, social, and economic vitality.
  - Promotes and markets a sustainable destination
  - Maximizes benefits to visitors and minimizes impacts to the community
  - Support healthy tourist flows throughout the year.
  - These flows and funding focus will continually shift to meet community and market conditions.
  - Promotes destination that stewards environment and community well-being.

### **Key Budgeting Principles**

- Increase event funding to support community well-being and visitor experience
- Require more from applicants regarding sustainability

- Broadening the event funding cycle
- Regarding marketing funds – they should be focused locally, more targeted, ensure Chamber alignment.
- Improve our use of Technology to meet our mission better
- Improve website that better speaks to both visitors and locals and creates a more welcoming, informational portal for visitors
- Create key points and look/feel for visitors that is consistent across platforms and organizations (especially those using TTB funds)
- Identify an appropriate content management system
- Expand wireframe capacity
- Think about how to better support tourism facing businesses
- Develop Ongoing tracking data to understand community well-being, visitor experience, and community needs related to tourism.

### **Draft Budgeting Frameworks for FY 2022**

- Consistent support & funding with last year on programs
- Add ~ \$1.5m out of reserves this year and perhaps next
- Website development - ~\$500
  - Brian and Eric to outline a scope of work document / RFP
  - Create tourist 1 step shop
  - Understand booking pathway and Central Reservations synergy/reservations technology
  - Understand how broadly functionality should be for activities
  - Make visitor planning easier
  - Goal – Integral destination education for tourists
  - Understand staffing implications – contract a part-time manager?
  - The timing coincides with STMP delivery.
  - Key question – how to set up website messaging beyond the life of the TTB
  - Create strong synergy/alignment with Chamber on Visitor Messaging at airport, throughout town, visitors services
  - Translation services for more community access
  - Increase contract advertising from 3 seasons to 4 with a focus on visitor expectations including local outreach and education including a focus on social media ( + \$100k)
  - Events – Increase funding in total for both Large events and community character events by +~\$600k)

### **Organizational Improvements**

Look into using Slack for team tasks, communication, decision making (Christa / Mary to lead)  
As contract staff gets up to speed, provide time frames for review/decision making.

**Answers to a Frequently Asked Question:**

Q: Things feel slow in town. What is the JHTTB doing?

A: We continually monitor and review the data and optimize as appropriate. Currently, Feb is sold out. April is up versus last year, and we are monitoring March.

A: After a year(s) of explosive growth, we seek a sustainable balance.

A: Settling in is OK.

**4:00 ADJOURN**

Respectfully Submitted: Willi Brooks, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved by the Board March 10, 2022, as evidenced by the Chairman's signature below and attested to by the Board Secretary:

Attested: Cory Carlson, Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Willi Brooks, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_