

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

**April 24, 2009 – SeaTac Conference Center – Seattle, Washington**

**FINAL – June 24, 2009  
SUMMARY MINUTES**

**Meeting attendees:**

**Members Present:** *Co-Chairs Larry Williams and Kim Bennett*, Clint Campbell, Michael Campbell, Dennis Clark, Frank Finneran, Leonard Forsman, Katherine Kertzman, Chad Mackay, George Schweitzer, Sandy Ward, Kris Watkins and Duane Wollmuth

**Members Absent:** Representative Barbara Bailey, Representative Fred Finn, Senator Mike Hewitt, Senator Ken Jacobsen, Rick Meadows and Brad Walker

**Staff:** Betsy Gabel, Tammy Guill, M. Alexander Harper, Marsha Massey, Gail Mitchell and Cheryl Rasch

**Guests:** Sandra Adix, Attorney General's office

**Call to Order / Roll Call / Approval of 4-24-09 Agenda / Approval of 3-9-09 minutes:**

1. Larry Williams called the meeting to order at 10:12 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 4-24-09 Agenda:  
**ACTION:** Chad Mackay made a motion to approve the meeting agenda with no changes. George Schweitzer seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**
4. Approval of 3-9-09 Meeting Minutes:  
Kim Bennett called for the approval of the meeting minutes from the March 9, 2009 Tourism Commission meeting.  
**ACTION:** Chad Mackay made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 9, 2009 with no changes. Duane Wollmuth seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**
5. Public Comment Period:  
Andy Olsen, representative from Washington State Hotel & Lodging Association (WSH&LA). Andy presented a proposal to the Tourism Commission with ideas for a new

partnership between Washington State Tourism and WSH&LA for publication and distribution of the WSH&LA Washington State Visitors Guide. Kim Bennett thanked Andy for his proposal and suggested a possible discussion during the marketing update section of the meeting's agenda.

John Cooper, President and CEO of the Yakima Valley Visitors and Convention Bureau, shared the Yakima Visitors guide with the Tourism Commission. John also extended an invitation to the Tourism Commission to hold their next meeting in Yakima.

Kim Bennett welcomed the audience attending the meeting, and asked them to introduce themselves to the Tourism Commission

6. Legislative update:

Larry Williams provided an update on the State budget process. Following are some relevant matters from the budget just released:

- Suspension of the Tourism transfers from the Trade Center account for biennium 2009-2011.
- Suspension of capital improvements

Frank Finneran shared his budget update for the Washington State Convention and Trade Center that came out in the Senate budget.

Larry reminded the Tourism Commission that there is still work to be done before any budget is final. The Budget Bill is not final until the Governor signs, which should be mid-May.

7. Marketing Committee update:

Betsy Gabel with the Tourism office gave an update for the Marketing committee in the absence of Brad Walker, chair for the committee.

Betsy provided the Tourism Commission members with a copy of the media schedule, including all paid media with the exception of SEM. Betsy also shared copies of two new print ads, which feature the Hoh Rain Forest and Seattle's Pike Place Market.

The Tourism office currently has two radio spots running in Portland, Oregon and Vancouver B.C. Betsy played the radio spots giving the Tourism Commission an opportunity to hear them.

Distribution of the Travel Planner is going strong. In conjunction with the Travel Planner order form on the Web site, there is a survey asking visitors where they heard about the Tourism Web site.

The chairs instructed staff to work with the Marketing Committee to review future marketing contracts. They also referred the WSH&LA proposal to the Marketing Committee for review.

8. Brand Development Proposal:

Marsha Massey introduced Nat Jungerberg with Green-Rubino who presented the Brand proposal next steps to the Tourism Commission. Marsha provided the Tourism Commission with the background of where the Tourism office is with the Brand, and re-emphasized the importance of branding to the tourism priorities.

There was discussion regarding the completion of the Brand by June 30, 2009 and the cost for completion. Kim Bennett asked Nat to bring back a dollar amount to complete the Brand signature and basic tool kit by June 30, 2009 to the Tourism Commission after the lunch break.

Nat expressed complete confidence that the Brand signature will be completed by June 30, 2009. The cost for the completion will be \$97,900.

**ACTION:** Frank Finneran made a motion that the Brand proposal be delegated to the Tourism Commission Marketing Committee with full authority to implement the Brand strategy. Duane Wollmuth seconded. **MOTION PASSED**

Marsha Massey made a suggestion to let the full Tourism Commission know when the Tourism Commission marketing committee meeting is scheduled, to allow any members to participate.

9. Web site update:

Alexander Harper presented an update to the Tourism Commission members on the Web site stability issues. The stability issues have been resolved and the Web site is responding well.

