



Northwest Territories Tourism

2020 AGM Meeting Minutes

Yellowknife, NT
November 6, 2020



2020 Annual General Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2020 Via ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Harold Grinde, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m. The Chair confirmed that in accordance with Article 4, Subsection E of the Constitution and By-laws, the meeting was properly constituted.

The list of AGM Attendees is attached as Appendix A.

2.0 OPENING PRAYER

Board member Gerry Kisoun provided the Opening Prayer.

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[Motion 2020-11-05-AGM-01]

To approve the Agenda as presented.

Moved by: Edie Yoder
MOTION CARRIED

Seconded by: Newton Grey

4.0 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

[Motion 2020-11-05-AGM-02]

To approve the 2019 AGM Minutes as presented.

Moved by: Francois Afane
MOTION CARRIED

Seconded By: Cathy Allooloo

5.0 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT TO MEMBERSHIP

The Chairperson acknowledged the significant challenges for the industry, given the COVID-19 pandemic and spoke about the pivot in marketing the organization had needed to do, about the significant increase in advocacy on behalf of the membership that was ongoing to ensure financial relief and recovery programs were in place. He thanked the staff and noted that navigating the pandemic in 2021 would be under new leadership given the imminent retirement of the CEO. He thanked members for their perseverance, and he reminded members of what a resilient industry the tourism industry is, providing words of encouragement to members, given the significant challenges that remain ahead. He also expressed his gratitude to members for the opportunity to serve them as Chair over the past year.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Approval of the 2019/20 Audited Financial Statements

The financial statements were presented to the membership by Mr. Fred Deschenes, of Crowe MacKay.

[Motion 2020-11-05-AGM-03]

To approve the 2019/20 Audited Financial Statements

Moved by: Newton Grey

Seconded by: Gord Gin

MOTION CARRIED

6.2 APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDITOR FOR 2020/21 FISCAL YEAR

The Chair advised the membership that the Board has issued an RFP for Audit Services in 2020 and that the successful proponent in that process was Crowe MacKay LLP and therefore the Board was recommending to the membership the appointment of Crowe MacKay for the audit.

[Motion 2020-11-05-AGM-04]

To appoint Crowe MacKay as the auditor for NWT Tourism for the 2020/21 Fiscal year.

Moved by: Cathy Allooloo

Seconded by: Susan Mercredi

MOTION CARRIED

6.3 CHANGE IN CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The Chair called upon the CEO to explain the changes being proposed. The CEO confirmed that notice of the proposed changes had been provided to the members and that the document with the changes had been posted on the AGM website for members in October. She took the membership through each of the proposed changes, explaining the purpose of the change, and she confirmed that all changes had been vetted by legal and by Corporate Registries to ensure success in filing with GNWT Corporate Registries.

There were no questions or concerns from the membership regarding the proposed changes.

[Motion 2020-11-05-AGM-05]

To repeal and replace NWT Tourism's Constitution and By-Laws as presented to the membership.

Moved by: Francois Afane
CARRIED

Seconded by: Edie Yoder

6.4 REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Chairperson noted that the report of the Nominating Committee was in the Membership Package and that it had been reviewed by the Board in October and approved for presentation to membership.

The Chairperson thanked the members of the Nominating Committee for their service and thanked all of the candidates that had put their name forward for election.

6.5 BOARD OF DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS

The Chairperson called upon Giselle Marion, Chairperson of the Board's Nomination and Election Committees to provide election results.

Ms. Marion confirmed there were 173 eligible voters in this year's election. She outlined to members how the process had been undertaken, the communications issued to membership to ensure member understanding of the election process and access to electronic voting and she noted that this was the first year an all-candidates forum had been offered to members in advance of voting and that 35% of membership had participated in or watched the forum afterwards. She noted that 8 candidates had been running for three positions and that when an elected position became vacant in September, that the Board had confirmed the person elected in fourth place would be given the remaining one year term on that vacant seat.

She advised that 92 voters participated in the board election and that this was 53% voter participation, which was similar to the previous year which saw 55% of eligible voters participate in the election.

