



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

Idaho Travel Council Meeting Minutes

May 9-10, 2017

Teton Springs Lodge – Snake River Conference Room
10 Warm Creek Lane, Victor, Idaho

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

Idaho Travel Council Members Present:

Doug Burnett, *Region I*
Lara Smith (Vice-Chair), *Region II*
Jim Manion (Chair), *Region III*
Shawn Barigar, *Region IV*
Matt Hunter, *Region V*
Courtney Ferguson, *Region VI*
Mike Fitzpatrick, *Region VII*
Rick Shaffer, *Multi-Region*

Commerce Staff Present:

Matt Borud, *Marketing and Innovation Officer*
Cindy Lee, *Grants and Contracts Manager*
Laura Conilogue, *Administrative Assistant I*

Commerce Staff on Phone:

Megan Ronk, *Director*

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Jim Manion called the meeting to order at 8:47 a.m.

Council and audience introductions.

Approval of Minutes

Courtney Ferguson motioned to approve the previous meeting minutes.

Rick Shaffer seconded. All in favor. **Motion approved.**

Commerce Update - Director Megan Ronk

During the 2017 legislative session Idaho Commerce worked with the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) to increase Idaho Tourism's spending authority by \$3.5 million. The committee approved an increase of \$2.5 million. Idaho Commerce will request more spending authority next year. The legislature passed a law that mandates all vacation rental businesses, like Airbnb, Vacasa, VRBO, etc. to collect and remit the Idaho lodging tax from all the homeowners that rent out their properties through the sites.

Grants Update - Cindy Lee

The Grants team has a new employee, Ewa Szewczyk, who is responsible for the requests for funds (RFF's) of all grants programs, including Tourism. Jill Eden is still the contact for any day to day grant administration questions, until she goes on maternity leave. When that happens, Ewa will be the contact.

Cindy Lee gave an update on the status of the RFF's. 96% of grantees are paid in less than 21 days, and 85% are paid within 15 days.

Cindy Lee demonstrated the grants pin map she created for Idaho Commerce. It shows everywhere a grant has been awarded around Idaho and tells how much the grant was awarded for. The pin map can be viewed here: <http://idahocommerce.force.com/grantmap>

Grant Presentation Process Review - Cindy Lee

Each grantee will receive 10 minutes to present their grant request, and two minutes to answer questions.

Grant Presentations**Yellowstone Teton Territory - Tom Walsh, President**

The mission of the Yellowstone Teton Territory (YTT) is to be the best advocate for their area on a global stage and to encourage people to come, stay, and play. In the last three years, YTT grew from 65 to 144 members. The YTT website is available in 103 languages, and they have three microsites in Mandarin, German, and Spanish. Some accomplishments from last year include an increase in digital guide downloads, and tourism in Region 6 had an economic impact of \$1.3 billion, up \$42 million from the year before. Their advertisement on Utah television had over one million impressions. Region 6 lodging collections have increased by \$23 million in 4 years.

YTT has many plans for next year including marketing the shoulder seasons using digital advertising. Digital advertising is 26% of their total budget, and print advertising is 48%. YTT will market to people in a four to five hours' drive time, and those communities that have direct flights to their area. YTT wants to hire a photographer to get new photos of their region because their current media is dated. YTT will aggressively promote local events and festivals. They plan to continue going to trade shows.

Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce - Chip Schwarze, CEO

The mission of the Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce is to promote the healthy growth of Idaho Falls. Idaho Falls currently has a new hotel under construction and is also building a new event center that can hold up to 450 people and an auditorium that can seat 4,000. Hotel stays in Idaho Falls have increased during summer months, however off-months are still not busy. The Chamber is promoting direct, inexpensive flights from Las Vegas, with the tag line "Beat the Heat", hoping to entice visitors from Nevada.

