

TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2016 at 4:00 pm
Courtyard Conference Room

Committee Members:

Barbara Hochberg (Chair)
Wynniss Grow (Vice Chair)
Terry Hopkins - absent
Colene Martin - absent
Robert Hamlyn – arrived late
Tamara Bushnell - absent
Doug Bradley
Mary Groves - absent
Tina Gotchall

City/Staff/Council Liaisons:

Darin Fowler (Mayor) - absent
Shonna Bouteller (City Council) - absent
Jon Bowen (Experience Grants Pass)
Susan Seereiter (City Business Advocate)

Guests:

Germaine Cartmell
Jacob Hornsby
Al Devine
Valerie Lovelace (City Council)

1. INTRODUCTIONS

2. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES (APRIL 12, 2016)

- The minutes were not approved due to a lack of quorum when this agenda item was reached.

3. Committee update and City Workshop (June 13th)

- The committee had a conversation about adding pedestrian wayfinding signs as a second phase to the wayfinding project.
- The dirt and grime in the City was something talked about in First Impressions and on the Radio Show. Jon would like to see Tourism make cleaning up the City a focal point to encourage tourism in Grants Pass.
- The CSOs come out by complaint only; however there is an option to be anonymous. Jon recommended that people be encouraged to report when things are not being kept up to par.
- There will be a river clean up on June 25th held by Serve Grants Pass.
- The 6th Street Bridge needs to be addressed, this could be mentioned to ODOT.

4. Tourism Report/Branding Strategies

- The Committee discussed that the local shelters are working on getting a food truck together to bring the food to a distribution location. This should cut down on the homeless in the core part of town and the tourist areas.
- There is a new visitor's guide in the works.
- First Impressions mentioned he need for more signage in the Historic District. The City is working to make easy over the counter permits for blade signs that will benefit tourists looking for businesses from the other end of the street.
- New website – grantspassport.com ready to debut - May 25th go live.

- Art Along the Rogue is in the works. There are currently two featured artists from the bay area, Jon is working on a third.
- There is a hospitality program held on the East Coast, they were able to make an online program that fits the needs of an area this size and allows local business to attend without sending their employees across the country. This will be free to local businesses and will feature customer service skills with a slant towards tourism.
- First Friday live going great.

5. Downtown Marketing Promotion Strategies – Jon Bowen

- First Impressions made comments about the vacant store fronts.
- Jon is working on looking at printing banners to put in vacant store fronts, these will have Historic District coloring and will encourage people to shop local, etc.
- This will be introduced at the merchant meeting on the 24th at 5:30.
- It was asked if the Grants Pass tourism pamphlets and information could be found in other cities. Jon is going to make the rounds and confirm that there are some locally.

6. Comments/Updates from Committee Members

- Jon mentioned that hospitality in the Asian markets will be key in the future. Greetings in their language, tea in the hotel rooms, etc. will encourage travel from other cultures and give Grants Pass a name for being welcoming.
- Encourage them to come up and stay in Grants Pass on the way to Crater Lake.

7. Comments from the Public

- Jacob Hornsbry is opening a local tour company. They will take people to the Caves, to the coast, and other local tourist destinations. The company has been formed and they are working on infrastructure. They should be fully functional for this tour season.

NEXT MEETING: June 14, 2016 at 4:00pm in the Courtyard Conference Room

These minutes were prepared by Carlie Paulsen, Administration Department, City of Grants Pass.