



## LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**DATE:** April 15, 2010

**TIME:** 8:30 am

**LOCATION:** Gig Harbor Visitor Center

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Warren Zimmerman, Kathy Franklin, Carola Filmer, Derek Young, Sue Braaten, Wade Perrow, Jennifer Kilmer, Laureen Lund, Jannae Jolibois

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Janis Denton, Randy Fortier

**STAFF PRESENT:** Karen Scott

**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

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### Agenda

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|---|------------------|
| 1. Chamber Website and Gig Harbor Guide Website | Councilman Young |
| 2. Visitor Center discussion                    | All              |
| 3. TPA Grant Application                        | Laureen          |
| 4. TCVB opportunities to leverage efforts       | Laureen          |
| 5. Requesting Funds out of the reserve          | Laureen          |
| a. Meetings Recruitment Plan                    | \$15,000         |
| b. Public Relations for Museum Grand Opening    | \$7000           |
| 6. Nominations to replace Randy and Janis       |                  |

Derek Young called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

**CHAMBER WEBSITE AND GIG HARBOR GUIDE WEBSITE:** Derek reviewed the City and Chamber collaboration meeting regarding the website. He informed the LTAC that the Chamber has agreed to have a visitor tab on their newly designed website. Derek suggested that the LTAC inform the Chamber how and where they would like to be listed on the new site. Carola suggested 'gigharborguide.com' (on the Chamber site). Jennifer suggested 'tourist information'. Tourist information was agreed on.

**VISITOR CENTER DISCUSSION:** Laureen discussed the memo that went to Council regarding the future of the Visitor Center. Warren gave an overview of the meeting and the discussion involving the space and layout of the Bogue Building. Warren said he will be meeting with the Executive Committee today to review the options. Laureen

stated that her preference would be to have Karen and herself stay in the building and that we work in sync with the Chamber. Laureen reviewed the options for the Skansie House for the committee. However she stated she felt the Council will not go that way. Laureen suggested exploring other options. Jennifer asked about GHHWA and where they would be located. Derek stated that the GHHWA could possibly be located at City Hall. Carola clarified stating, "Until they are a designated Main Street they do not have to be in the district". Jennifer pointed out that the Museum may have an opportunity to house them for 1 year and the Museum Board could discuss that. Warren reiterated that his committee would look at this option but are currently examining costs and other factors. He continued stating, "One thing they will need to know is what, exactly, are the parameters for using the Bogue Building, the costs, rent etc." Continuing, "I'm wondering whether there will be anything we will be compensated for." Derek stated that he will talk to Rob Karlinsey, City Administrator, and a basic proposal can be put together. Warren stated that the Chamber Board looked closer at what they can do, being open 7 days a week, etc. He said they are trying to identify what their staffing needs are at this point and what we are going to need in the future.

TPA GRANTS: Laureen distributed the grant that she had submitted for the Tourism Promotion Area, Pierce County, and explained the process for submission. Laureen pointed out she requested \$18,000. She reviewed her strategy moving forward. She stated she had met with Wade Perrow and Sue Braaten in preparation for this grant submission. She stated that the TPA Grant Committee is made up of hoteliers from Pierce County and that she is not a voting member. She stated that Ken Braaten is a voting member. Sue Braaten stated that Gig Harbor is collecting \$.50 per hotel room while Pierce County is collecting \$1.50 per hotel room.

Jennifer Kilmer stated that the Museum will (most likely) be opening this summer – earliest August 23<sup>rd</sup>. She continued, the Museum Marketing Committee has requested \$7,000 from LT for a position working with the media – and promoting the museum. Laureen pointed out that the dollar figure quoted is an estimate given by Carol Zahorsky who has been with the City of Gig Harbor previously and has a number of personal contacts. Laureen pointed out that with media, you cannot 'count' the number of room nights but you just have to go with it. "Editorial is so valuable you can hardly put a price on it." Jennifer discussed their limitations in staff and feels this is something that will slip if there is not a dedicated person working on it. Jennifer offered to re-cuse herself from the conversation. Derek clarified that because this is an advisory committee she is not required or will be asked to do so. Jannae Jolibois asked about the dollar amount that the LTAC has in the so-called 'reserve'. Laureen stated approximately \$120,000. Derek suggested members talk to Council, further stating 'this is not a normal request and that we have a bit of a crisis.' Kathy Franklin said that because of their size, the

Maritime Inn does not pay into the TPA, “but we benefit from that type of work.” She continued, “Editorial, for example, people will keep that type of info, I am an advocate for this type of work.” Carola pointed out that they have seen an increase in people who are looking at editorial. In reference to the museum project Sue asked that we look at a variety of people. Laureen pointed out that it must go out for RFP. Kathy said it is important that we look at what work they have done. Jennifer asked why the lodging tax would have to bear the brunt of the rehab of the building. Laureen shared her concern for the reserve fund and clarified, it is a rainy day fund, and it is a rainy day so we have to look at those funds. Derek stated in terms of the PR of the Museum – that makes sense because we didn’t know it would open within 2010. Derek explained the origin of the ‘rainy day fund’: “Steve Ekberg had originally suggested that funds be set aside across all funds... that is the original reason.” Lauren suggested voting on these two items.