Next year Idaho Falls will host a Fly Fishing expedition that will bring visitors from Wyoming, Colorado, and Portland. The Chamber plans to leverage the new event center, shopping, and public arts in their marketing. Idaho Falls has the biggest shopping centers in Eastern Idaho so the Chamber hopes people will stay the night when they come shopping during the off-seasons. The Chamber will go to trade shows. The Visitor's Center will be moved to a more centralized location by Memorial Day 2017. The Chamber's marketing breakdown is 45% traditional, 30% digital, 15% billboards, and 10% print and collateral. A website update is planned for next year.

Teton Regional Economic Coalition - Jennie White, Vice President

The goal of the Teton Regional Economic Coalition is to have a stable and diverse community filled with meaningful jobs and experiences. Accomplishments have included increased visitors, from 11,000 to 13,000 and website growth including a 45% increase of page views and a 31% increase of time spent on site. To make the website even better, they continue to add new content. The Great Snow Fest increased visitors, as did the Whydaho Teton Bike Festival.

Next year the Coalition will focus on marketing outdoor recreation, including promoting the only Geotourism Center in the country. 90% of their marketing budget is spent on print advertising, but they are trying to move to more digital advertising. The Coalition will spend \$15,000 on marketing for the next year, plus \$20,000 to support local events, and \$6,000 to hire a local photographer.



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism - Destiny Egley, Grant Administrator

The mission of Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism is to promote travel and tourism to their region, to increase bed tax, and to entice visitors to stay longer in Idaho. Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism works with other grantees in the southeastern region to stretch their grant dollars further. Accomplishments from last year include an increase in lodging property taxes by 10%, plus an increase in visitors to restaurants and campgrounds throughout the region, even during the off-season, and Lava Hot Springs hit record attendance. Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism rebranded last year, including a new name, and new website: <https://idahohighcountry.org/>. The lodging and events pages are the busiest pages on the website and easy to use. Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism helps small communities in their region with the Small Community Brochure Program where they match up to 50% of the cost to print brochures. Last year Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism helped Malad, Soda Springs, and two museums in Pocatello publish brochures.

Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism has specific goals for next year including getting people to stay during the weekdays. They will be marketing to travelers from Salt Lake, Boise, and Canada using co-op digital advertising with Idaho Tourism. They plan to spend \$27,000 for collateral material including visitor's guides and brochures. 68% of their marketing is digital, 32% is traditional. Their video and pictures are outdated, so they hope to hire someone to take updated photos of the region.

Greater Pocatello Convention & Visitors Bureau - Birgitta Bright, Grant Manager

The Greater Pocatello Convention and Visitors Bureau promotes tourism and recreation in the Pocatello, Chubbuck, and Bannock counties. A mountain biking video showing Pocatello trails was very popular last year, and their website click-through rate is successful. Partnering with other tourism entities in Region 5 to market the area was very successful, making grant money more effective because it prevents waste of duplication.

The Greater Pocatello Convention and Visitors Bureau advertises in Calgary, Alberta, Boise, and Salt Lake. 53% of Canadians that leave through Alberta drive down I-15. The Bureau's marketing breakdown is 67% digital and 33% traditional, however much traditional advertising also has a digital component. They send out a quarterly newsletter, but starting next year, they will increase it to every other month. The Bureau wants to rebuild their website next year.

Sun Valley Marketing Alliance - Scott Fortner, Executive Director

The goal of the Sun Valley Marketing Alliance is to market their area in ways that individual entities can't do themselves. Some accomplishments from last year included a 6% increase in tax collections, 25% increase in web visits, a 13% increase in Instagram followers, and more press coverage of the valley. The Sun Valley Airport is working on adding more flights.

Next year the Alliance has the goals of increasing web traffic by 10%, increasing social media engagement by 10%, and increasing occupancy rates by 5%. They will achieve these goals by targeting different marketing areas with specific trip planners and videos. The Sun Valley Marketing Alliance has learned that videos work best for their marketing objectives, so half of their marketing spend will be for videos. They spend 75% of their total budget on marketing. The Alliance will add stories and lodging information to their website.

