

# Fish

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on the same team and placed first. Maser helped Korhel pull his fish out.

Twenty minutes after Korhel's fish was caught, Maser discovered he had caught another big fish, this time measuring 27 inches. Then the third fish Maser and Birdsley pulled out measured about 29.75 inches.

Birdsley said, "It was back to back. It was wild! You never see stuff like that. Ever." Maser's team caught three big fish all within two hours. They still had three more hours left in the derby. Birdsley pondered, "I don't know, man, I think we kind of got it. But you never know how everybody else is doing, right?"

Maser said he was functioning with little sleep. He said, "After I caught that 32 inch, I was like, man, I should probably go back to the camper and take a nap because usually it's, you know, one big fish like that and you've pretty much won. But then after I saw Sam catch that bigger one, I was like, well, I gotta keep fishing and try to get at least another big one to try to get first."

Birdsley was taking stock of the experience and showed concern for his friend. He asked Maser, "Gage, not only one, not only two, but three. I was like, how are you feeling right now?"

All Maser could reply was, "I'm numb. Numb. Like, I am so anxious." Birdsley described the fight they faced trying to pull the fish. He said, "It's just getting that fish right to come out through the hole is crucial." They were all excited, screaming, and jumping up and down.

Maser, Deere, and Birdsley's team placed first with 133.125 total inches winning \$3,550. They were sponsored by Stars and Pipes Derby Promotion. Maser recognized his team's competitors and said, "This year really is special because every team had at least one Thermopolis person on it that was in the top three, which is pretty cool."

Coming in second place, Dave Diede, Justin Kiser, (both from Worland) and Sam Korhel (from Thermopolis) brought in a total of 121.625 inches, winning \$2,540. Korhel also won \$800 in the Calcutta competition. Last year Korhel, Maser, and Kiser were on the

first place winning team at the derby. Korhel also won first place in 2022.

On Saturday, Korhel said his teammates "really carried me that day...The second day it's just a crapshoot." However, on Sunday Korhel said he and his team were able to pull some big fish. Korhel pulled one just over 30 inches.

Korhel said about his friend Maser and their team, "I was super stoked for Gage. He and I have a passion. I kind of got him into ice fishing and passed on quite a bit of knowledge to him. To see all that payoff was really cool. I was really happy for him. I landed his first big fish for him that morning and kind of talked him through it, kept him calm. And then, you know, gave him a big hug. We got it through the ice."

All of these friendly fishermen also work together at Wyo-Ben.

The third place team includes Adrian Padilla (from Thermopolis), Heidi Freeman, and Jose Guzman (both from Lander). Their total inches were 116.625 and won \$2,000.

Saturday, their team was six inches behind from being in the lead and placed 82nd. However, for Heidi Freeman, it was her first time there. She pulled a lake trout measuring at 36.5 inches and weighing 15 pounds. Padilla said, "She never caught a big laker like that." It was the longest fished caught during the derby.

Freeman said it took her and her team six minutes to get the big fish in. She said, "It was a big one, but I did not realize it was that big. The size of it coming through that hole, it was monstrous...And oh man, I was just like holy struggle. Just the weight of that fish pulling it up was heavy. I was just like, oh my God. There was a lot of swearing that happened."

Freeman's son Logan earlier told her that her previous fish were babies. But after catching this one, she sent a photo to him and asked, "Is this big enough for you?" Freeman won an additional \$100 for catching the biggest fish.

It turned out that Grandpa Thorton's prediction was more than just about his grandson. What a great fish story for everyone.



photo by Nadja Cavin

## Galentine party

Anne Benboe crafts a Valentine at the Galentine party sponsored by Charis Clothing and Art House on Feb. 6.

## Replacement flag pole damaged

The Town of Thermopolis has announced that the new flag pole recently installed downtown at the intersection of 5th and Broadway Streets was damaged during installation by the contractor.

The original flag pole was damaged during a wind event

in 2024. The new flagpole was installed in January.

Assistant to the Mayor Jim Jeunehomme reported that the replacement flagpole has multiple scratches and scuffs on the surface, and there are some dents in the pole.

A second replacement

flagpole will not be paid for by the Town of Thermopolis or insurance. The contractor Billings Sign Service and the flagpole manufacturer, Western Banner & Flags, will work out the matter. At this time, the second flagpole replacement has not been scheduled.