Alexander went over the metrics handout. The metrics report is showing a 7-percent decrease of traffic since last year. The average time spent on the Web site is still holding at 7-minutes.

The SEM continues to show that “Google” is the primary search engine. As the SEM continues, we should see opportunities for others (MSN etc.) to improve performance.

Alexander explained the procedure to order a Travel Planner off the Web site. Chad MacKay reinforced his suggestion that it should be as simple as possible for folks to find and order the new Travel Planner.

10. Public Relations update:

Marsha Massey introduced Ian Jeffries from Edelman, who supplied an update for the Public Relations section.

Ian reported on National Travel and Tourism week, May 9 through May 17, and what the Tourism office is doing.

The National US Travel Rally will take place on May 12, 2009. The Tourism office will research the locations of State-wide rallies through the DMO offices, and distribute the

information. Marsha Massey requested that the Tourism Commission members join in on one of the rally locations convenient to their location.

Social media still continues to be a positive line of communication for the office. Kristin has been keeping up on all the information, and reporting on Twitter. In 3-months she has sent over 450 tweets. Also in that 3-month period the Tourism office has reached 850 followers.

11. Governor's Conference Planning committee:

Katherine Kertzman, chair of the committee, gave an update to the Tourism Commission. The committee has been doing research on past conferences to gather information for future planning. The Governor's Conference Planning committee would like to suggest that the Tourism office go forward with an RFP for a meeting planner for this event.

Kim Bennett asked for volunteers to join the Governor's Conference Planning committee. The following are the current members:

Katherine Kertzman – chair  
Kim Bennett  
George Schweitzer

Kris Watkins volunteered to join the committee.

There was substantial discussion regarding when and where to schedule the Governor's conference. Katherine Kertzman suggested March 2010, following the 2010 Winter Olympics as the date for the conference.

George Schweitzer suggested the location to be Seattle. Past held conferences have taken place in the Seattle area, and the turn out was impressive. Since there has been a lapse of a couple of years since the last conference, George thought that Seattle would be a preferred choice, to encourage higher turnout.

12. FY2010 Tourism Marketing Plan and Budget:

Kim Bennett suggested that this topic be tabled until a later date when more clarification is known on the State's FY2009/2011 budget. All agreed.

13. Competitive Grant committee update:

Duane Wollmuth, chair of the Competitive Grant committee, started by thanking the committee and staff for all their hard work once again, for completing another round of grant awards.

Duane shared the list of selected grant awards for the Fiscal Year 2010 round of grant funding. He included a summary of the selected projects backgrounds. Duane clarified that these selections are still pending finalization of the State's Tourism budget for next biennium. Following is a list of the awardees:

Allied Arts of Whatcom County	\$25,000
Bainbridge Island Downtown Assn.	\$ 5,000
Cascade Loop Assn.	\$19,000
Cowlitz County	\$ 6,325
Grays Harbor Tourism	\$25,000
Kirkland, City of	\$ 7,000
Methow Valley Sports Trails Assn.	\$15,987
NW Agricultural Business Center	\$10,000
Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater VCB	\$10,000
Olympic Peninsula Visitors Bureau	\$15,750
Prosser Chamber of Commerce	\$ 5,000
Puget Sound Regional Council	\$10,000
SeaFair Foundation	\$25,000
University Place, City of	\$15,000
Washington Wine Country	\$25,000

The following list of grant awards, were partially funded:

Kennewick, City of	\$ 7,097
U.S. Canada Peace Anniversary Assn.	\$ 7,097
Visit Rainier	\$ 7,097
Woodinville Wine Country	\$ 7,097
Yakima Valley VCB	\$ 2,550

Kim Bennett again reminded the Tourism Commission members that these awards are pending until the outcome of the FY2009/2011 budget is released.

14. International Sales/Marketing update:

Tammy Guill from the Tourism office updated the Tourism Commission members on the activities in the International Travel Trade area. Tammy is currently focusing on the POW WOW trade show that takes place in Miami in May.

15. Future Meetings:

A discussion took place regarding the June 5, 2009 meeting. The WEDA conference is also scheduled for the same time, and a suggestion to move the June 5, 2009 meeting was made. With the WEDA conference in mind, it was requested that the meeting in June be re-scheduled for June 24, 2009 in the Yakima area.

In regards to future meetings, Kim Bennett relayed that the charter states that the Tourism Commission is required to hold at least 4 meetings per calendar year. With that said, Kim is suggesting 3 meetings to be held in the SeaTac area, and 3 around state. The Tourism Commission members requested that the Tourism staff come to the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting with some future dates and locations to be decided upon.

16. Wrap-up and Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.