The Chamber (formerly the Hailey Chamber of Commerce) - Jeff Bacon, Executive Director

Last year the organization changed their name to The Chamber, and started to serve the entire Woodriver Valley, not just Hailey. There are new hotels in the valley. The Chamber had 260 members last year, now there are 350, and they hope to have over 400 by the end of the year. All events have experienced increased attendance. The chamber spent the last year working on two main projects: Helping the Woodriver Valley with event planning including social media, promotions, and financial



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

management, and helping the Woodriver Valley organizations to work together on a way to promote the entire valley. Their new campaign is called "Discover Woodriver Valley."

The Chamber has three goals for next year: 1) produce a new community guide with photos from locals, 2) create training videos for local merchants and tourism workers, and 3) start a "shop local" campaign.

Courtney Ferguson requested that Idaho Commerce/Idaho Tourism be the one that makes the training video for all of the Idaho tourism workers.

Stanley-Sawtooth Chamber of Commerce - Ellen Libertine, Grant Manager

The mission of the Stanley-Sawtooth Chamber of Commerce is to encourage tourism and "make sure the area brings happiness to visitors and locals." Website views increased to 98,000, up 10,000 from the year before, and Facebooks visitors also increased by 5,000. The chamber's website is being updated, and their social media is run by two local contractors.

The Stanley-Sawtooth Chamber of Commerce's marketing plans for next year include increased social media, state co-ops, new collateral pieces, and trade shows. The chamber's digital and traditional advertising breakdown is 50/50. They have a new website manager who will be purchasing more online ads. The chamber will support 16 local events in the upcoming year, more than last year.

Idaho Ski Areas Association - Rebecca Reeves, Account Supervisor

The mission of the Idaho Ski Areas Association is to raise awareness of Idaho as a ski destination. Idaho has 18 ski areas. Accomplishments from last year include record-breaking attendance at the resorts, traffic to and time spent on their website was up, plus the website garnered over seven million impressions, with two thirds of the views from out of state, and the fifth and sixth grade Passport Program increased users. In the past three years, the Ski Areas Association rebranded their organization, rebuilt their website, and revamped their email newsletters.

In the upcoming year the Ski Areas Association will continue reporting snow conditions to media outlets. Their marketing campaign is 90% digital. The target audience is families and avid skiers. The association will use geotargeting to reach key areas that have close drive times or direct flights to Idaho. Videos will be produced of the ski resorts showing activities during the summer months to increase growth for the resorts.

Idaho RV Campgrounds Association - Anne Chambers, Executive Director

One of last year's accomplishments for the Idaho RV Campgrounds Association (IRVCA) was an 83% increase of new visitors to their website. The Association sends their RV guide to over 300 visitors' centers and tourism organizations, in fact their RV guide is one of the most requested publications at Idaho Gateway Centers. The IRVCA experienced great click-through rates last year because of their advertising.

IRVCA explained their marketing plan for next year will include 35% of their budget being used for media buys, digital and print advertising in Canada, and sharing a co-op advertising opportunity with the state. 32% of their budget is for publishing and printing the campground directory. In 2018, IRVCA will print 115,000 copies with 100,000 of those being sent to distributing partners, and 92% of those will go out of state. A total of 13% of the Association's budget is fulfillment and 10% of their budget is dedicated to the website and social media.



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

Idaho Outfitters & Guides Association - Janey Bruesch, Office Manager

The Idaho Outfitters & Guides Association (IOGA) is committed to the conservation and enhancement of quality outdoor experiences on Idaho's land and water. One accomplishment from last year is a 50% increase of click-through rates because they have improved their website. IOGA has been promoting brands, and "Hunt Idaho", "Fish Idaho", and "Raft Idaho" are completed, and this year they promoted the brand "Guest Ranch Idaho". They have had increased demand for their directories, so they printed more last year. They are sending them out individually and in bulk to visitor's centers.