## Public notices

### Notice of application for 2025-2026 Liquor License Renewals.

Notice is hereby given that on the dates given, the following applications were received for liquor license renewals. RETAIL: OEB LLC, 528 Broadway St., January 10, 2025; 7 Lazy S Café & Bar LLC, 109 S. 6th, January 9, 2025; Compass Realty Group/Thermopolis Liquors, 615 S. 6th, January 13, 2025; Mack's Market Inc., 600 S. 6th, December 16, 2024; OEB Saloon, LLC, 500 S. 6th, January 10, 2025; Grand Cru Enterprises LLC, 735 S 6th, December 26, 2024; Maverik Inc., 425 S. 6th, December 30, 2024; Big Spring Spa Inc/Safari Club, 115 E. Park, January 15, 2025 and. BAR & GRILL: OEB LLC/One Eyed Buffalo Brewing Co., 535 Broadway, January 10, 2025; Lopez, Inc., Los Cabos, 942 Shoshoni, January 16, 2025, VFW Post #2281, 302 Broadway, January 17, 2025. MICROBREWERY: OEB LLC/One Eyed Buffalo Brewing Co., 528 Broadway, January 10, 2025. Protest, if there be any, against issuance of any of these licenses, will be heard at the hour of 7:00 p.m., February 18, 2025, at the Thermopolis Town Hall, 420 Broadway.

Tracey Van Heule, Thermopolis Town Clerk

Pub. Feb. 6 & 13, 2025 No. 1784

### WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CHEYENNE, WYOMING NOTICE OF ACCEPTANCE OF AND FINAL SETTLEMENT FOR HIGHWAY WORK

Notice is hereby given that the Wyoming Department of Transportation has accepted as completed according to plans, specifications and rules governing the same work performed under that certain contract between the State of Wyoming and Mountain Construction Company, The Contractor, on Highway Project Number PEG2351 in Park and Hot Springs Counties, consisting of aggregate stockpiles and the Contractor is entitled to final settlement therefore; that the Director of the Department of Transportation will cause said Contractor to be paid the full amount due him under said contract on March 19, 2025.

The date of the first publication of this Notice is February 6, 2025.

Pam Fredrick Senior Budget Analyst Budget Program Wyoming Department of Transportation

Pub. Feb. 6, 13 & 20, 2025 No. 1785

STATE OF ) OFFICE OF THE WYOMING ) BOARD OF OF ) COUNTY COUNTY OF ) COMMISSIONERS HOT SPRINGS ) January 21, 2025

The Hot Springs Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. in the

Public Meeting Room at the Government Annex. Present were Commissioners Tom Ryan, Bob Aguiar, and Paul Galovich. Also present were County Attorney Jill Logan, Deputy County Clerk Karen Slocum, and Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners Connie Guntly. Chairman Ryan led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda** – The Commissioners amended the Agenda as follows:

**ADD:** Commissioner Galovich – Present a Letter of Clarification and Rebuttal for the Letters Received from the Planner and Land Use Planning Committee

**Steve Voytilla** – Discussion of Star Plunge **Approval of Minutes** – The Commissioners approved the minutes from January 7, 2025 meeting.

**518 Arapahoe St Update and Land Use Planning Committee and Planner Letters** – 518 Arapahoe Street Asbestos Update – Planner Culliton sent out requests for quotes to four companies for asbestos abatement services and two companies to date have returned with amounts. Mr. Culliton also went over the two quotes and explained the difference in amounts, Environmental Contractors submitted a quote based on the Asbestos Report and has a disclaimer about a clear work area free of obstructions. Insulation Inc. reviewed the interior of the building and provided an amount that is not to exceed, there is a \$5,500 difference between the two quotes. It was suggested to wait to make a decision on the quotes until the Community Development Block Grant is determined.

**Land Use Planning Commission and Planner Letters** – Mr. Culliton explained these letters are in regards to the Public Hearing set for February 4th for the Tipi Retreat. Chairman Ryan summarized the Land Use Planning Commission ("LUPC") letter stating LUPC was concerned the County was not following the Land Use Plan document. The original Tipi Retreat application was reviewed and ultimately rejected, so if new evidence is available the Stevens should reapply to the Land Use Planning Commission with a new application. Commissioner Aguiar stated it was his understanding by seconding the motion on January 7th it was not guaranteeing any results, but to give the Stevens an opportunity to remedy. Chairman Ryan stated the remedy was through the court, and the motion made January 7th was to go through the check list which would ultimately grant or deny the land use change.

**Commissioner Galovich Rebuttal of Tipi Retreat Letters Presented** – Commissioner Galovich presented a letter to the Board regarding his rebuttal. Discussion ensued between Chairman Ryan and Commissioner Galovich about the judge's original ruling and the remand requested by the judge for the County to provide findings of fact. Chairman Ryan stated once the County provided the findings of fact the judge ruled one absolute finding was upheld, and the case continued on for County restitution. Commissioner Aguiar asked Planner Culliton if the Land Use Plan has changed since the original Tipi Retreat application, Mr. Culliton stated it had changed. Chairman Ryan asked if there was interest in rescinding the motion or making a new motion to have the Stevens reapply. Commissioners Aguiar and Galovich do not wish to recon-

sider the original motion.

