

**TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING
CO-CHAIRS LARRY WILLIAMS AND KIM BENNETT
WA STATE COMMUNITY TRADE & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

January 21, 2009 – Heritage Room – Olympia Washington

**FINAL – March 9, 2009
SUMMARY MINUTES**

Meeting attendees:

Members Present: *Co-Chairs Larry Williams and Kim Bennett*, Frank Finneran, Leonard Forsman, Katherine Kertzman, Richard Meadows, George Schweitzer, Brad Walker, Sandra Ward and Duane Wollmuth

Members Absent: Representative Barbara Bailey, Clinton Campbell, Michael Campbell, Dennis Clark, Representative Fred Finn, Senator Mike Hewitt, Senator Ken Jacobsen, Chad Mackay, and Kris Watkins

Staff: Betsy Gabel, Alexander Harper, Kristin Jacobsen, Marsha Massey, Gail Mitchell and Cheryl Rasch

Guests: Ian Jefferies and Catherine Trinh

Call to Order / Roll Call / Approval of 1-21-09 Agenda / Approval of 11-21-08 Minutes:

1. Larry Williams called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Larry and Kim welcomed the Tourism Commission members, audience and staff.
2. Roll Call
A roll call of the Tourism Commission members was taken, and the presence of a quorum was established. See above for the members that are present or absent.
3. Approval of 1-21-09 Agenda:
ACTION: Leonard Forsman made a motion to approve the meeting agenda with the removal of Longwood's 2008 Ad/Evaluation report. Frank Finneran seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**
4. Approval of 11-21-08 Meeting Minutes:
Larry Williams called for the approval of the meeting minutes from the November 21, 2008 Tourism Commission meeting.
ACTION: Frank Finneran made a motion to accept the November 21, 2008 meeting minutes with no changes. Brad Walker seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

5. Public Comment Period:

Jamie Fay with the Chambers Bay Pure Links Golf would like to request the opportunity to partner with Washington State Tourism in regards to the 2010 Olympics.

Mike Dexter with the Olympia/Lacey/Tumwater Visitors Convention Bureau would like to request the assistance of the Washington State Tourism Commission to support saving the Capitol Visitor Center. Governor Gregoire's initial budget has called for the closure of the Capitol Visitor Center.

Leslie Johnson with Squaxin Island Tourism and the Mason County Chamber introduced herself to the Tourism Commission members. Leslie holds the position of Vice President for Marketing at the Chamber.

6. Marketing Committee Update:

Brad Walker, Co-chair for the Marketing Committee introduced Betsy Gabel with the Tourism office to update the Tourism Commission on the 2009 Advertising Campaign.

Betsy shared copies of the print ads that will run in this year's advertising campaign from March – June 2009. There are still 3 photo shoots to be completed; they are The Quinault or HOH rain forest, Mount Rainier and a wine culinary ad.

Sandy Ward updated the Tourism Commission on the 2009 Travel Planner. The cover of the Travel Planner will use the art work from the Seattle print ad. Kim Bennett thanked Paul Heppner and his group for engaging the DMO's on this project.

Rick Meadows updated the Tourism Commission on the consumer Web site. Since the last Tourism Commission meeting in November, Rick has met with Alexander Harper, Tourism office and Ascentium, (web contractor) a couple of times to discuss budget and further updates. All is proceeding as planned.

The issue of site stability and hosting still seems problematic. Rick is suggesting that CTED consider an outside hosting service.

Rick asked Alexander Harper to review the quarterly web trends site analytics. For 4th Quarter 2008, site traffic has slowed since the launch and this is due in part to seasonal shifts. Please refer to the analytics hand out for the balance of the information.

Duane Wollmuth shared concerns he has heard from some stakeholders and businesses regarding content on the site, and particular navigational challenges. He emphasized the importance of linking to a DMO, or CVB for greater detail on an area. Kim Bennett commented that she is hearing some similar comments. Alexander advised that these concerns are being addressed in upcoming web updates.

7. Grant Committee Update:

Duane Wollmuth, Co-chair for the Grant Committee updated the Tourism Commission members on the Grant Committee activities.

The \$150,000.00 grant funds for fiscal year 2009 have been awarded, and contracts finalized. For fiscal year 2010, the total grants awards is budgeted to be \$250,000.00, and the applications are due in the Tourism office on February 17, 2009.

The process for 2009 went very well. Process refinements were made during a 12/19/08 conference call by the committee. The following revisions were made:

- Wording changes for clarification
- Application due date moved from 2/16/09 to 2/17/09, due to holiday on 2/16/09
- Tourism office to do a preliminary technical scrub, as well as review and initial ranking before the Grant Committee starts their work

At the April 24, 2009 Tourism Commission meeting, the Grant Committee will announce their recommendations for the fiscal year 2010 awards. May 1, 2009, the awardees will be notified.

8. *Finance Committee Update:*

Frank Finneran, Co-chair of the Finance Committee supplied and reviewed a handout explaining the budget match requirement and definition.

Frank presented a budget update through June 30, 2009 to the Commission. He explained that the budget shows a substantial amount of dollars not spent, but reminded the Commission several large program expenses like the advertising charges from March through June have not yet been billed to the Tourism office.

9. *Review of Tourism Performance Measures:*

Marsha Massey reviewed performance measures with the Commission, and explained where the Tourism office currently stands against their goals.

Kim Bennett suggested that the Tourism Commission should be involved in determining performance measures and goals for the next biennium.

10. *Education and Public Affairs Update:*

Katherine Kertzman introduced the new collateral piece “Tourism Matters to Washington”, which was prepared under the guidance of the Education and Public Affairs committee, and designed to communicate industry and Tourism Commission highlights to elected officials. She also gave an update on the “Tourism Day in Olympia” event, planned for March 9 or 10, 2009 (Note: subsequently confirmed for March 9, 2009). The WADMO (aka WACVB) is planning a reception at the Governor’s mansion that evening. Tourism Ambassadors from around the state will gather to demonstrate a strong unified industry to spread the word of “Why Tourism Matters”.

Using the new collateral piece, the Tourism office created packets of information to hand out to the legislators in today’s meetings on the hill. There was strong positive feedback from the Commission on the brochure. Duane Wollmuth suggested the Tourism office reprint this informational piece to have and share with media, as well as create on-line availability. Larry Williams suggested that the tourism team have more of these brochures produced before March 9, 2009.

Ian Jefferies and Catherine Trinh from Edelman reviewed good communication techniques for communicating our message to the elected officials; with an emphasis on tax dollars generated and jobs created or retained.

11. Wrap Up:

Larry announced that the next Tourism Commission meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2009. The WADMO (aka WACVB) will also be hosting "Tourism Day" in Olympia March 9 or March 10.

ACTION: Katherine Kertzman made a motion to move the March 6, 2009 Tourism Commission meeting to March 9 or 10, 2009 to coincide with Tourism Day in Olympia, once the date is confirmed. Leonard Forsman seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.