During the next grant cycle IOGA wants to promote outfitting and recreation in Idaho, although they have not decided on the specific brand yet. One way they will achieve this goal is through attending sports shows, including the SHOT Show in Las Vegas. One of their main goals during the next grant cycle is to do an economic survey, however they will need an additional \$50,000. The last time IOGA did an economic survey was in the mid-90s. The survey will provide a breakdown of every outfitter in each region, including which collect the bed tax.

Program Updates - Josh Mercado

The state co-ops were a success last year. 100% of the \$250,000 budget was allocated, and it funded 64 programs. Every region was included and 75% of the multi-regional grantees participated. Idaho Tourism will spend \$250,000 on co-ops next year as well.

Josh explained the two new month-long culinary initiatives. The first is Idaho Craft Beer Month. There will be statewide events where locals and visitors can come together to celebrate Idaho craft beer. The second culinary initiative is Idaho Wines Fly Free. This program has been in the works over a year. Alaska Airlines members flying out of Boise or Lewiston, get their first case of wine to fly for free. Program starts June 1, 2017.

Tourism also launched the Idaho Solar Eclipse page on VisitIdaho.org and PR events around the state. The program intends to get people to stay in Idaho for longer than a day or two for the eclipse.

Tourism is working on the 'Idaho Roadsider' - a brochure of the scenic drives in the state. They will be printing 20,000 copies in May or June. Once the 'Roadsider' is printed, chambers can order in bulk.

The '18 Summers' campaign runs through the end of June. Idaho Tourism will use that campaign for one more year, then they will come up with fresh ideas. The last '18 Summers' campaign will start next March and go through June 2018. Planning for the winter campaign has kicked off. The winter campaign will begin in October.

The 2018 Idaho travel guide is in progress, and the ad rates are published. Idaho lodging properties will still be represented in the travel guide. Airbnb will not release the addresses of their property listings, so those will not be in the travel guide. However, individual homeowners can go make a page for themselves on the VisitIdaho website like any other lodging property.

Chairman Jim Manion adjourned the meeting at 1:17 p.m.

Wednesday, May 10

Idaho Travel Council Members Present:

Doug Burnett, *Region I*
Lara Smith (Vice-Chair), *Region II*
Jim Manion (Chair), *Region III*
Shawn Barigar, *Region IV*
Matt Hunter, *Region V*
Courtney Ferguson, *Region VI*
Mike Fitzpatrick, *Region VII*
Rick Shaffer, *Multi-Region*

Commerce Staff Present:

Matt Borud, Marketing and Innovation Officer
Cindy Lee, Grants and Contracts Manager
Laura Conilogue, Administrative Assistant I

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Jim Manion called the meeting to order at 8:47 a.m.

Council and audience introductions

Grant Presentation Process Review, Cindy Lee

Each grantee will receive 10 minutes to present their grant request, and 2 minutes to answer questions.

Grant Presentations

Boise Convention & Visitors Bureau - Carrie Westergard, Executive Director

The Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau (Boise CVB) is the tourism division of the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce. Their mission is to enhance the economy of Boise and the surrounding area by selling the area and their vision is to be the most welcoming city in the country. Some of the achievements in Boise over the past year were: two new nonstop airline flights, an expanded convention center, 500 additional rooms in four new hotels, and three new proposed hotels. Boise has seen an increased numbers of hotel room bookings for the past 5 years. Social media engagement has grown since last year including double the Instagram followers. Also, the monthly newsletter email list has grown by 17%. This past year the Boise CVB hosted 23 media influencers which generated 68 stories and reached 100 million readers. They also participated in two media missions, one to Washington D.C., and one to Denver. They are proud of hosting the first annual Rose Awards in April that brings awareness to hospitality employees.