She announced the election results for those elected to a two-year term:

Harold Grinde – 62 votes
Cathy Allooloo - 48 votes
Verda Law - 35 votes

She explained that the candidate that would fill the one-year vacancy was Wendy Grater with 30 votes.

Ms. Marion thanked all candidates for putting their names forward and thanked Election Committee members as well as Ms. Julie Warnock, Communications Officer for administering the "Big Pulse" Election system and for excellent communications to members regarding the process.

6.6. DESTRUCTION OF ELECTION BALLOTS

[Motion 2020-11-05-AGM-06]

That the election ballots be destroyed.

Moved by: Edie Yoder **Seconded by:** Carolos Gonzales

MOTION CARRIED

6.7 APPRECIATION FOR OUTGOING DIRECTORS

The Chairperson thanked those who had allowed their names to stand for election and congratulated those re-elected and newly elected to the Board. He thanked all those who have served on the Board and on board committees in the past year, noting that this has been an extra-ordinary year.

6.8 RESOLUTIONS

The Chairperson explained to members the role of resolutions in setting the priorities for advocacy for the organization, the role of the Resolutions Committee and spoke to the timeline that had been communicated to members regarding the opportunity to bring forward member resolutions. He noted that in September the Board had set advocacy priorities and had directed the Resolutions Committee to develop resolutions to bring to the members for consideration and approval. He confirmed there were four resolutions coming forward from the board, and two resolutions that were member resolutions. He called upon the Board Resolution Committee Chairperson to present the Board resolutions, and noted that 51% of the voting membership in attendance was required to pass a resolution.

6.8.a) Resolution #1 – LIQUIDITY

Resolution #1 was presented in full to the membership. There were some suggested edits to the proposed resolution by the members.

Motion: 11-05-2020-AGM-07: To approve Resolution #1 as amended (as presented in Appendix B.)

Moved by: Dana Hibbard

Seconded by: Joy O’Neill

RESOLUTION CARRIED.

The full approved resolution is included in Appendix B.

6.8 b) Resolution #2 – GNWT Communications

Resolution #2 was presented in full to the membership. There was discussion by membership, but no edits to the proposed resolution were proposed by members.

Motion 11-05-2020-AGM-08: To approve Resolution #2 (as presented in Appendix B).

Moved by: Dana Hibbard

Seconded by: Joy O’Neill

RESOLUTION CARRIED.

The full approved resolution is included in Appendix B.

6.8 c) Resolution #3 – Easing of Border Restrictions

Resolution #3 was presented in full to the membership. There were a number of questions and clarifications, and discussion regarding a number of proposed modifications. Once all edits suggested by members were discussed and finalized, the resolution was presented for final approval to the membership.

Motion: 11-05-2020-AGM-09: To approve Resolution #3 (as presented in Appendix B)

Moved by: Dana Hibbard

Seconded by: Joy O’Neill

RESOLUTION CARRIED.

The full approved resolution is included in Appendix B.

6.8 d) Resolution #4 – Clarity regarding Timelines Decision Points To Ease Border Restrictions

Resolution #4 was presented in full to the membership. There were questions, clarifications, modifications proposed and discussion about the proposed amendments. When consensus was reached on the final proposed wording, the resolution was presented to the membership for approval.

Motion: 11-05-2020-AGM-10: To approve Resolution #4 (as presented in Appendix B)

Moved by: Dana Hibbard

Seconded by: Joy O’Neill

RESOLUTION CARRIED.

The full approved resolution is included in Appendix B.

6.8.e) **Resolution #5 – Assistance for Remote Lodges to Transition to New Satellite Options**

Gord Gin provided the membership with an overview of the challenges for those lodges that have been relying on Infosat and/or Xplorenet for satellite services and the uncertainty regarding the options they may or may not have after December 31, 2020.

The CEO updated the membership on her correspondence with telecom service providers and indicated there may not be the need to action this resolution as she was anticipating an announcement this week from Infosat and Xplorenet about extending the existing Ka2 band services into December 2022. She noted that if this decision was made, the advocacy on this issue would no longer be required. An amendment was proposed to broaden the request for GNWT help to include more than just the Department of ITI, and once there was consensus on wording, the resolution was presented to membership for approval.