#### VOTE

Requesting funds out of the reserve--- meetings recruitment plan: Wade stated he, Sue Braaten, Rob Karlinsey and Laureen Lund had meet and that the individual property can sell the property but they can’t market the city in general for ‘things to do’. He continued ‘that is the purpose of the marketing recruitment plan. We need to know what to do with the people if they are to come. Jennifer and Carola seconded, both stating this is something that can be done. Jennifer continued, “The City is in a position to develop something that can be shared widely with groups. I hope it can be spread widely, and we can work together, for example, a two- hour brain dump and then the City can do the follow up work on the programming. Derek stated that this needs to be put in a precise wording for council – and that the LTAC needs to be ready to answer ‘isnt that we do that already’. Lauren asked that LTAC be at the meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Jennifer pointed out that they (the Museum) are hosting two groups in the future, this is something to give to council.

Derek Young proposed, “Vote on use of funds for a meeting recruitment plan”

In favor – all motion

Opposed – none motion

Derek Young proposed, “Vote for use of funds for public relations in coordination with museum grand opening “

In favor – all motion

Opposed – none motion

Derek stated, “This is a once in a lifetime thing and it is an opportunity that can’t be missed.” Sue asked what the museums grand opening budget is. Jennifer pointed out

that her budget is as lean as possible. Laureen said she has researched a project with scope of 15 hr/wk from June through September or a possibility of \$10,000 for June through November. Jennifer re-iterated that she will be willing to spend any money on this event until there is a commitment from board members for a opening date. Laureen stated that her objectives to get the publications, for example, Sunset Magazine and Northwest Travel, to cover the museum. Jennifer suggested we title the project "Public Relations for Heritage Tourism."

Laureen suggested we ask council for \$20,000 for the project. Sue Braaten motioned and Kathy seconded.

Vote

In favor – all motion

Opposed – none motion

Kathy clarified, "if we get partial grant from TPA then we will take the dollars from reserve that make up the difference."

#### TACOMA REGIONAL CONVENTION AND VISITOR BUREAU

Laureen discussed her work with TRCVB on the Glass Roots Campaign to bring meeting planners in Tacoma/ Pierce County. She shared details about the big event at the Murano, September 16<sup>th</sup>. The hope is to have 50 or so people who are professional meeting planners at this event. Glass Roots will culminate at this event, with the next few months spent gathering people and ideas from Gig Harbor for our 'neighborhood'. The event will lay out as neighborhood style. Laureen said she hopes to have 7 Seas, Water To Wine, etc. She continued saying she hoped to pull all the people together before her vacation. Sue asked if each 'neighbor' had to be there a member of the TRCVB? Laureen stated 'yes'.

MEET IN YOUR CITY: Laureen stated she is trying to re-visit the 'Meet in Your City' program. She reminded the committee, "It is a program in which I go to individual stock holders, groups and encourage them to meet in Gig Harbor." Laureen shared she would like to work with Warren Zimmerman and Mary DesMarais to engage as a partnership, with Rotary, Kiwanis, churches, etc. Laureen stated that meet in your city is being worked on by TRCVB and they have a short film she hopes to get a hold of. Jennifer suggested there being a packet of information available on our website, that the options should be there – Sue stated that Gigharborguide.com should have this option available.

NOMINATIONS: Randy Fortier (resigned due to move) and Janis Denton (resigned due to move)- Derek nominated Wade to take place for Randy. Laureen pointed out that

Janis is spending more time in San Diego and continued by saying she has had a request from a community member to be on the board. Derek shared that anyone, not only a user or not only a receiver, can be on the LTAC. Jennifer nominated Tom Drohan. Derek stated that the committee has to be an even number of providers, and users. Laureen nominated Jannae to Janis' position. Jennifer nominated Tom Drohan and Kathy Franklin seconded. Kathy seconded the nomination of moving Jannae to Janis' vacant lodging position. Carola nominated Mary DesMarais.

Laureen stated she would contact all nominated and ask if they would be interested in being on the ballot, those include Tom Drohan and Mary DesMarais. Derek asked that we submit votes (for the vacant position) by email.

Vote on moving Wade and Jannae: Kathy nominated Wade and Jannae, the nomination was seconded by Jennifer.

In favor – all motion

Opposed – none motion

Kathy shared that she will be attending the first board meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> for the TRCVB. Laureen asked that Kathy provide a paragraph to the committee each month as a review of these meetings.

Jennifer stated that the museum is very close to opening yet it is not public yet.

Derek adjourned at 9:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Scott, Admin Asst, City of Gig Harbor