For this upcoming grant cycle, the Boise CVB wants to accomplish several goals including upgrading their database system, adding itineraries and virtual reality to their website, making an app about breweries and restaurants in Boise, and adding an interactive touchscreen kiosk in the Boise visitor's center. The Boise CVB needs more photography and videos, including professional and social media generated pictures. They will focus on marketing within Idaho and the areas with nonstop flights to Boise, trying to get visitors to come on weekends and holidays. They are using both digital and print advertising. During the upcoming grant cycle the Boise CVB will continue to support local events, plan FAM trips, and attend marketplace and trade shows.

Southwest Idaho Travel Association - Jared Montague, President

The mission of the Southwest Idaho Travel Association (SWITA) is to increase growth and lodging nights by selling the region. SWITA and its members work collectively to elevate Region 3. Accomplishments from last year include website traffic increase by 16%, page views up 28%, Region 3 up 13% in tax collections, and Facebook followers increased 23%. SWITA started an Instagram



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

account and created summer and winter videos of their region. Last year SWITA took advantage of co-op dollars, which increased their media spend by 47%.

In the upcoming grant year SWITA wants to work on enhancing their profile, including new branding. They will also work to increase tax collection in the region by advertising in Washington, Oregon, Texas, and California using digital marketing, print marketing, and billboards. SWITA is going to update their email newsletter by sending out specific newsletters based on what the reader has expressed interest in. FAM trips have been planned for next year, as well as trade and consumer shows. SWITA will help their partners to attend trade shows.

Cascade Chamber of Commerce - Bobbie Patterson, Grant Manager

The goal of the Cascade Chamber of Commerce is to develop and promote the Cascade area as a year-round tourism destination for travelers who want to experience unlimited outdoor recreation. Cascade has been around for 100 years and for the most part it was a mill town. Cascade is a natural tourism destination, one can do almost any outdoor recreation activity from Cascade. The Chamber produced five videos of Cascade throughout the year and put them on their website. Their advertising is mainly done in print form and is focused on the recreations and special events in Cascade. Cascade has a new geothermal swimming pool.

McCall Area Chamber of Commerce - McKenzie Kramer, Director of Marketing

The mission of the McCall Area Chamber of Commerce is to promote and support the McCall community and mountain lifestyle. Accomplishments from last year include more traffic to their website, click-through rates doubled, and McCall is up 10.5% in lodging sales. The Visit McCall magazine is increasing circulation with each issue, and is 100% self-sufficient. During this past year the Chamber hosted more than 40 journalists, earning McCall great media coverage. In fact, Country Living magazine named McCall as one of the 20 best mountain towns in the country. The summer marketing pitch is all about family and kids and the winter will be focused on snow conditions in McCall. They developed the McCall Ale trail as an off season activity for McCall.

The Chamber has several goals for the upcoming year: increasing digital advertising, increasing click-through rates, narrow McCall's message, and grow public relations. The McCall Area Chamber wants to fine-tune target markets and advertising, they know that 90% of visitors to Valley County come from Idaho so they have television advertising in Boise and the Tri-Cities area, plus marketing in Spokane. Their advertising breakdown is 60% digital and 40% print marketing. This upcoming grant cycle the Chamber will also work on a backend clean of website, more social media, and a summer recreation survey that is a follow-up to the winter survey from 2013.

Nampa Chamber of Commerce - Debbie Kling, President and CEO

Nampa has three new hotel properties. The extra rooms will help to bring in bigger events, especially the hotel property next to the Idaho Center. Nampa has been focused on their downtown core; they recently upgraded their downtown through the Main Street Program. Once downtown Nampa has been updated, they will include it in their marketing campaigns.

In the upcoming year, the Nampa Chamber of Commerce plans to advertise to people that are already staying one night in Nampa, and try to get them to stay another night. They will achieve this with more co-op advertising with their partners. The Chamber also plans to make at least one 30 second video about Nampa. Their marketing will mainly be done through social media and digital advertising. The Nampa Chamber of Commerce wants to keep the horse shows at the Idaho Center because they bring in \$1 million in economic impact, and an average stay of 7 or 8 days. They are also want to retain the Professional Bull Riders show.

