



Tourism Development Council Meeting
Wednesday, April 15, 2025 12:35 – 2:14pm

Minutes Approved 9/9/26

In person and virtual via Zoom - [Recording Link](#)

Members Present: Luke Spencer, Katen Patel, Amy Barton, Patrick Dawsey, Mike Quinn, Ryan Tigner, Tessa Koch, Brian Crow
Staff Present: Lizzie Keenan, Aaron Liersemann, Jim Austin, Danae Burke Jones
Others Present: Kathryn Larsen, Thema Haggemiller

12:35pm - Welcome/Call to Order/Introductions & Declaration of Conflicts - Luke Spencer, Chair

12:37 – 12:40pm - Approval of Minutes for December 2025 and February 2026 - Danae Burke Jones, Administrative Specialist

Katen motioned to approve minutes from December, seconded by Amy and **approved** unanimously.
Katen motioned to approve minutes from February, seconded by Patrick and **approved** unanimously.

12:40 - 12:46pm - Approval of 1 Year Term Extensions for Chair and Vice Chair - Luke Spencer, Chair

With recent changes to the TDC and BCC boards, along with departmental changes, it was identified that it would be helpful to keep the Chair and Vice Chair in their current board positions for an additional year to provide historic knowledge to the TDC. Both Luke and Holly are scheduled to term-out from the board this June, but the idea for extension was shared with the County Administrator and he agreed it was a good plan to have the continuity. Looking for a motion to approve the term extension for both Luke & Holly to continue in their current positions until June 2027.

Brain asked to clarify if Luke was already on an extension and would it require any update to the bylaws to extend his term further? Lizzie confirmed that Luke is currently on an extension and this would increase that to a two-year extension. No issues were identified by county administration, and the bylaws allow for the TDC to approve extensions.

Katen motioned to extend Luke and Holly's terms and executive positions on the TDC for an additional year, seconded by Mike and **approved** with one abstention.

12:46 - 12:49pm - Approval of Executive Committee At-Large Position - Luke Spencer, Chair

The At-Large position on the council has been vacant for a while and Katen expressed interest and excitement in joining the executive team to serve in this role.

Luke motioned to approve Katen to join the executive committee in the At-Large position, seconded by Amy and **approved** unanimously.

12:49pm - 1:04pm - Legislative Update: Short Session Recap - Jim Austin, Development and Community Relations Coordinator

Jim offered a legislative recap that focused on bills that were introduced into the short session that addressed recreational immunity and liability waivers and agritourism.

Senate Judiciary Committee introduced SB1517, that would allow recreation operators to require waivers

from adults passed and was signed by the governor. It appears that recreation partners are cautiously optimistic that this will be helpful to their businesses.

Luke shared that the USFS and Travel Oregon are both doing liability educational seminars to help operators better understand the ways SB1517 may affect their businesses. Mike reported that ski operators have a similar meeting regarding recreational liability that he will be attending and can report back at the May TDC meeting. Lizzie asked if TDC members whose businesses would be affected by this were feeling positive with this legislation passing. Mike reported that it is overall good news and all things considered, ski operators feel like it is a win for the state of Oregon. It should help operators get more affordable insurance coverage when they were previously almost uninsurable in Oregon due to the nature of the business. It is anticipated that there will still be some lag time before insurers are open to write policies in Oregon again, so it might be while before there's multiple insurance options, but operators are feeling positive overall.

HB4153 also passed and was signed by the governor. This legislation creates a new category for farm stores that will allow for and have a different licensing process for temporary structures and farm kitchens. This provides a new opportunity for agritourism tourism partners to make additional revenue, which makes a big difference to our small farm partners. It will be left up to the counties to administer, and it will be incorporated into local planning.

Tessa shared that HB4153 was a win for farms and further clarified that it will be left up to county interpretation for land use laws, but overall positive for farms. Farm store permits will not be available in Clackamas County until 2027 which will allow time for the processes to be figured out.

1:05pm – 1:19pm - Strategic Investment Program – Next Cycle Feedback - Jim Austin, Development and Community Relations Coordinator, Lizzie Keenan, Executive Director

Lizzie provided space for feedback and questions about the Strategic Investment Program process and asked TDC members to answer a few questions:

- 1.) What are your overall thoughts about the process
- 2.) Do you have any questions about the process?
- 3.) Are there any changes that you would like to see made to the process?

Suggestions discussed included:

- Considering asking for letters of support from community or land managers to be included with any applications for projects taking place on public land. Currently applicants are required to provide letters of support from any partners that are named in their grant application, and we could also implement this for any public lands projects as well.
- More clarity around what constitutes direct versus indirect funding for staffing and administration for projects for the review committee and TDC members.
 - Reviewed current guidelines which allow for capacity and for funds to pay for staffing and administration if it will be bringing on a new role or additional hours specifically to manage the project/program.



- It is typical for grants to allow for some amount of indirect costs for running the program such as administration of the grant (filling out paperwork, reporting, accounting etc.)
- Industry standard is 15 -20% for indirect costs

Jim encouraged members to also send any thoughts or ideas to himself or Lizzie if anything comes up as they continue to consider the program updates going forwards.

1:20pm - 1:32pm - BCC/TDC Joint Meeting Plan - Lizzie Keenan, Executive Director

The joint meeting with the TDC and Board of County Commissioners is scheduled for June 10th. It will be hosted at the Museum of the Oregon Territory. The first 30 minutes will be an optional tour of the museum and new exhibit that the Office of Tourism funded through the SIP program, followed by a 1-hour working lunch with both boards.

