

WAM Region V Meeting Notes
10/11/2017 Kemmerer, WY

Members and Guests Present include: Margaret Huggins & Liz Pace, Bear River; Scott Dellinger, Mountain View; Kate Zimmerman, Dave McGinnis, Anthony Tomass, and Andrew Nelson, Kemmerer; Sherri Redden, Big Piney; Amy Grenfell, Trudy Lym, and Dean Barker, Evanston; Clint Bowen and Kathy Stukel, Diamondville; Sue Abrams, Kathleen Buyers, Evan Byrd, and John Lynch, Star Valley Ranch; Tony Ritzdorf, Jane Broadhead, and Laura Gerber, Opal; Jonathan Teichert, Afton; Matt Murdock, Pinedale; Bob Lenz, Jackson; Kassi Hamon and Larry Steff, LaBarge; Rep. Mari Halverson; Rep. Mike Gierau; Rep. Danny Eyre; Rep. Tom Crank; Senator Frank Baldwin; Chairman Dan Dockstader; Elaina Zempel, Wyoming Business Council; WAM Staff Katie Waldner and Rick Kaysen.

WAM Board of Director and Vice President Scott Dellinger welcomed all and asked for introductions.

Rick Kaysen, WAM Executive Director, provided an update on WAM's 2018 Legislative Agenda and an overview of WAM's Municipal Finance Report Volume II that was issued in September, and presented to the Joint Revenue Committee on September 22, 2017. The discussion included the basic overview of municipal government, fiscal framework and WAM's recommendations of:

1. Securing a minimum of \$105 Million in Direct Distribution for the next biennium for cities, towns and counties.
2. Revise tax laws to allow INCREASED MUNICIPAL REVENUE CAPACITY
3. INCREASE THE CAP for Severance Tax and Federal Mineral Royalties
4. REMOVE TAX EXEMPTIONS that do not support economic development

Rick also shared legislative topics the WAM Board agreed to support, oppose and monitor. Included in the discussion was to support a statewide tourism tax, support permanency of the 5th Penny Option Tax, support a municipal tax, monitor a real estate transfer fee, support efforts of WAM and the WCCA to address extraterritorial jurisdiction bills, and to support a surface water drainage system bills.

Following the legislative discussion, Dellinger asked the municipality leaders to share what has been happening in their communities.

Cities and towns provided the following update from their municipalities:

Bear River- Have moved into their new town hall and would like everyone to come see it and offered to host the next region meeting.

Kemmerer- They have gone through layoffs and reductions, but were happy to be able to balance the budget without cutting services. They recently purchased a new police car and have been working to communicate better with the public and improved the public perception of the city.

Evanston- Their roundhouse was vandalized awhile back and have started replacing broken window they use this facility as a community center. They are working on a sewer expansion project and avoided layoff through attrition.

Star Valley Ranch- This community incorporated back in 2005 due struggles with their water system. They are just wrapping up the water system improvement project.

Opal- They just completed building an equipment building which will help prolong the life of the machines and other equipment. They also spent a lot of time this summer improving their park landscape.

Big Piney- They were happy to report that they could reduce their electric costs by replacing all of the lighting in their community with LED lights. Shared they saved about 1/3.

Pinedale- They have been working on some corrosion control with their water system and getting that taken care of. They are also focusing on a big broadband contract and will be hosting the 2018 WAM Convention.

Jackson- Shared that the big power outage that happened late this winter in Teton Village has led to the power company replacing the lines underground. They are almost through mitigation on their 2014 landslide and think the work should be complete by next spring.

LaBarge- They have seen quite a few new people moving to town, opening new businesses that include a beauty shop, day care and the senior center.

Afton- A Tractor Supply Store just opened along with two urgent care centers. They are wrapping up their street project and have seen 79,000 visitors with the opening of the new Temple.

Mountain View- They are struggling to have enough police officers and have reached out to Lyman to see if there is interest of having a joint police force. Discussion on collaboration are still taking place.

Kaysen shared the Town of Bear River eagerly offered to host the next region meeting in the spring and will coordinate with WAM on scheduling a date and the logistics.

Safe travels home to all!