

TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes – August 2, 2022, at 4:00 pm
Ridge Room 108

Committee Members:

Doug Bradley (Chair)
Terry Hopkins (Vice Chair)
Barb Hochberg
Tamara Bushnell
Wynniss Grow
Rebecca Anderson
Mandi DeVaglio
Tamra Martin - Absent
Kevin Hopper

City/Staff/Chamber/Council Liaisons:

Brian DeLaGrange (City Councilor)
Josie Molloy (Chamber Liaison)- Absent
Darin Fowler (County Liaison) - Absent
James Conway (City Liaison)

Guest:

Brad Clark – Community Development Director

1. **Roll Call:** Chair Bradley started the meeting and took roll at 4:00 pm.
2. **Introductions:** - None.
3. **Public Comment:** – None.
4. **Approval of Minutes:**
 - a. Approval of minutes from June 7, 2022.

MOTION

Member DeVaglio moved, and Member Anderson seconded the motion to approve the June 7, 2022, minutes, as submitted. The vote resulted as follows: “AYES”: Chair Bradley, Vice Chair Hopkins, Members Hochberg, Grow, Anderson, DeVaglio, and Hopper. “NAYS”: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Member Bushnell and Martin.

The motion passed.

5. Work Session Items:

a. Staff Presentation – James Conway and Brad Clark

- Chair Bradley stated, I think what you guys did was look around and see what other cities do and put together best practices for TLT finances, is that what you're going to present to us today?
- James Conway agreed. He stated how he selected the cities by choosing region, proximity to natural resources, rural, land size and population size. He did try to contact three out of state cities as well. He continued to state the cities, Roseburg, Pendleton, Ashland, Albany, and Redmond.

Roseburg

- James Conway said that Roseburg's biggest asset was Wildlife Safari. He continued that they market themselves as the gateway to Crater Lake and that they had a Food Trail, which they're going to try to ramp up again. It got a lot of visitors, especially from Portland.
- James Conway mentioned that Roseburg has two grants they provide with the left over TLT monies. These can be spent on new or expanding events and capital improvement projects for organizations that help increase tourism.

Pendleton

- James Conway said the convention center is the largest in the region and their main tourist attractions are large events like the whiskey music festival and the Pendleton Roundup

Redmond

- James Conway said that they conducted a feasibility study to target family and family friendly events. It was successful and they recommended Johnson Economics as a company to do a study for us. He also added that telecommuting is a new and growing part of their demographic, where the outdoors attracts out of staters to come and live there.
- James Conway mentioned that Redmond has a historical hotel that is over 80% occupancy year-round and helps draw visitors in their city. He also mentioned that they have an outdoor art gallery that is very popular with locals and tourists.

Brainstorming/recap

- Brad Clark said that a couple things to consider are the season events that help bridge and extend the tourism season and he asked the question, "what are those assets and what do they look like?"
- Brad Clark brought up the question what does the post-Covid era look like? People are changing behavior, employment and travel behaviors are changing as well. We need to evolve and learn how to tap into these changing behaviors.
- Brad Clark said we should think about our unique identity, and assets that are long-term vs. trendy and how do we build on community pride?

b. Assets and Strategies

- Chair Bradley said that he contacted DMO Pros for recommendations and these companies come in and do a study, look at who we compete with and how to bolster assets. He said that what he would like to do for this group to review each company, where we can reserve some time for that. He continued to suggest that we can select one to present to Council or just have the top two present for Council and to see if this is the direction we want to go.
- Council Liaison DeLeGrange said that we have a DMO and Tourism Committee that are knowledgeable about our assets. He asked what insight would we get that we could not get from the "brains" we already have? Chair Bradley responded that he would want them to do the presentation to find that out.
- Vice Chair Hopkins (in reference to being on the CBDV Taskforce) said that he tries to be the voice of this group. He added that priority items are from this group, the string lights, permeant parklets, and infrastructure for alley activation and beautification.

c. Discuss possible consultants for feasibility study

- Chair Bradley said moving forward and getting back to Councilor DeLaGrange's question. He did have a short presentation given by one of the people that he contacted. He thinks that this group should review and see if there is a value, then we will make a recommendation to Council.

- Member Hopper asked the question has an outside party ever provided insight to who our market is? He added, did they present anything about infrastructure?
- Brad Clark said he did not remember them (DMO PRO's) including the infrastructure piece, we can send the report around. Member Hopper stated, looking at your presentation the two things I saw was that the successful units knew their market, and the unsuccessful units did not. Then they leveraged spending to increase infrastructure around things.

d. Brainstorm around the table

- Member DelVaglio said that "Instagram worthy" walls draw people all over the place and all ages, like an Instagram trail. She added a social media competition "my favorite thing about Grants Pass..." and concluded with having an Ale Trail, marketing, signage and getting people onboard.
- Member Hochberg mentioned she would like to see a convention center and lights on 5th Street.
- Member Hopkins wants to work with the assets that we have, the river, expanding outdoor recreation and Agro Tourism. He likes how the DMO is bringing in the folks out in the Applegate Valley.
- Member Anderson stated that Airbnb has a great tool (creating a guidebook). Its easy, it has the pubs, parks, activities, and restaurants.
- Member Grow mentioned having running events, marathons, 5 and 10K runs, and they are fundraisers.
- Member Hopkins said he is a big fan of the white-water park idea. Expanding river opportunities. We are under-utilizing the sportsman park; we should have sportsman conference. Expanding fiber-optic internet to accommodate the mobile economy.
- Member Anderson mentioned the Indian Relay Races. We looked at a few years ago and it is a huge spectator sport.

6. Information Sharing

- **Committee Members: None.**

7. Future Agenda Building for Next Meeting:

- a. Presentations (5 minutes long) by the three companies.
- b. Discussion: to recommend or not recommend a feasibility study

8. Adjournment: 5:08 PM

- a. Meeting adjourned at 5:08 pm

Next scheduled meeting: September 5, 2022

Minutes prepared by James Conway, Staff Liaison