Southern Idaho Tourism - Melissa Barry, Executive Director and Grant Administrator

Southern Idaho Tourism is the only grantee in Region 4. Their mission is to develop and promote recreation and tourism in Region 4. This past winter southern Idaho received extreme weather including too much snow and flooding, which led to Shoshone Falls and Thousand Springs flowing in epic numbers. Accomplishments from last year include a 14% increase in lodging sales, 10,000 contacts collected in over a year, increased website traffic, and increased time on site. Last year Southern Idaho Tourism hired a photographer and received 30 high quality images, and a high quality video.

In order for Southern Idaho Tourism to better understand their target market they are working with Boise State University to conduct research on their visitors. That project will be finished in the fall. Southern Idaho Tourism's marketing breakdown is 40% digital, and 60% traditional, however many traditional buys have digital aspects. They plan to co-op market with the state using TV, radio, and billboards. They receive their best type of feedback from co-ops. Southern Idaho Tourism will increase the marketing budget to over \$200,000 including local co-ops where they pay 50/50 to market local restaurants, events, and attractions. They will also hire a new local social media manager.

North Central Idaho Travel Association - Victoria Scalise, President

The mission of the North Central Idaho Travel Association is to create a great experience for travelers, assist tourism businesses, and promote the diversity of travel opportunities in the region. Some accomplishments from last year include a drastically increased Association membership, increased page views on their website, and increased emails for their online newsletter. However, the Association's greatest success was training outreach to their tourism community, they hosted a one day workshop in April. In order to promote their area, the Association placed ads in key publications and on websites. They have also been helping Grangeville Chamber update their website.

North Central Idaho primarily gets visitors that drive into their area so Spokane, Boise, Portland, and Seattle are their main target areas. The North Central Idaho Travel Association's marketing strategy is to advertise in Pacific Northwest publications and in niche publications. Next year they want to expand their visitors guide, upgrade the quality, and add itineraries and maps. They are trying to increase advertising in the guide in order for it to be self-sustaining.

Visit Lewis Clark Valley - Michelle Peters, President, CEO and Grant Manager

The mission of Visit Lewis Clark Valley is to attract visitors from around the world by promoting the valley. Some accomplishments from last year include: lodging tax increase by 5%, increased visitors to the visitor's center, a new hotel in Lewiston in 2016, and increased social media engagement, especially with the emerging wine industry. A new winery opened, so there are now seven wineries in the Lewis Clark Valley. Last year 18,000 cruise ship passengers docked in Lewiston, six vessels can dock there at one time, and one more dock will be added in 2018. New last year Visit Lewis Clark Valley participated in the state co-ops program. They also attended conferences and hosted journalists.

Next year they will start a new marketing campaign called "The Northwest Discovery Destination". They plan to host more press trips for key influencers to visit the valley. Their marketing budget consists of 15% for key influencers, 25% towards prints, and 60% towards digital marketing. They also plan to continue going to trade shows, including wine related trade shows. One item on their wish list is to create a Visit Lewis Clark Valley app.

Moscow Chamber of Commerce - Jenny Ford, Executive Director

The mission of the Moscow Chamber of Commerce is to be a forward thinking entity that helps the business and travel community in Moscow. The Chamber works with local businesses to promote

events and bring more overnight stays to Moscow. Last year the Chamber revamped their website, and added more information to it, including a third bed & breakfast tour.

The Chamber's marketing plans include: increasing tourism through targeted marketing, branding efforts, encouraging business opportunities, and collaborating with University of Idaho to promote their region. The Chamber will also continue co-op marketing. Marketing is split 50/50 between digital and traditional, however, they are increasing digital marketing. The Chamber will engage in marketing events, increasing from 2 to 12 a year. This summer Moscow will host a baseball tournament and summer concerts.

