



## Tourism Development Council Meeting

MINUTES – **APPROVED**

Wednesday

October 12, 2022

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

**Members Present:** David Penilton, Luke Spencer, Holly Pfortmiller and Gail Yazzolino

**Staff Present:** Samara Phelps, Ithaca Janzen, Jim Austin, Kristen Cianci, Lizzie Keenan, Casey Knopik, Aaron Liersemann, Jarrod Lyman, Janice Nilson and Annie Austin

**Others Present:** Thelma Haggemiller, Slow Poke Tours

### Action Items:

**Welcome/Call to Order/Introductions & Declaration of Conflicts—** David Penilton, Chair

### Action Items:

**Approve June 8 & September 14 Minutes—**Janice Nilson, Management Analyst

- Due to lack of quorum, these will be reviewed in November

### Discussions:

**Strategic Planning Framework for 2023 –**Plan for updating strategic documents

Samara Phelps, Executive Director

- How we do the planning of strategic mid and long range planning?
  - PowerPoint presentation walking through guiding documents
    - County Ordinance
    - Master Plan
    - 5 yr. Strategic Priorities Plan (2017)
    - Key Issues (2021 then reconfirmed for 2022)
  - Identified key issues
    - Covid and Wildfire impacts on Tourism Industry and assets
    - Negative Perceptions of the destination around safety
    - Overuse in specific locations with underuse in others
    - Department reduced capacity and Financial Stability
  - Evolving Issues to Action Statements
    - Lenses applied to all work
      - Visitor – Resident – Partner - Place
      - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
      - Sustainability
    - Critical issues evolved into outcomes
      - Support Tourism
      - Enhance the experience
      - Drive visitors to identified areas as informed by their needs

- Continue to develop organizational resiliency for effective tourism leadership
- Strategic Planning Framework
  - Goals for the Process
    - Consolidate KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)
    - Identify appropriate timing & phasing of planning work
    - Streamline efforts; create efficiency
    - Maximize impact
    - Minimize redundancy & maximize trust
    - Solidify authority & credibility
    - Defendable outcomes; data-oriented work
  - Strategic Plan has various audiences
  - Planning process will include
    - Annual budget and 2 year rolling business plans
    - Performance Clackamas as required
    - Destination Priorities
    - Tourism Master Plan
- The coming year of work – This is done led by staff with an consultant and helps to identify destination priorities for the next 5-20 years.
  - Strategic planning timeline
    - Jan-Feb – Budget planning for FY23/24 will happen on County cycle and fiscal year work plan developed with staff
    - Mar-May – Background and data collection
      - Resident survey
      - Travel Oregon stakeholder survey
      - Regional focus groups
      - Stakeholder interviews
      - Industry trends data
      - And more
  - What is GSTC? Global Sustainable Tourism Council – basis for the assessment that was done with George Washington in 2019
  - How will the residency survey be processed, mail/online? We will get outside help to assist with the work, but last time it was done online
  - How did that go, do we get a lot of feedback? We’ve only done one, officially, and we got about 1,400 responses.
    - This was the same year Travel Oregon did a resident survey for the whole state.
    - We worked with PGA (Public & Government Affairs) across their network and got good participation from all regions within the county.
    - We planned on doing this again in 2024 but based on work that is being done, we are going to do that in 2023.
  - Will we do comparisons old to new? That’s the intent.
- Know that you have the opportunity to give feedback, but we will be starting this month to scope out the needs to implement the work.

**Financial Report – Samara Phelps & Janice Nilson**

- We committed to having more of the financial transparency to help monitor the budget that was approved by you.