**Hot Springs State Park Update** – District Manager for Wyoming State Parks, Brooks Jordan, presented an update for the Hot Springs State Park, specifically the Star Plunge. Mr. Jordan stated the Star Plunge is closed until the legal proceedings that was brought against the State Park by Star Plunge owners is resolved. Mr. Brooks went over the background of the issue and the timeline of the Request for Proposals process. Commissioner Galovich asked why the shut down as it could affect the tourism and even the facility. Mr. Jordan stated there is staff on site to maintain the facility during the shutdown, Mr. Jordan also stated the State Parks operated in good faith with the facility owners for three years. Chairman Ryan stated as County Commissioners they are not deciding factors for this issue and are just assisting with releasing information. County Attorney Logan inquired about the court records for the case, Mr. Jordan stated they are filed with the Clerk of District Court in Laramie County.

**Discussion of Star Plunge** – Steve Voytilla, presented his concern about the Star Plunge being closed and the process the State Park used. Mr. Voytilla stated every business in Hot Springs County will be affected by the Star Plunge being closed and doesn't see why an agreement cannot be made for an extension while the issues are being worked out. Mr. Voytilla submitted two letters to the Commissioners and referenced them in his presentation. Jon McDonald spoke about the Star Plunge Facility, the family owners and concerns the State was not transparent in the Request for Proposal process. Chairman Ryan stated their concerns should be addressed to the State. Mr. Jordan addressed the Commissioners regarding these comments, stating he is from Hyattville and is in Hot Springs County weekly, he cares about this community and the State negotiated in good faith with the Star Plunge owners.

**Memo Regarding Bond for Elected Official** – County Attorney, Jill Logan, stated no action is needed for this memo, but the Board could approve. The Bond is for District Court Clerk, Kris McNeff's position. This Bond was initially done when she was appointed and swore in to her position, a rider was added to the Bond to extend the term for the next four years. The Commissioners did not see a need to approve. Attorney Logan clarified the Commissioners Bond is supposed to be reviewed and approved by the District Court Clerk, which has been completed.

**Other Business** – 1) **Ratification of Notice to Proceed for Black Mountain Road Project** – Chairman Ryan explained at the pre-construction meeting Wilson Bros Construction indicated they were ready to start work right away; therefore, the Notice to Proceed was signed and needs ratification. The Commissioners ratified Notice to Proceed signed by Chairman Ryan on January 8th for Wilson Bros Construction. 2) **Request for Approval of Updated Unified Certification Program Agreement and Acceptance from Wyoming Department of Transportation** – The Commissioners approved the Unified Certification Program Agreement and Acceptance. 3) **Request for Approval of Support Letter for Charter Communications for their BEAD Grant Application** – Chairman Ryan stat-

ed Charter Communications contacted him the other day for a letter of support for the Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program. This is not an exclusive request to provide services just a support letter. The Commissioners approved Chairman's signature on the support letter addressed to Chad Bolling for high speed internet in support of the BEAD grant. 4) **Request for Approval of Rapid Fire Agreement, in the Annual Amount of \$480 for Annual Fire Sprinkler Inspections at Common Ground Building** – The Commissioners approved the Rapid Fire Agreement. 5) **Request for Approval of Rapid Fire Agreement, in the Annual Amount of \$1,910 for Annual Fire Sprinkler, Annual/Semi Annual Kitchen Hood and Annual Fire Alarm Inspections at the Detention Center** – The Commissioners approved the Rapid Fire Agreement. 6) **Request for Approval of Rapid Fire Agreement, in the Annual Amount of \$1,070 for Annual Fire Sprinkler, Annual Fire Alarm and Annual Back Flow Inspections at the Museum** – The Commissioners approved the Rapid Fire Agreement. 7) **Request for Approval of Facility Use Form, Annex Meeting Room, Wyoming Water Development Office Meeting** – The Commissioners approved the Facility Use form, Annex Meeting Room, for Wyoming Water Development Meeting on February 13, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. It was clarified this meeting is for the recommendations of the Hot Springs County Water supply for the study conducted. 8) **Appointment of Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Center Joint Powers Board Member** – The Commissioners appointed Joe Moon to the Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Center Board.

**Correspondence** – 1) **Invitation to Wyoming Association of Municipalities Reception** – January 23rd 6:00 pm; 2) **Land Use Planning Commission Minutes** – November 2024; 3) **Natural Resource Planning Committee Minutes** – November 2024; 4) **Hot Springs County Prevention Coalition Minutes** – January 2025; 5) **Hot Springs County Fair Board Minutes and Agenda** – December 2024 and January 2025; 6) **Letter from Steve Voytilla** – Star Plunge Swimming Pool

The Commissioners reviewed the forgoing correspondence. No further action was required.

**Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Hot Springs County Board of Commissioners will be held on February 18, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., at the Hot Springs County Annex building, 117 N. 4th St. Thermopolis. The public is invited to attend in person or stream online. To be placed on the Agenda please email Connie Guntly, Administrative Assistant to the Board of County Commissioners at connie.guntly@hscounty.com. Per Wyoming Statute section 18-3-516 (f), County information can be obtained at the County website https://hscounty.com/ or by requesting a Public Records form from the County Clerk's office.

ATTEST:

Thomas J. Ryan, Chairman

Becky Kersten, County Clerk

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