Post Falls Chamber of Commerce - Deb Wheeler, Operation and Grant Manager

The mission of the Post Falls Chamber of Commerce is to establish, maintain, and grow a healthy and prosperous community. Their primary objective is to get heads in beds and entice people to stay through the weekend. Last year was the first year of the "Your Summer, Your Story" campaign. It was successful, helping to increase unique website visitors up 23%, individual website page views up 27%, and a 23% increase in Kootenai country lodging tax. In May their website received 290,000 impressions. Last year the Chamber hired a research group to do research for all of Northern Idaho, they also hired a photographer to take pictures of the North Idaho region. One other accomplishment was netting 12,000 new email leads for them and their partners through a contest hosted last year.

Digital marketing is the main component of the Chamber's marketing plan, however print media will always be important because it better showcases their area. Each year the Chamber will increase their digital marketing presence. For this upcoming year, their marketing ratio is 30% digital, 50% traditional, and 20% to social media. One goal for this next year is to enhance click-through rates to the Chamber's website. The target markets are families in Seattle, Spokane, western Montana, and Moscow.

Salmon River Chamber of Commerce - Karen Savage, Grant Administrator

The mission of the Salmon River Chamber of Commerce is to promote and develop tourism in the Salmon River canyon by promoting local products, and local beauty. One of the biggest accomplishments of last year was that occupancy rates increased by 10% with increased visitors during the shoulder season. Another factor that increased occupancy rates were all the summer events, and the increased participation at the events. In fact, the newest event, the Salmon Run, doubled participation last year. More accomplishments from last year include membership growth of the Salmon River Chamber of Commerce, web traffic increased 20% year over year with increased requests for information, and Facebook engagements rose. Last year the Chamber marketed using digital and print ads; they targeted Montana, Utah, and Washington.

The Salmon River Chamber of Commerce has many goals for the upcoming grant cycle including improving coordination with Whitebird Chamber, improving reporting metrics, increasing digital buys and attracting more visitors outside of rafting season. The Chamber will give the Whitebird Chamber some of their grant money to help market the area. They will continue standard print advertising, will continue to fund events to increase visitors, and will work with Hagadone to do an update of their website so it is more functional for mobile users.

Coeur d'Alene Convention & Visitor Bureau - Katherine Hoyer, Grant Manager

The mission of the Coeur d'Alene Convention and Visitors Bureau is to develop tourism in Coeur d'Alene. Their goal is become a four season vacation destination. 2016 was a successful year for Coeur d'Alene. Lodging tax collections are up 8%. The city was featured in several magazines, newspapers, and websites. There are two new hotels coming to Coeur d'Alene; the city needs more rooms because of increased traffic to Silverwood - the most visited attraction in the state. The Coeur d'Alene Downtown Association puts on events, creating an economic impact of over \$4 million. The city



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

will host two IronMan races this year; one sold out last year. Another popular event is the Holiday Light Show. During that weekend, hotels were booked solid.

Next year the Chamber has many plans for marketing including a co-op with the state, adding lodging packages to their marketing campaigns, and marketing using many formats such as: print, digital, social media, web, radio, and TV. The Chamber will reduce their print budget and increase digital marketing, and continue to include interactive guides and maps on their website and at visitor's centers. The Chamber also plans to continue investing in local events.

Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce - Kate McAlister, President, CEO, and Grant Manager

The Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce strives to be an advocate for business development and tourism in their area, with their main focus being heads in beds. Sandpoint lodging has increased every year since 2013. Accomplishments from last year include a 410% increase in visitors at the Beer Event in July and a 2.5% increase in visitors during the half marathon. Another accomplishment is that visitor's guide requests are up 3%. Through social media their presence grows, for example, one online video has been viewed over 17,000 times, shared 180 times, and another video released last May has been seen over 58,000 times. The Chamber works with partners on events and marketing including successful marketing with Silverwood last year. Sandpoint hosted The North West Outdoor Writer's Association meeting earlier in the year and gained over 200 emails for e-newsletters. The Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce launched a Spring Getaway Contest, and collected 700 new emails.