Motion: 11-05-2020-AGM-11: To approve Resolution #5 (as presented in Appendix B)

Moved by: Gordon Gin

Seconded by: Margaret Peterson

RESOLUTION CARRIED.

The full approved resolution is included in Appendix B.

6.8 f) **Resolution #6 – One Time Assistance for Customer Deposit Refunds 2020 and 2021**

Gord Gin presented the challenges that members have with respect to deposits, given the lack of revenue in 2020 and proposed a one-time assistance for tourism operators to help them to refund deposits if travel restrictions are not lifted. Some members discussed concerns that it was not responsible for businesses to take deposits and spend them when refund policies are about holding a spot for those booking the trip. Others indicated it is normal practices for operators to take deposits and use them in the off season and to prepare to host the guests, and not having revenue due to cut off revenue sources is a challenge. Members discussed the concern that any kind of refund support by governments would need to have guarantees that the client is the person who gets the refund and it would be necessary to have controls in place for operators to prove they have repaid the refunds to the customers. Another suggestion was the that GNWT could consider offering a three year loan, interest free to help businesses pay back customer refunds, but remain in business.

Motion: 11-05-2020-AGM-12: To approve Resolution #6 (as presented in Appendix B)

Moved by: Gordon Gin

Seconded by: Bill Braden

RESOLUTION CARRIED

7.0 SURPRISE ITEM – RETIREMENT GIFT FOR CEO

The Chairperson noted that this item on the agenda was a surprise item. He thanked the outgoing CEO for her service and shared with members a power point presentation regarding the contribution of the CEO to the organization and noted she had been with the

organization for the past 6.5 years and would be retiring in December. He presented a \$500.00 gift certificate on behalf of the Board to her that can be used with any member of the organization for a tourism experience and he opened the floor to members to offer their best wishes and thanks, which they did. The CEO thanked the chair and membership and noted she had loved working at NWT Tourism and was going to miss the members, staff and board.

8. Adjournment

Joy O'Neill moved the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

(Appendix A: List of 2020 AGM Attendees)

(Appendix B: Final Resolutions Passed by the Membership)

**Appendix A: 2020 AGM Voting Delegates in Attendance
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Name	Number of Votes	Business Name
Amanda Peterson	2	Peterson's Point Lodge My Backyard Tours
Andrew Moore	1	Yellowknife Sportfishing Adventure
Bill Braden	1	BillBradenPhoto
Breanna Bray	1	Touch the Arctic Tours
Verda Law	1	Yellowknife Tours
Carlos Gonzales	1	Yellowknife Outdoor Adventures
Cathy Allooloo	1	Narwal Outdoor Adventures
Chris Potyok	1	Northern Star B & B and Tourist Services
Corey Myers	1	Frontier Fishing Lodge
Dana Hibbard	1	Nahanni Wild
Edie Yoder	1	Hearne Lake Lodge
Yvonne Quick	1	Yvonne Quick
Faith Embleton	1	Embleton House B & B
Francois Afane	1	CDETNO
Gary Jaeb	1	True North Safaris
Gerry Kisoun	1	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Giselle Marion	2	Tlichu Government Tlichu Online Store
Gordon Gin	1	Yellow Dog Lodge
Harold Grinde	2	Gana River Outfitters Association of Mackenzie Mountain Outfitters
Jackie Challis	1	Town of Inuvik
James McPherson	2	Sahtu Adventures Sahtu Secretariat
James Robinson	1	Aurora Village
Jonah Mitchell	0	Parks Canada – Board Member Ex-Officio
Bobby Drygeese	1	B Dene Adventures
Joy O'Neill	1	Gwich'in Tribal Council