An open agenda was suggested for the meeting format, allowing the BCC and TDC to discuss any timely topics. Ideally the BCC will bring questions to drive the conversation. A member asked if there's any goals or topics that staff would like the TDC to discuss with BCC. Lizzie suggested focusing on relationship building, sharing the work that the Office of Tourism does and having TDC members speak from their own personal experience as subject matter experts in their area. The May TDC meeting could be used to discuss additional topic ideas.

1:32pm – 1:51pm - Industry and Program Updates – Staff

Lizzie shared that the department has been holding an in-person staff meeting once a month at partner hotels. This allows the team to see properties, meet staff and get shared updates on what's going on. In April staff meeting was held at Residence Inn Lake Oswego where Patrick provided meeting space and led a tour of property.

Goal is to have open positions filled by end of the current fiscal year. The Tourism Program Assistant job posting was open for two weeks and had over 340 applications, Lizzie is working with HR to screen applications and will be scheduling interviews for that position soon. The Tourism Program Manager position is currently open and will close on April 22nd.

The marketing campaign RFP got around 30 applications and staff interviewed three entities. An intent-to-award will be shared by the county next week. The team is feeling good about the process and is excited to move forward with the country process.

The new 26/27 Travel Planners have arrived and were shared with the TDC. They are also available online.

AARP did a big story on Americas 250th and Mt. Hood Territory got coverage that highlighted some mountain partners including Timberline Lodge and the Mt. Hood Cultural center

Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm had asked for some support to connect their wine business to the tulip festival and staff worked with our PR team to produce video that was aired on KOIN and featured Emily from Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm talking about their 'Tasting in the Tulips' event.



Aaron shared that he attended and tabled at three different travel shows in March including the Vancouver BC Adventure Show where Mt. Hood Territory shared a booth with Travel Oregon. At the LA Travel & Adventure Show, Mt. Hood Territory shared a booth with Travel Southern Oregon, Eugene Cascades & Coast, and the Willamette Valley region. Go West Summit in Las Vegas is a business-to-business show focused on travel trade and is attended by tour operators and agents who are focused on the West Coast and are knowledgeable about the area.

Finally the Clackamas County Office of Tourism hosted the 10th annual Ag Tourism Summit and set an attendance record and had to cap registration at 52 participants. Over half of attendees were first timers and half were from outside Clackamas County which is great for networking. The speakers and panel discussion went well, with some panel members from very established farms that were able to share lots of knowledge with newer farms.

1:52pm 2:14pm - TDC Updates - TDC Members

Mike – The mountain got 9” of snow overnight, but the overall snowpack is still low. Skibowl will be soft-opening with limited operations starting Memorial Day weekend and expects to be fully open for summer options on June 12th. Wedding bookings were soft in 2025 but are back to average for 2026 and all things are pointing to a decent summer so far.

Brian – Deep into the busy season. Upcoming events at the Event Center include the Spring Garden Fair, Brewfest, Renaissance Fair in June, Harefest in July, Clackamas County Fair in August, FOBtober Fest in Sept. New construction has started, and they already have steel in place. For the bleacher project they have decided to go in a different direction buying the bleachers on contract and possibly having the installation completed by a local group at no labor cost. Aiming to start that project after the County Fair.

Katen – Heading to Hotels on the Hill in DC in May where he, along with other delegates from Oregon, will be meeting with senators. Katen will report back on learnings.

Ryan – Got tickets to Renaissance Fair. Lack of snow hurt winter booking on the mountain for Q1, but summer is looking okay for now and ahead of last summer.

Patrick – Also got Renaissance Fair tickets. When there’s bad weather they see an increase in bookings mainly from insurance claims. Because we’ve had mild winter weather, they are seeing lower bookings, shorter length of stays and bookings closer to arrival. Summer is starting to pick up, but still down year over year.

Tessa – TMK is doing good. Open every weekend and hosting tours 7 days a week. Seeing an uptick in colleges and universities from across the country coming into the area.

Amy – December’s flooding caused lots of trash to enter the Clackamas River so are working on getting some funding to support clean up as there is no agency tasked with clean up big messes. Will be at the Upper Clackamas White Water Festival with a booth and will be doing a clean up on site during the event. Permitting for the Indigenous art installation has finally gone through and installation is planned for the first week of June and where they will have a ribbon cutting and ceremony with artist. Working with a group to



create a master plan to restore Centennial Park in Damascus including adding gardens and a playground.

Luke – Clackfest is in one month. Clackamas River Outfitters is getting into their busy season and has obtained a permit from the Forest Service to operate on the upper Clackamas River this year.

Thelma – Had a client that came up from California who spent a day at Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm to learn to carve wooden shoes. Thelma was able to make connections to make that happen and suggests continuing the FAM tours as she learns a lot about area businesses' offerings.

2:14pm - Adjourn Public Meeting

Free language assistance is available for this document. Contact info@mthoodterritory.com

Hay asistencia de idiomas disponible para este documento. Contacto info@mthoodterritory.com

Для ознайомлення з цим документом доступні безплатні послуги перекладача. Зв'яжіться з нами: info@mthoodterritory.com

Для ознайомлення із цим документом доступні безплатні послуги перекладача. Зв'яжіться з нами:

info@mthoodterritory.com

本文件可提供免费的语言协助服务。如需帮助，请联系 info@mthoodterritory.com

Chúng tôi cung cấp hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí cho tài liệu này. Liên hệ info@mthoodterritory.com