Next year the Chamber plans to advertise in many publications, because many include digital buys on their corresponding websites. However, they prefer traditional advertising. Their marketing plans includes advertising in the Spokane airport, and on the Spokane highway to Coeur d'Alene. Other plans include contracting a PR person, attending trade shows, and regular intercept surveys at visitor's center and restaurants.

North Idaho Tourism Alliance - Stephanie Sims, Executive Director for International Selkirk Loop

North Idaho Tourism Alliance serves all five counties in Region 1. Their mission is to make Region 1 a travel destination by promoting the entire north Idaho region primarily through digital advertising. The Alliance focuses on promoting the shoulder and winter seasons in north Idaho. Accomplishments from last year include increased website traffic by 150%, also the Alliance launched a Facebook ad campaign that reached 66,000 people in four months with 1,000 clicking through to their website, Seattle visitors have increased by 108%, and they created over 100 co-op projects with their members. The North Idaho Tourism Alliance increased their social media presence, they also added things to do and an interactive itinerary planner on their website.

During the next year the Alliance will continue co-ops with their partners, social media advertising, promoting their apps, supporting small communities in north Idaho, and developing north Idaho videos showcasing the region. The North Idaho Tourism Alliance advertises primarily through digital advertising, their ratio is 80% digital, 20% traditional.

ITC Tourism Budget Review - Matt Borud

As Commerce is headed to the end of the fiscal year, Tourism is at, or under, budget across the board. Matt explained that Tourism will be prepaying for more website updates. Idaho Tourism is advertising with commercials again in Seattle, Salt Lake, Spokane, Yakima, the Tri Cities, Reno, and all across Idaho. Those locations were chosen because they are about an eight hour drive time, or an uncomplicated day trip, from Idaho. Tourism has received a positive response to the commercials.

Idaho Tourism will not be able to cover the registration fees for ESTO for Council members this year. Bed tax collections are forecasted to increase 11% this year, April was up 18%. Airbnb brought in



C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Megan Ronk, Director

\$40,000 in bed taxes in April, and if the collections keep on the same trend, Airbnb could bring in \$550,000 in taxes this year. Idaho Tourism will allocate those funds proportionally based on the bed taxes each region earned during the year. All of Vacasa's bed tax collections go to Region 3 now because they are a Boise based company, however Idaho Tourism will try to break the taxes up proportionally per region. Although occupancy rate was down in January and February, Idaho is still up 1.7% year over year because March occupancy rebounded. Average daily rate is up 4% over last year and RevPAR is up over 5%.

Other Business - Jim Manion, Chair

The Council would like to see a tourism training video made by Commerce, then given to all the grantees for their local hospitality workers. Southern Idaho Tourism has a customer service program they provide to their tourism community and could share with other grantees.

Many grantees requested funds for research, so the Council suggested that Idaho Tourism continue to fund larger state research projects, especially industry-specific research, such as a wine or hunting study across Idaho. The Council also suggested that Fish and Game or IOGA might want to partner on research that affects their organizations. Moreover, economic impact research is more useful for the grantees than perception studies.

Jim Manion said he would like the minutes to reflect that the Council misses Diane, and sends their best wishes to her.

The Council discussed the upcoming Idaho Travel Council (ITC) meeting in McCall. The meeting will be on August 8 and 9, with a travel day on the 7th. The Council will depart after the meeting on the 9th.

The Idaho Conference on Recreation & Tourism (ICORT) will be held in Coeur d'Alene on October 17 – 19, 2017. However the ITC meeting will be on Monday the 16th, from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Tuesday October 17th is the Grant Summit from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., then ICORT tours from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. with the Idaho Small Bites Reception later that evening. ICORT is all day on October 18 and 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Chairman Jim Manion adjourned the meeting at 1:27 p.m.