Appendix A: 2020 AGM Voting Delegates in Attendance

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Name	Number of Votes	Business Name
Kelly Martin	1	Explorer Hotel
Lin Ward /Al Pace	1	Canoe North Adventures
Liza McPherson	1	Dehcho First Nations
Matt Hill	1	Kasba Lake Lodge
Michael Olson	1	Outcrop Communications
Myles Carter	1	Nonacho Lake Fishing Adventures
Newton Grey	2	Capital Suites Yellowknife Capital Suites Inuvik
Joe Bailey	1	North Star Adventures
Susan Mercredi	1	Top of the World Travel
Tracy St. Denis	0	NWTT Board Member – GNWT Appointed (Ex Officio)
Greg Dussome	1	Lac La Martre Adventures
Wendy Grater	1	Black Feather

APPENDIX B 2020 AGM RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #1 – ENSURE LIQUIDITY FOR TOURISM INDUSTRY TO ENSURE RECOVERY FROM COVID-19 TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

Whereas the decision to restrict travel within the NWT to non-essential travellers and non-NWT residents is a GNWT decision aimed at protecting the health and wellbeing of NWT residents from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the tourism industry supports ensuring the safety and wellbeing of NWT Residents; and

Whereas survey results in September 2020 showed that 70% of tourism businesses in the NWT will experience a 76% to 100% loss in total revenues for 2020 compared to their total revenues in 2019 and that this lost revenue is directly caused by travel restrictions that have disabled tourism visitation from outside of the Northwest Territories; now therefore

Be it resolved that GNWT and the Government of Canada deliver adequate financial supports for the tourism industry in order to protect private sector investments made in tourism infrastructure, tourism product development, employee recruitment and training and tourism marketing, ensuring tourism businesses are able to resume full business operations in 2021 or 2022, as applicable.

APPENDIX B 2020 AGM RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #2 – GNWT COMMUNICATIONS RE COVID-19 TO SUPPORT SPEEDY RECOVERY OF TOURISM INDUSTRY

Whereas the Government of the Northwest Territories declared a public health emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 which has been extended and remains in effect and GNWT has put in place measures to protect NWT Resident health and safety, including travel restrictions that have effectively closed the Northwest Territories to tourism; and

Whereas the GNWT has significantly increased its communication to NWT residents about the pandemic and related GNWT measures, orders, and enforcement of measures, including restrictions on travel for health and safety reasons; and

Whereas GNWT's communications can influence NWT Resident perceptions about travel, tourism and hospitality for visitors and NWT Resident perceptions will play an important role in the pace of recovery for our industry; now therefore

Be it resolved that the GNWT apply a tourism lens on all of its COVID-19 communications, adding key messages that demonstrate the GNWT's goals for emerging wisely include facilitating a rapid recovery for the tourism industry by enabling visitors to return and NWT Residents to be comfortable once again in sharing their spectacular hospitality

APPENDIX B

2020 AGM RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #3 – Easing of Border Restrictions – Saving Summer 2021

Whereas the tourism industry supports the objective of the GNWT to protect the health and safety of NWT Residents while balancing the need to allow essential work to continue; and

Whereas making a living as a licensed tourism operator is essential work and 23% of respondents in the NWT tourism industry survey say their business can survive less than six months without additional government supports, 40% say they are unsure of their ability to survive with additional supports;

Whereas there are unprecedented best practices and standards now established with the World Travel and Tourism Association and the Adventure Travel Trade Association that ensure safe travel; and

Whereas these new standards create an opportunity for GNWT to work now with tourism operators in remote locations, such as, but not limited to the hunting, paddling and fishing sectors to develop a safe plan that will enable visitors to travel into the NWT without self- isolation when travelling with NWT Tourism Operators who have been approved by GNWT based on demonstrating their ability to minimize exposure to NWT communities and adherence to these best practices and standards; and

Whereas operators working in remote locations, such as those working in the hunting, fishing and paddling sectors, need to know by February 2021 whether they can commit to clients for summer 2021 or risk losing 2019/20 deposits and 2019/20 clients; now therefore

Be it resolved that the GNWT place a priority on establishing protocols and standards that tourism operators offering tours in remote locations, such as, but not limited to, the hunting, paddling and fishing sectors will be required to meet in order to bring guests into the NWT for the summer of 2021, and that the opportunity to bring guests in if operating to these approved standards be confirmed no later than February 1, 2021.

