

Town of West Yellowstone

Town Council Work Session

Tuesday, July 18, 2017

Town Hall, 440 Yellowstone Avenue

West Yellowstone, Montana

6:00 PM

Agenda

Public Comment Period

FY 2017-2018 Municipal Budget, Special Funding Requests

Discussion

The Public is invited to attend.





PO Box 458
West Yellowstone, Montana 59758
destinationyellowstone.com

July 14, 2017

Town Council
Town of West Yellowstone
PO Box 1570
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Dear Council,

Meeting friends at the Post Office or grocery store. Working together as volunteers at events. Sharing grief at the loss of long-time community contributors and friends. Sharing joy at the completion of challenging projects. All and more make up life in our small town. Out of necessity, small communities have a way living in interdependency and synergy. These two characteristics have regularly marked the relationship between the Town and the Chamber, and we are very grateful.

Perhaps the Visitors Center is the single most visible example of our collaboration and Katrina Wiese, the manager, will address it in a more in-depth, additional letter.

Through such Chamber directed events as the Fall Cycle Tour, Yellowstone Ski Festival, Christmas Stroll, the World Snowmobile EXPO and the Fourth of July, our combined efforts bring about positive, memorable experiences for our visitors and our citizens alike. Taking care of and entertaining our guests is an investment that keeps paying dividends to our community. We thank you for all ways you contribute to meeting and exceeding our visitors' expectations.

Our economy is tourism. We sit in the admirable position of having many of the attributes current travelers seek. Every visitor has a direct impact on our community's well being at many levels. As a team, there is no limit to the positive experiences we can bring to our visitors and, through that, the benefits we can bring to our citizens. The Town's continued participation is essential and we ask particularly for the extension of help in these areas as you work through the Town's FY18 budget:

- Facility and grounds care for the Visitor Information Center.
- Support of the Fourth of July festivities and, as you have in the past, a cash contribution of \$4,000 to help assure another great fireworks display.
- Contribute to the success of organized activities and events through the cooperation and assistance of all the emergency and public services staff.

Thank you for your past support. I look forward to our continued strong relationship.

Sincerely,

Melissa Alder, Co-Chair



West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center
PO Box 458 | West Yellowstone, Montana 59758
406.646.7701

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Dear Council Members,

The first order of business is to extend a very loud, and large, "THANK YOU!" The additional support that the Town provided the Visitor Center last year made it possible to offer the same level of service that we have provided for many years, and hope to continue for many years to come. As you know, visitors are the life-blood of our community and their care and satisfaction are of prime importance.

Our mission at the Visitor Center is to treat our guests so well that they want to stay and then return, bringing family and friends. The Town's mission with the Center has been to provide safe and well maintained grounds in the summer, restrooms and parking lot maintenance year round and most recently, staffing assistance. For hundreds of thousands of visitors this is the place that gives them their first or last impression of our community.

Last year the Town committed \$20,458, as we had requested for labor and operational expenses to cover through June 30, 2017. Today we are asking for \$29,000 to help fund these same expenses through June 30, 2018, as well as continued facility and grounds care. The attached budget gives further information, and as well, shows you our other funding sources.

While we realize this request is more than we asked for last year, this year we are choosing to not ask for MAP funding of \$10,000 as we did then, because we realize that Visitor Center funding isn't the purpose of MAP funds.

The Visitors Center is good for West Yellowstone business! Over 45% of West Yellowstone visitors that were surveyed say that once they arrive, the visitor center is the most highly used method for getting information and making plans. We believe that singularly the Center is our community's greatest year-around marketing tool!

In June of this year alone 33,801 visitors stopped in, a 9.14% increase over the previous June, which saw a 7% increase over June 2015. In addition to the drop-in visitors, in any given year the Visitor Center also responds to thousands of phone inquiries answering questions, selling West Yellowstone and providing information on our businesses as these future, potential guests plan and refine their travel plans.

We remain ready to answer questions that you may have as you deliberate your decision. We sincerely hope that you, too, see the value of the continued operations of the VIC and will respond with the commitment we are requesting. As always, we cordially invite you to stop by at any time to see the Center in operation.

Regards,

Katrina Wiese, Manager
West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center

Visitor Information Center Budget FY 2018

(July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018)

FUNDING SOURCES		FY17
Yellowstone Country Montana (6/1/17-9/30/17)**	\$ 25,782	30,000
Marketing Committee (Bed Tax)	\$ 22,000	14,000
West Yellowstone TBID***	\$ 15,000	15,000
Town of West Yellowstone		20,458
		10000 - MAP
Total	62,782.00	
LABOR		
Labor-Staff (Including Taxes, WC & Benefits)	63,541.43	
Labor-Manager (Including Taxes, WC & Benefit)	22,481.26	
OPERATIONS		
Payroll Processing	1,600.00	
Staffing Software (Whentowork)	100.00	
Training (Including Travel)	1,500.00	
WiFi Hot Spot	1,068.00	
Brochure Storage	780.00	
Total Cost	91,070.69	
Difference	(28,288.69)	

**Yellowstone Country Money must be used between Memorial Day & Labor Day
 - Used \$4218 for July 1st Payroll, leaving us with \$25782.00 of the \$30,000.00

***TBID created a line item within their budget for the VIC

Visitor Information Center Door Count

	FY14-15	FY15-16	FY16-17	Increase/Decrease
July	25942	34737	38211	10%
August	22028	29551	37702	27.58%
September	16829	20984	27189	29.57%
October	6385	7330	9407	28.33%
November	1059	879	1575	79.18%
December	2257	2266	2300	1.50%
January	3041	2901	2505	-13.65%
February	3327	3295	3280	-0.45%
March	2958	2509	2484	-0.99%
April	3854	4382	3877	-11.52%
May	15719	16918	20020	18.33%
June	29065	30969	33801	9.14%
TOTAL	132464	156721	182351	16.35%