

# WCCE News

## Wyoming Chamber of Commerce Executives

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April 2010  
Newsletter

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### WCCE President:

**Tim O'Donoghue, Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce**

Dear Colleagues,

WCCE will be undertaking a strategic review and planning session on **April 29 and 30<sup>th</sup>** in Lander for the purpose of examining our short- and long-term goals and tactics, budget, and schedule to accomplish these goals. WCCE has always been comprised of strong chambers of commerce and serves as central coordinating organization for providing the resources for training, legislative participation and advocacy, and information for our members. These services and more will be examined during our strategic review and planning session. The anticipated outcome of the session will be a revisited and renewed direction for WCCE and a set of actions that will work towards this direction and strengthen the capabilities of WCCE to effectively serve not only the WCCE membership, but our strategic partners and businesses around the State of Wyoming.

I look forward to being able to report to you the results of our strategic review and planning session, and the goals and activities that WCCE will be striving to reach and conducting on behalf of our members, partners, and businesses.

Tim

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**WCCE Strategic Review & Planning Session**  
**April 29<sup>th</sup> (starting at 1) & 30<sup>th</sup> (ending before noon)**  
**The Inn at Lander**  
**307-332-2847**  
**Lander, Wyoming**  
**For more information contact Candy 307-322-3977**

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### Object and Purpose of WCCE

*The organization shall be organized to advance Chamber of Commerce management in all areas; to advance standards of ethical and efficient operation; to provide assistance to members in the conduct of their responsibilities; to coordinate information on all matters relating to Chambers of Commerce and similar organizations; to be a clearinghouse for interchange of ideas and information among Chambers which may provide a basis for action on matters of statewide importance; and to provide a medium for effective cooperation with organizations performing specialized functions related to Chamber of Commerce.*

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## Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

### 2010 GOVERNOR'S SUMMIT ON WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS ANNOUNCED

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council, in partnership with the Governor's Office and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, has announced the dates for the 2010 Governor's Summit on Workforce Solutions June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in Casper, Wyoming. This year's summit theme is Valleys of Change: Mountains of Opportunity. The conference, the sixth one of its kind, will provide an opportunity to enhance the partnerships between employers, workforce and economic development professionals, educators and other state and local partners.

Joan Evans, Director of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, said, "The Governor's Summit on Workforce Solutions has been a tremendous opportunity for partners around the state to gather and talk about issues surrounding workforce and the economy," Evans said. "This year I think the theme, Valleys of Change: Mountains of Opportunity, is going to be a venue where businesses, education and workforce can talk about the issues facing them during these tough economic times and how we can come out of the recovery stronger than ever."

Jon Conrad, Chairman for the Wyoming Workforce Development Council, said, "There is no question that these are dynamic times for Wyoming and there is no better time to seize the opportunity this Summit presents us. The Summit is truly Wyoming's premier event that addresses the numerous employment issues, promotes dialogue, while offering solutions to employers so that they will have access to the world's best workforce and innovative programs in Wyoming. We have a great Summit planned and your attendance is greatly needed to ensure a prosperous Wyoming workforce."

Registration for the Summit is \$125. The Department of Workforce Services is offering its Workforce Development Training Fund program as a means to cover up to 60 percent of the cost of registration. The Workforce Development Training Fund is a program that offers training grants to businesses, and the Summit provides a great opportunity for businesses who may not be familiar with the program to experience its benefits first-hand.

In addition to the Summit, a Job and Education Fair is also being schedule to compliment the main event. While the Summit is geared primarily to businesses and employers, the Job and Education Fair brings the whole of Wyoming's workforce system together by offering information and opportunities to job seekers as well. - For more information on the Governor's Summit or to register, please visit [www.wyowdc.org](http://www.wyowdc.org) or call Jeremiah Rieman, Administrator for the Council, at 307-777-5629.

