

MASON COUNTY LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Commissioners' Chambers
411 North 5TH Street, Shelton, WA 98584
Wednesday, July 29, 2014 9:00 a.m.

Members in Attendance: Chair Terri Jeffreys, Bonnie Knight, Duane Wilson, Stephanie Rowland and Angela Rabelos, Kelly Bergh, Julie Gray, Shaun Tucker, Darin Barry. Absent: Duane Wilson, Bonnie Knight Guests: Nancy Johnson, Union Tourism Association, Natalie Johnson, The Journal, Deidre Eaton, Shelton-Mason County Chamber, Rachel Hanson, Image in Action Design, Debbie Krumpols, citizen, Tom Davis, citizen, Jerry Eckenrode, KMAS and Diane Zoren, Staff.

1. Chair Jeffreys called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.
2. Approval of Minutes: Approval of the June 2, 2014 minutes.
 Cmmr. Jeffreys asked that Rachel's title be changed to Rachel Hansen, Image in Action Design.
Rowland/Gray moved and seconded to approve the June 2, 2014 minutes as amended.

3. Review all Tourism Marketing Proposals & Select top 3 to interview.

Angela thinks that no points should be given for finance because it was not requested. There will only be a 90 point maximum total.

Ferde Grofe: Average 29.57 average

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| DB 21 | AR 21 | ST 24 |
| SR 10 | DW 38 | KB 50 |
| JG 43 | | |

NW Event Organizers, Inc.: 82.57 average

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| DB 90 | AR 65 | KB 86 | ST 76 |
| SR 85 | DW 86 | JG 90 | |

Shelton/Mason County Chamber: 68

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| JG 84 | ST 76 | KB 84 | SR left the room |
| AR 57 | DW 86 | DB 21 | |

KMAS Olympic Broadcasting: Average 52.67

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| ST 35 Too local | KB 74 | SR 33 | DB 21 |
| AR N/A | JG 80 | DW 73 | |

Blue Collar: Average 72.57

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| JG 71 | ST 76 | SR 83 | DB 21 |
| KB 85 | AR 90 | DW 82 | |

Darin/Angela really liked the Washington State visitor's guide magazine.

Pivot and Levy: Average 76.57

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| AR 58 | ST 76 | SR 90 | DB 90 |
| KB 70 | DW 80 | JG 72 | |

S3 Solutions: Average 55.57

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| AR 65 | ST 69 | JG 78 | SR 68 |
| DB 21 | KB 88 | DW 86 | |

Top three are:

NW Event Organizers

Blue Collar

Pivot & Levy

It was agreed that they should all three be invited for an interview although travel reimbursement will not be provided.

Julie Gray stated that she feels they should not be allowed a tele-conference interview. They should come in person to their interview.

It was agreed that they should all bring references and a balance sheet and possibly inquire as to the exact percentage of the budget will be spend on actual third party media.

Shaun Tucker suggested adding a fourth group and he also disagrees with how certain people scored applicants.

Julie stated that each person votes differently. She also added that this committee has a reputation for changing things. She added that from an outsider's point of view, it will not look like good business practice to change things now.

Angela commented that people's opinions should be respected.

Stephanie asked how they will be scored.

Darin said he would like to slow down the interview process so that everything is completely understood. He would like a tighter understanding before interviews.

Julie asked if the next scheduled meeting is Sept 11, 2014 and asked if that would be enough time.

Rachel explained that other programs are similar to google analytics and google analytics is an added expense.

Angela asked to meet again to discuss.

Shaun Tucker said he doesn't feel the committee needs to get together again before the next meeting.

Stephanie Rowland doesn't think we need to meet again either.

It was decided by a show of hands that there will not be an additional meeting.

4. Discussion of allowing public comment at LTAC meetings -

Darin Barry suggested allowing public to comment at the end of the meetings.

Angela Rabelos commented that she feels public should be allowed to provide feedback and comments.

Julie Gray suggested an introduction period at the beginning and to offer an opportunity at the end.

Cmmr. Jefferys asked if that process should be started today.

The committee agreed.

Commissioner Jeffreys read Duane Wilson's letter in response to Angela's letter to the editor. Duane thinks it reflects badly on the committee.

Introductions of guests

Tom Davis suggested focusing revenues on clubs and sporting activities. Locally sponsored events would attract groups of people to Mason County.

Darin Barry suggested a regular part of the agenda should be allowed to share new research and information if applicable.

Cmmr. Jeffreys agrees that is a good idea.

5. Review draft VIC contract -

Cmmr. Jeffreys reiterated portions of the last meeting. It may not be appropriate that a review is based on google. She shared the contract she has drafted.

