

MASON COUNTY LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Commissioners' Chambers
411 North 5TH Street, Shelton, WA 98584
Tuesday July 28, 2015 9:30 a.m.

Members in Attendance: Chair Terri Jeffreys, Bonnie Knight, Kelly Bergh, Darin Barry, Angela Robelos, Duane Wilson, Shaun Tucker, Arnold Hampton, Heidi McCutcheon and Mason County Staff, Diane Zoren Absent: Kelly Bergh, Angela Robelos and Arnold Hampton.

1. Chair Jeffreys called the meeting to order at 9:48 a.m.

Duane Wilson said he doesn't like advertising done on just social media.

Heidi doesn't see a lot about events on social media. She said advertising needs to be multi-faceted although it appears there is no money for print.

Shaun said it connects to other areas and stated that Blue Collar Agency wasn't hired to advertise all events but were hired for General Tourism.

Heidi asked if Blue Collar is available for a multi-faceted campaign.

Cmmr. Jeffreys spoke about putting the RFP out again and stated Blue Collar would respond to an RFP. She also asked the group how they can recruit hotel chains such as Red Lion to come to Mason County. She asked the group how they can entice chain hotels to establish business in Mason County.

Shaun said it would be difficult to get people to invest in the County at this time and there still needs to be a reason to come. He said most people visiting the County may be more prone to camping out and having a camp fire to maintain the rustic feel.

Darin Barry joined the meeting at 10:08 a.m.

2. **Bonnie Knight/Duane Wilson moved and seconded to approve the June 30, 2015 meeting minutes as written.**

3. Review 2016 Small Festival Application & Determine Funding Level.

Cmmr. Jeffreys reminded the group to not use the "reply all" function in email. She reiterated some key points of the Open Public Meeting Act (OPMA). Kelly Bergh was not in attendance although Chair Jeffreys stated that Kelly sent email to suggest letting Blue Collar handle everything.

Darin shared his approach. He stated they would get more leverage by having Blue Collar (BC) establish a landing page such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc for all festivals. He said after the social media is created, he would like to see 30 percent to go boosting. Darin reiterated BC would need an additional \$5000 per month.

Heidi McCutcheon said landing pages seem redundant because most events and festivals already have their own page.

Bonnie said perhaps a link would do the same thing.

Shaun said a landing page is just another page within the website in order to get to the information someone is interested in. Shaun reiterated the roll of the LTAC and said it's not to create strategy but is to allocate money.

Heidi said they can give directives and give a vision although they can't tell BC exactly how to need to do things.

Cmmr. Jeffreys said this year is about "building the machine".

Darin recommended the professionals spend 80-90 percent for third party paid advertising and boosting.

Shaun said if we already have all the answers then why bother even sending out an RFP. Shaun recommends letting BC do their job.

Heidi recommends hiring a contractor for the paid advertising duties. She said it's like pulling teeth sometimes to get content from people.

Shaun said he thinks that's already Stephanie's roll. He also stated that he thinks deciding how to achieve results is up to Blue Collar since they are the professionals.

Darin said it's all about development of content.

Bonnie reminded everyone that BC said the first year is about developing content.

Duane said BC has a full year and then after review, they come back with plans for the second year. They can ask BC what their plan is for the second year at the next review meeting.

Heidi said individual grants don't have the same effect. She stressed that there needs to be paid, multi faceted advertising and not just social media and there also needs to be a set amount for advertising.

Shaun said it should go out to RFP and the professionals can manage all of this.

Bonnie agreed with Heidi.

Cmmr. Jeffreys stated the RFP requires due process. She thinks the RFP can state the amounts to be allocated for each area.

Heidi suggested it also includes paid advertising in various forms.

Consensus was reached to abandon the individual grant process and ask for RFP to move to a single company advertising approach process.

Cmmr. Jeffreys asked if the RFP dictates an amount for paid advertising and what is the funding level?

Bonnie wants to know what they plan to do next year before giving them more money.

Heidi suggests 60k and a requirement to work directly with the events and festivals with consideration of multi media advertising. Heidi said they should be asked to define their direct marketing approach and use with scoring system.

Shaun agrees that it's an important factor to explain what they would want but not tell them exactly how to do it or exactly how much they should spend on each outlet.

Heidi suggests stating they are "looking for an overall strategy not individualized marketing plans".

Heidi/Bonnie moved and seconded to have an RFP for \$65,000.00 for a contract to set an overall strategy for developing a plan for marketing events and festivals in Mason County; working with event organizers and calling for the budget for direct promotion & marketing. This proposal is expected to integrate and tie in with the current tourism plan. Motion carried unanimously.

Cmmr. Jeffreys said the legal duty of LTAC is to make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioner regarding how to spend Lodging Tax money.

4. Report on Marketing of Tribal Owned Property – Cmmr. Jeffreys reported that she has not been able to make contact with the appropriate people.
5. Report on Lodging Tax Payers – Heidi reported on who she identified does and does not pay Lodging Tax.
6. Other Business- There was no other business.
7. Public Comment- There was no public comment.
8. Calendar – Set next meeting for quarterly updates and to make funding recommendations for small festivals. Blue Collar should come on the same dates. Diane will set up meetings and send out emails. LTAC will also do a year end review for Blue Collar sometime in December.
9. Adjourn at 11:40 a.m.

LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST:



LTAC Clerk



Cmmr. Terri Jeffreys, Chair