

# Clackamas County Tourism Development Council

## Meeting Minutes August 8, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jody Carson, Roger Beebe, David Penilton, Bobbie Wilburn, Betsy LaBarge, Barb Iverson and County Commissioner Liaison Martha Schrader.

STAFF PRESENT: Danielle Cowan, Janice Nilson, Jeannine Breshears, Samara Phelps, Dan Gering, Lizzie Keenan, Jim Austin, Annie Austin and Ithaca Jensen.

OTHERS PRESENT: Lori Gaffney, Ali Raynak, and Matt Johnson of BPN; and Thelma Haggemiller with Slow Poke Tours.

### Action Items:

- **Call to Order / Call for Declarations of Conflicts** –there were none
- **July 11, 2018 Minutes TDC Board Meeting Minutes Approval:** Motion to approve was made by Barb Iverson and seconded by Roger Beebe. Unanimous approval.

### New Business:

#### Grant Programs Overview—Samara Phelps, Development; Jim Austin Community Relations

- An overview of the grants program (a copy of the presentation is attached) was presented defining the three different types of grants:
  - Development – There is \$250,000 budgeted for these grants. They can be as little as \$5,000 and as much as \$100,000.
  - Heritage Capital Improvement Grants - \$50,000
  - Community Partnership Program Grants - \$20,000 to each of 13 communities. This grant program is not centrally managed by us as the other grants are. Instead, local review committees select the grant recipients. The information is then passed on to us for final approval and distribution. The minimum request is \$250 and the maximum is \$20,000.
  - Event Sponsorship Program – This grant was created to help with the creation and promotion of signature events in the county. Requests up to \$1,500 are allowed.

#### Crisis Management for Mt. Hood Territory – Lizzie Keenan, Hood – Gorge Region

- The fire season has started earlier this year than last and it appears we really don't have a crisis management plan in place. Lizzie lead the Hood-Gorge Region response team to the Eagle Creek Fire, and was asked to present what happened during the Eagle Creek Fire, what we learned from that and what take-aways there are for us to plan for the future. From a regional standpoint, Lizzie's responsibilities included Stakeholder Support and Messaging. The two big challenges that she dealt with were Misinformation and News Coverage. As a staff of one, it was necessary to reach out and work with partners. We used social media to update our followers (a copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached).
- We are working on a Crisis Management plan within the department. Dan Gering is heading that up and there will be more information at a future meeting. There will be an internal task force and they will then be working with emergency management at the county to develop recommendations to build a plan for dealing with crisis in the future.

**New Species Fall Campaign; 2019 Travel Planner Creative-** Jeannine Breshears, Marketing Programs Manager; BPN Staff

- The current Species and Phoenix campaigns close on Sunday. We have conducted an analysis reflecting on how it is performing today, what has been learned and recommendations for the trip-planning phase.
- The Fall campaign is digital only to reach visitor audience from Sept 10 – Nov 18. Partners are Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest. We will refine the creative so it is clearer in the messaging.
- The Species launched as a full media mix. In reviewing the analytics, we noted the single species creative performed better than the couples creative did. The single delivered an 81% higher click through rate and the users responded better to the more animated versions. When the species by themselves were run vs species name and the species name performed better. Overall, the conversion rates were lower than expected.
- Based on these analytics we will be focusing the budget on those mediums that tell the story better. Additionally, the messaging will be clearer to understand.
- We will be looking at changing the names such as Kayahikeboarder to Kaya-hike-boarder.
- Have already begun designing the 2019 Travel Planner:
  - The Board was satisfied with the interior pages of the planner.
  - The cover photos presented were not acceptable to the board, although they liked the idea of using Trillium Lake.
  - They would like to see more photo options, possibly a vignette of options
- A complete copy of items shared by BPN are included in the attachments.

**Continuing Business:**

**TDC/BCC MOU Final—** Chair Carson

- The MOU is final. It was approved at last month's meeting and the Board of County Commissioners have approved it as well.
- The question today is should there be any attachments of reference materials added to the file? The Executive Committee's recommendation would be that there are no attachments.
- Motion was made by Roger Beebe to accept the MOU without any attachments. It was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Betsy LaBarge. Voting was unanimous
- There may be another document that outlines types of things agreed upon related to the audit in terms of what things need to go to the Board of County Commissioners as an agenda item and what things can be approved by this board. That will be forthcoming.
- There is also some lively discussion on whether room tax can be collected from Airbnb. County Legal Counsel has come up with one opinion, which we have concerns with. There is an upcoming meeting internal meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup>, to discuss this further among staff and then a subsequent meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup> for a broader discussion.
- Roger Beebe made a motion to ask for a second opinion if we can't get the necessary clarification from County Counsel on the TRT. It was seconded by David Penilton. The vote was unanimous.

**Updates:**

**Marketing Program—** Jeannine Breshears, Marketing Programs Manager

- Nothing more to add then was already presented earlier on the agenda.

**Development Program—** Samara Phelps

- Michael Crane who conducted our Water Tourism Study will be coming back for follow-up presentations that are being scheduled. There will also be time available to make presentations to key stakeholders in the community.

#### **Community Relations— Jim Austin**

- There has been “Storytelling Training” for some of our partners with Kimberly Jacobs Nelson. This training was recorded for feedback. This year’s training was focused on south county Agritourism Partners as a pilot session. Next year’s training will include other Agritourism and Heritage partners as well.

#### **Executive Director's Report— Danielle Cowan**

- Don Krupp is retiring January 2019.
- September’s TDC meeting will be held on the third Wednesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, as many of the department will be out of the office attending the DMA West Education Summit in Boise, Idaho and Travel Oregon meetings in Eastern Oregon.
- The joint meeting with the Board of County Commissioners is now scheduled for October 10<sup>th</sup>. We will have Michael Crane in attendance. We will also discuss other issues of interest such as sustainability and heritage. The meeting may be longer that day to go over our business prior to meeting with the BCC.
- TRT reports are in. We ended up about where we thought we would be at year’s end. We will wait and see if more funds come later in the year with the annual “True-up” of funds. There are many new hotel rooms that have been built in Washington County over the past year and the saturation of available rooms is affecting hotels in the I-5 corridor. There may also be bleed off from the Intermediaries like Airbnb and others which has impacted TRT collections.

#### **TDC Member Reports—Roundtable**

- David – We received information on last year’s fire but there is a huge fire in southern Oregon. We have begun reaching out and hope others as well. As far as Hoteliers, yes, 3,800 rooms have been added but at the same time, hoteliers don’t necessarily work well with individual travelers. We may have to look at that differently.
- Roger – No news on the job front, still plugging along.
- Bobbie – Has not been a great year. We are in the middle of a remodel, hoping to get that finished and back to available rooms and good reviews. Hood to Coast is coming up on the 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Betsy – All interesting conversation getting the bigger picture. Fire bans have been in place since the end of June. Pretty much now, no spark or flame. Her business hasn’t been affected. About the same numbers as last year. September and October have been low and then November and December picked up. Record December. January – March were slow but there wasn’t a lot of snow. April, May and June have been record breaking. A lot has been environmental. Supply increases every year. Many are going to the rent by owner VIRBO, Home Away, Airbnb and such. That may be a lot of the topping out as well. There is more supply for the vacation rentals.
- Jody – From the Heritage side of things, Oregon City Arts Festival at The End of the Oregon Trail is happening August 11-12. The Willamette Living History Tour is September 15<sup>th</sup>; it is now set in 1922. Canby Fair is next week. Wonderful trail band and heritage dinner at End of the Oregon Trail last week. It was an excellent dinner and great band.
- Adjourn 4:32pm