APPENDIX B 2020 AGM RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #4 - CLARITY REGARDING TIMELINE DECISION POINTS TO EASE OF BORDER RESTRICTIONS

Whereas tourism operators have lost the 2020 tourism year to COVID-19 travel restrictions and face continued financial losses related to unknown timelines around reopening of NWT borders to summer visitors and

Whereas visitors to the NWT generally plan their trips well in advance and customers who had booked 2020 trips with NWT tour operators, which were subsequently delayed to 2021, are now asking NWT tourism operators to confirm milestone dates by which NWT tour operators can confirm the customers' trips for 2021 will go ahead or be cancelled; now therefore

Be it resolved that GNWT establish a clear timeline by February 1, 2021 that identifies specific dates by which decisions will be made about the status of the border being reopened to Canadian resident and international visitors, so that tourism operators can manage customer relationships, reduce uncertainty for themselves and for their customers and put in place strategies to minimize further losses.

APPENDIX B 2020 AGM RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #5 – ASSISTANCE FOR REMOTE LODGES TO TRANSITION TO NEW SATELLITE OPTIONS

Whereas the current provider of Ka2 satellite internet service is being sunsetted as of December 31, 2020, a replacement for this service has not yet been announced; and

Whereas tour operators need internet service at their lodges for safety, to coordinate logistics, to complete sales and marketing of products and services, to enable lodge owners, employees and clients to keep in touch with families and to enable clients to have access to the internet for their own communications services, including Voice over Internet, text messaging and GPS location broadcasts, while at remote NWT lodges; and

Whereas northern communications service providers and/or satellite service providers have not yet defined or provided the next generation of satellite internet service or the costs to transition and subscribe and this situation is occurring at a time when operators are already facing significant revenue loss and uncertainty due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Be it resolved that the GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism & Investment, as part of its tourism development initiatives, work with satellite service providers and other government departments, to identify and provide information to remote lodges regarding new service options , and also make available through its relief and recovery programs, funds in 2020 and 2021 to assist tourism operators in acquiring and installing new satellite technology equipment that they will require to transition to new services, when they become available and that GNWT view the installation of such equipment as essential work, and facilitate any travel exemptions that may be required to install the equipment on site.

APPENDIX B 2020 AGM RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION # 6 – ONE TIME - ASSISTANCE FOR CUSTOMER DEPOSIT REFUNDS 2020 and 2021

Whereas the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) through ITI and organizations such as NWT Tourism (NWTT) has made significant investments to promote and encourage visitors to come to the Northwest Territories; and

Whereas tourism operators have also invested in promoting the Northwest Territories, their businesses, and the spectacular experiences they offer; and

Whereas deposits taken by tour operators to reserve tours and excursions are generally used to pre-pay many core expenses and to secure supplier contracts for the tours and excursions being provided to the client. Up front expenses for tour operators may include items such as the purchase of core supplies (perishable & non-perishable), annual insurance premiums, staff wages, and deposits issued to secure transportation and accommodation provided through other 3rd party contractors. Further, the deposits received by tour operators can be further diminished through the application of credit card fees and affiliated 3rd party services such as travel agency and booking agency fees; and

Whereas travel restrictions issued by the GNWT and the Government of Canada have created uncertainty for customers and tourism operators regarding when NWT vacations will be allowed to proceed; and Whereas tourism suppliers have been largely successful in working with their clients to defer many bookings from 2020 vacations to 2021; and

Whereas clients' trips are unable to proceed due to continued government border closures and/or isolation requirements, and customers may opt to cancel their trips and request refunds on their deposits; and

Whereas NWT Tourism wishes to preserve the goodwill created by past advertising campaigns as much as possible and to protect the reputation of NWT tourism operators and the Northwest Territories by preventing tourism clients from losing their deposits, which were made prior to March 15, 2020 towards future planned travel; now therefore.

Be it Resolved that NWT Tourism request both the GNWT and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) to work together to put in place a one-time financial assistance program, aimed at assisting tourism operators in refunding their clients' 2020 and 2021 reservation deposits.