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#### **Institute Report from Terry Sutherland, Worland Chamber of Commerce:**

Before I attended the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona; I thought that my 30 years of management experience with Pacific Power and Light well qualified me to manage the Worland Wyoming Chamber of Commerce. I soon found out that skills needed for managing a non-profit Chamber of Commerce were much different than those needed to manage an electric utility. The classes offered during this first year were highly valuable in providing the orientation necessary for a first year manager to better understand the unique problems associated with running a Chamber office. I found the following classes especially useful in developing the leadership and technical skills necessary to be an effective manager of the Chamber of Commerce: The class on Financial Fitness was very helpful in explaining the fundamentals of nonprofit financial management components; budgeting, financial statements, audits, and internal controls. The Guide to Governance was especially helpful in understanding the 200 year history of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the unique place it has in our country to make governance decisions on behalf of our members. I know that the knowledge gained will make me a more effective manager and the Chamber a stronger advocate for our business community.

## WACE Conference 2010 (Western Association of Chamber Executives) Conference Report from Lori Becker, Casper Area Chamber of Commerce:

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### General Observations/Suggestions

- Many Chambers are suffering and are in “deep” trouble. California chamber’s are down in income by 10% on average
- Regional Chambers are becoming more popular as smaller Chambers are not able to sustain.
- Many Chambers are working more closely with other entities to accomplish more with less financial impacts to each organization. DDA’s, Chamber’s, Econ Dev Groups, City’s, Town’s, Counties, etc.
- Many Chambers are going toward on-line meetings vs. live for committee work, etc.
- Don’t be afraid to lose some members in order to gain more members overall.
- High tech and high touch are equally important.
- With a high rate of older workers and business owners, we need to engage that population as well as the younger generations. Many retirees don’t stay home, they start businesses.
- If expenses are cut too severely, the chances of producing less quality becomes higher. Try to find a balance. Invest in what matters most.
- Ask for updated member contact information more than once per year.

### Marketing

- The components of a successful marketing plan were shown by the instructor. I’ve shared the materials with the marketing committee and we’re taking bites at the effort to better market what the Chamber is, to investigate if we’re doing what our members want, how well we perform, who are competition is, etc, then market it using all medias. Find a way to have a marketing budget!! It’s imperative.
- Chamber’s should look at programs, events and products to evaluate what advantages we can offer over other organizations, to determine our weaknesses, what we do well, and to investigate if there are opportunities that we are missing. Know what makes us unique.
- Conduct member focus group meetings. Sometimes what we are selling isn’t what the members want. Find out.
- Use testimonials to “prove” value.
- Businesses don’t necessary want to know WHAT you do; they want to know your successes.
- Chamber offered opportunities should easily be defined as such. i.e., *Businesses meet businesses=prospective customer.*
- Marketing materials should be clean, and concise in relaying value.
- Add a section on the website that lists “What the Chamber Does For You”.
- Social networking is growing quickly in Chamber’s all over the world. We must get on board to capture younger generations.—The idea was shared to offer seminars on how to build Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn pages.
- Having social networking pages can help reduce the # of broadcast e-mails.
- Be sure to add the link to all communications!
- Video is an important part of Chamber websites.
- Our sales team is everyone, the staff, the Board, the committees, our members. Be sure to train them on the benefits of being a Chamber member.
- Track member retention #’s, event attendance, product purchases, website hits, sponsorships, ad revenue regularly and adjust services as necessary.
- Many Chamber’s are offering Challenge Board sessions which allow business owners and managers to attend a roundtable type meeting where they are allowed to ask for help on any level, i.e., “Where can I find training for this, how do I contact to provide this service, I don’t know how to do this paperwork, etc.”
- Schedule “Ambassador/Board Walk”. Canvass the community and leave Chamber info, thank existing members.
- Offer samples of what marketing materials will look like when we recognize sponsors.

- Marketing presentation should be more formal. Develop a video or PowerPoint that can be given to potential members.
- If box stores can't join Chambers, ask if they can support us on other levels. Can they purchase sponsorships, can they purchase ads or broadcast e-mails, etc. Remind them that our services are marketing products and though they may not have dues/subscription budgets, they may be able to use their marketing budgets.
- In selling memberships, ask, if you can't give money right now, can you give time or talent? (Be careful not to devalue membership with too many trade agreements)
- Send Thank You's! 37% of non-profits don't!
- Don't treat all members the same. Tailor materials to appeal to different sectors.
- To boost the role of the Ambassadors, have them visit each new member and take a photo of them actually putting the membership window cling on the businesses door.
- Take credit for good things that happening in the community!
- Don't promise to increase a member's sales. We can provide exposure to more people, not customers. It's the member's job to make the people into customers—we make the pie bigger.

