



## LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**DATE:** July 14, 2011

**TIME:** 8:30 am

**LOCATION:** Gig Harbor Civic Center, Executive Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sue Braaten, Tom Drohan, Kathy Franklin, Jennifer Kilmer, Mary DesMarais, Councilman Derek Young

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jannae Mitton Jolibois, Wade Perrow, Warren Zimmerman

**STAFF PRESENT:** Laureen Lund

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mona Sarrensen

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### Agenda

1. Welcome
  2. Brief update on happenings
  3. Budget 2012
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Councilman Young opened the meeting at 8:30am.

Budget is the main agenda item for discussion. Councilman Young said the Councilman Malich has asked for a webcam and he explained how it would work ie: KING TV. Laureen Lund has done a little preliminary research. Tom Drohan said he liked the idea. Kathy Franklin said she thought it had merit. Jennifer Kilmer felt perhaps that money would be better spent elsewhere ie: advertising or a marketing campaign.

Councilman Young proposed going through the budget line item with specific questions to several items starting with Tacoma Convention and Visitors Bureau. Discussion from Jennifer and Tom were supportive of that organization. Tom felt the meeting we had to help learn how to follow up on the leads was useful. Sue Braaten felt there is no value to her organization. Councilman Young asked the hotels if they saw a value at all. Sue felt that the money could be used better doing direct marketing ourselves. Discussion on website referrals followed.

Councilman Young said that Kitsap VCB makes him uncomfortable. Their approach has been strange. His concern is stability in that organization. Tom feels it is not productive to be negative. Jennifer feels that Kitsap does not have their act together. Do we make an investment in Kitsap? Sue feels like we should give Kitsap a try. Jennifer wants to know why Sue thinks Kitsap will be better. Sue thinks maybe naval connection would be a better fit.

Mona Sarrensen says occupancy increase is the goal. What is being put out there is not driving people to spend the night. If the TRCVB were driving things to Gig Harbor we would see an increase. Jennifer said she would be more comfortable taking the \$10K and focusing on strategic promotional effort. Jennifer thinks we could buy Google to amp up the website.

Video discussion how can this investment come back to help. Kathy Franklin thinks it's a mistake to withdraw from Tacoma right now. Timing would be bad. Kathy thinks Kitsap has no value. Kathy said that the City Marketing focuses mainly on the INN at Gig Harbor and the Wesley, but the Maritime gets a lot of value from the city efforts as well. She feels the City Marketing office has a valuable relationship with the Tacoma CVB.

Jennifer suggested the Pierce County Arts Organization and they are marketing something called Experience 253. Might be somewhere we want to get involved. She continued by saying said she could buy an ad in the TCVB Visitor Guide.

Councilman Young reminded everyone how the tax was instigated and how Gig Harbor has the strategic approach.

Tom Drohan made a motion to eliminate from the budget the \$5K for both TRCVB and Kitsap which would also eliminate the meeting planners guide and Glassroots line item. Jennifer second.

Vote passed.

Discussion followed regarding graphics designers, Showcase Magazine, video. Agreement to move forward with these and other items placed in the budget.

Jennifer feels it is excessive to put 15K in the reserve fund. Councilman Young said he thinks it could be added back into the marketing plan and hold off on reserve fund again in 2012.

Next meeting is Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:30am to finalize budget.

October 6<sup>th</sup> 8:30am is next regularly scheduled meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Laureen Lund, Marketing Director