



LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

DATE: September 12, 2013
TIME: 7:30 am
LOCATION: Gig Harbor Civic Center
SCRIBE: Maria Tobin
MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Drohan, Warren Zimmerman, Mary DesMarais, Sue Braaten, Lindsey Munson, Kathy Franklin, Mona Sarrenson
MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilmember Tim Payne, Jannae Mitton
OTHERS PRESENT: Maria Tobin, Kati Wright, Karen Scott

INTRODUCTION

Karen called the meeting to order at 7:35 am. Karen presented the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee with a folder containing the meeting minutes from June 27, 2013 LTAC Committee meeting; the proposed 2014 Marketing Department Budget, a list of Lodging Tax Advisory Committee members and their individual term dates; June 2013 Lodging Tax Collected Report; Visitor Center 3rd Quarter Tally Sheet and the most recent printed rack cards.

DISCUSSION

Discussion opened with the proposed 2014 budget. Among the budget is an adjustment to the marketing director and marketing assistant salary at 50% General Funds and 50% LT. This reflects feedback and requests made at May work study sessions and reflects the current workload assignments amongst staff. A partnership with Visit Kitsap Peninsula has also been added to the budget of \$5,000, Karen reminded the committee that we had partnered with Kitsap in previous years but it had been 5 years since. The budget will begin its final review amongst the City Administrator and Mayor within the month with approval at the Budget Work Study Session October 21st.

Further budget discussion took place. Warren inquired if the budget was a zero based budgeting. Karen responded we are not and the previous years' balances remains, clarifying that this will allow the 'reserve fund so to speak' to re-establish itself as has been done in previous years. This fund had been built up for Skansie House VIC renovation yet was relied heavily upon during the downturn in the economy in 2009. It has significantly diminished. Karen stated that all expenses not included in 'marketing efforts' are available through our Finance Department and Dave Rodenbach is available for any further questions or clarification. Kathy and Sue commented that the goal of the LT committee is to advise solely on the marketing and tourism promotion dollars and not staffing and personnel expenses.

As the budget discussions covered projected advertising expenses, Tom asked when the new version of ads would be produced and if the committee would have some oversight regarding the style and design

of ads placed. He expressed discord amongst the group regarding to past ad campaigns such as “Got Gig?” Karen agreed to present the committee with new ad designs when they are produced and can be circulated for feedback during design.

Mona asked that there be some advertising campaign focused on meeting in Gig Harbor to maximize on its two meeting facilities at the Wesley Inn and the Inn at Gig Harbor. Karen said she would work to combine the advertising for work and play in Gig Harbor. Tom Drohan suggested coming out with a new tag line. Please email suggestion to Karen for development during last quarter of the year.

Moving on through the budget, Sue suggested that training/trade show allocation be increased from \$500 based on current trade show participation to \$2,000. Kati Wright suggested consideration for a City Membership with MPI. Karen will explore possible membership.

Kathy made a motion for a vote of approval of 2014 budget with an amendment to increase Training / Trade Shows line item to \$2000 from \$500. Sue seconded the motion. The 2014 marketing budget was voted on by entire committee with a unanimous vote of yes.

Patricia Graf-Hoke, Executive Director from Visit Kitsap Peninsula provided a brief presentation on the benefits of Gig Harbor’s partnership with the Kitsap CVB at a cost of \$5000 per annual membership.

Upon conclusion of her presentation the committee voted yes and agreed that the benefits of this partnership were in agreement with the LTAC committee’s goals for increased awareness of Gig Harbor as vacation and meeting destination, positively impacting tourism in Gig Harbor. A professional services contract will be included in the 2014 budget as presented.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45am.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Tobin
Marketing Assistant