### **Changing Roles of Chambers-Economic Impacts on Communities**

- Chambers need to play a role in economic development. This can be done by partnering with local econ dev. groups. Some Chambers and their local econ development groups are together making personal visits with local businesses to bring discussion about the needs of the community.
- Many Chambers are implementing training programs to help to sustain jobs. Many work closely with their community colleges to develop training or certificate programs to meet specific workforce needs.
- Some Chambers are heavily involved in recruiting potential employees.
- Can the Chamber help businesses get through City and Planning & Zoning processes?
- Some Chambers are working to brand the "whole" community. The Chamber, the local econ development group and the city all use the same logo and tag lines to promote their community.
- Everything Chambers do IS economic development and we need to talk about it in that manner.
- Some Chambers publish yearly reports that have listings on on-going building projects within their community. It lists the developer, expected finish date, and a picture of the drawings or mock of the building.
- Some Chambers are adding member job listings on their websites.

### **Representing Business**

- Implement grass-roots efforts when addressing or supporting issues, they are highly effective and personalizes the message and the Chamber's role.
- Conduct writing campaigns.
- Host "coffee breaks" with elected officials. Local, state and federal.
- E-mailing representatives is now most effective. 9/11 has caused huge delays in their receipt of mailings.
- Communicate both sides of issues when possible/appropriate.
- Tell representatives when you're happy about a decision. Let them know they are right.
- When sending a message to representatives, use the # of members you're representing. It has an impact.
- Use Board members who have relationships to deliver your message.
- Don't host Town Hall meetings. They are avenues for the naysayers rather than those who are truly seeking information. We risk being tied to the message that's outputted from the meeting.
- Add weblinks for donations for campaigns. We need to do this for the one-cent!!
- Have a policy manual in place. This allows for rapid responses on issues.

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## Mark Your Calendar:

- **Strategic Review & Planning Session – April 29-30, 2010** in Lander
  - **Fall Conference** is scheduled for **September 29-October 1, 2010** in Jackson
  - **WCCE Winter Conference** is scheduled for **February 1, 2011** in Cheyenne
  - **Business Day at the Legislature** is scheduled for **February 2, 2011** in Cheyenne starting at 7 a.m. at Little America, Cheyenne
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## WCCE Board of Directors 2009-2010

### **Tim O'Donoghue, President**

Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce

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[tim@jacksonholechamber.com](mailto:tim@jacksonholechamber.com)

### **Julie Simon, President-Elect**

Campbell County Chamber of Commerce  
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### **Jackie Bredthauer, Past President**

Niobrara Chamber of Commerce  
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### **Dale Steenbergen (2010)**

Greater Cheyenne Chamber of  
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### **Janet Hartford, Secretary/Treasurer (2010)**

Green River Chamber of Commerce  
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### **Terrie Swift (2011)**

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### **WCCE 2010 Members** (as of 3/31/2010)

Buffalo Chamber of Commerce  
Campbell County Chamber of Commerce  
Casper Area Chamber of Commerce  
Cody Country Chamber of Commerce  
Douglas Area Chamber of Commerce  
Evanston Chamber of Commerce  
Glenrock Chamber of Commerce  
Goshen County Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce  
Green River Chamber of Commerce  
Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce  
Kemmerer/Diamondville Chamber of Commerce  
Lander Chamber of Commerce  
Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce  
Wyoming Economic Development Association

Newcastle Area Chamber of Commerce  
Niobrara Chamber of Commerce  
Powell Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Rawlins-Carbon County Chamber of Commerce  
Ringle, Dan  
Riverton Chamber of Commerce  
Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce  
Saratoga/Platte Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce  
Star Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Sublette County Chamber of Commerce  
Worland/Tensleep Chamber of Commerce  
US Chamber of Commerce  
Wyoming Business Council