Darin commented that there is an outdated understanding of how it works and stated that updated events will attract people to the events.

Stephanie Rowland stated that web content and google analytics should be in the mix although possibly not heavily weighted on.

Darin reiterated that we need virtual visitor centers. Door County website has 51 thousand likes on Facebook. He says Mason County should have "friends" in social media.

Cmmr. Jeffreys stated if we are looking for fresh content things will need to be updated on a regular basis.

Darin commented that the money is going to outdated means of attracting tourism. He also introduced reasons why more money should be spent on updated and virtual technology and weekly updated content creation. He would like to see a breakdown on what has been spent over the last year on hard media.

Shaun Tucker joined the meeting at 9:25 a.m.

Stephanie Rowland commented that this process is already approved so she feels that what Darin is proposing is the bigger picture. She feels that he has good ideas but at this time they should focus on what is already proposed.

Darin commented that he feels that the virtual and social media needs to be started soon. He feels there should be an email opt in on the website. He said there needs to be updated content.

Angela commented that she agrees that updated media does attract tourism.

Shaun Tucker asked if the process being used now is one that was used in previous years.

Cmmr. Jeffreys stated that the difference is that this time RFP's were used describing exactly what is desired.

Darin stated he is fine with stepping out but he has a problem coming to meetings and just authorizing the old process.

Stephanie stated she does feel they are already doing a good job. She feels defensive because she knows people are working hard. She stated that Mason County 's Lodging Tax is better than any other on the peninsula.

Shaun Tucker stated that there are different ways to measure tourism and that it's not just one thing that attracts tourism.

Stephanie wants to know how web content will be measured. She feels it should not be heavily weighted.

Cmmr. Jeffreys answered there is a scope of work. She added that item 6 addresses the required work. She is asking what the applicants will be evaluated on.

Darin suggested the following:

1. Accurately updated lodging facilities in the County.
2. Posting two or three new pictures along with content. He said the content should be delivered to web administrator on a weekly basis which can be turned into a blog and used to update Facebook. He added that they should always be updated with accurate content.

Julie Gray asked if private homes are required to pay lodging tax.

Angela answered yes.

Kelly stated she updates her Facebook site and uploads pictures.

Stephanie stated that she doesn't feel she can do all this for VIC with her budget.

Julie Gray stated that it can be done. She states the rodeo brings alot of people to Mason County.

Stephanie stated she can somewhat update events although shouldn't be required to come up with three new stories each week. She is happy to provide updated content but not the quantity that Darin suggests.

Cmmr. Jeffreys also explained that this is outside of the original content.

Deidre Eaton commented that the VIC RFP that went out does not mention what is being discussed here today. She feels these things belong under general tourism and marketing.

Cmmr. Jeffreys stated this is a contract and can be signed or not signed. She suggests that generic frequency of updated web content could be added instead of adding a specific number.

Rachel Hanson commented on the web content updates. She feels people are busy and do not have time to write articles and post comments and photos. They need a conduit.

Shaun shared that for his business he does not require a specific number of updates. He feels if you regulate and are too strict with deadlines of the submissions, the quality will suffer.

Darin stated that the VIC should be the cheerleader for the virtual world. He is saying that there needs to be website development and get the content from the field.

Shaun feels that this should be a marketing function. He feels that the people being asked to do this would be the wrong people and so it would decrease the quality of content. He doesn't think this aspect should be in the VIC contract.

Cmmr. Jeffreys will take this information and write a contract.

6. Small Festivals applications-finalize score sheets & review news release -

Diane stated the RFPs go out in mid August and the deadline for applications is September 30, 2014. She added that the scoring will be done in October.

Darin reiterated that he feels strongly that social media should be utilized.

Angela agrees with Darin.

Shaun commented that you can force someone to comply. He stated that changing things now is not a good thing from the committee or the community. He said there should be a strategy to look at the big picture.

Cmmr. Jeffreys reminded everyone that this is a new committee.

Debbie Krumpols stated that she noticed the committee seems frustrated with this process but are an amazing group of people. She commented that the committee seems on the right track.


Nancy Johnson commented that it is frustrating with all this new information. She agrees that the website with fresh content is a very important component.

Jerry Eckenrode commented that assigning someone to the website is essential to keep it fresh and useful.

7. Next meeting date - September 11, 2014 @ 9 a.m. to interview top three proposals. There will be a date scheduled in October to review small festival applications.
8. Ajourn 11:55 a.m.

LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST:



LTAC Clerk



Cmmr. Terri Jeffreys, Chair