- A recommendation was presented on how we would do updates
  - Revenues will be slightly off cue due the way revenues come in.
    - In February, we will share quarter 2 – slide presented showing prepared work highlighting specific categories.
    - What is or is not clear.
      - Do we receive a breakdown of what goes into Allocated Costs? Yes and we can provide if necessary.
      - Percentages are what we have paid up to this point? Will all of these reach 100% by year end? Yes, that is the goal but there is a lot of forecasting. By the time we reach 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, we will begin to see where we may be high and low. Excess funds will be allocated into the next year. Carryovers will be worked into next year's budgeting.
  - Are the numbers we see processed? Yes, this is processed items.
  - Are the majority of these things items that are paid throughout the year? Are some paid more in the beginning or are they spread out? It is not consistent.
  - Did we find someone to take over the lease? The office space is expected to see the settlement come out as a lump sum at some point this year. Currently the expense is not showing as we are working with the landlord.
  - Is there a stipend for people working from home? No, they don't get compensated in these ways. Only for their computers and such which are all county issued.

#### **Program Updates – Samara Phelps**

- Jim – I recently attended the DMA summit to pick up 2022 Best Idea Program. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> in a row. We have received this award the last 3 years it has been given. This award was for the work we did with our partners (Forest Service and ODOT) on the reopening of the Clackamas River Corridor. Additionally, October 25<sup>th</sup> will be our 1<sup>st</sup> in person FAM Tour. Going to be fall fun, South County, Wilsonville, Canby, Molalla. There are spaces for 18 people.
- Aaron – Oregon Outdoor Recreation Summit is happening on Mt. Hood this year at the Mt. Hood Oregon Resort. Our involvement includes attendance at summit and running an interactive car free workshop about the environment and sustainability. There is public transportation from Portland available for this summit in Welches Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. Kristen is helping with this. We will have hop on speakers including Teresa Christopherson with the Mt. Hood Express, a private tour company, David Duncan who does the Waterfall Trolley in the Gorge, Bigfoot will deliver Joe's Donuts at the Sandy Transit Center. There is a one pager of car free options in the area, links to webpage and car free itinerary and more. We also will have a table at the event with collateral from Mt. Hood Territory. Mt. Hood Territory is sponsoring the lunch for 100 at Wildwood with food coming exclusively from Mt. Hood Territory restaurants and food carts.
- Annie – There is a lot of fall messaging happening – Farms, harvest events, authentic fall dining – Pumpkin Spice everywhere, authentic fall dining, bounty, farm to table and such. Also focusing on of our heritage and culture small businesses, fall and our new travel planner. Social media and digital files are all out there with more information to come. It's a way to use the great data we are getting from Datafy. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year we are working with KOIN on the Oregon Harvest Program. It's a 30 minute program and we get about 7 minutes of that time. Willamette Valley Melons in Molalla, Yacon from Moonridge Farms and TMK Creamery in Canby that now has a distillery. We will have air dates for that. Lots of other digital media in other magazines. This

fall will support Tourism Industry recovery by focusing on small businesses and again on a diverse group-farms, museums, restaurants. We want to enhance awareness of the territory as a desirable destinations such as Milwaukie, Happy Valley, Clackamas, and Wilsonville. There's a "fall" landing page on our website that highlights what is out there in this off season.

- Jarrod – Fall landing page, we've now looked at everything that comes through and redesigned it based on current browsing standards by users. The photography contract is done by Nashco. We've focused on communities, main streets, and small businesses getting that authentic feel. They did a marvelous job. Some of the photos are in the travel planner, some on the website and with the communities. Each community was to get 20 photos. Additional can be purchased.
- Ithaca – Last year we offered a co-op advertising opportunity with American Road Magazine which has to do with road travel, about 72% of readers are very much interested in heritage and history. These are people that will plan their travel around museums and such. We had a full page add last year that was really cohesive and fun. We are offering that again this year offering to our heritage partners. Also, we have another opportunity with KOIN. It is called "Eye On Northwest Wines". It's a 30 minute wine program. This year they weren't going to run as they didn't think they would be able to get enough wineries on board in time. We were able to work with them and get "Eye On Mt. Hood Territory Wines" which will feature 5 of our wineries; Forest Edge, Hanson, Whiskey Hill, St. Josephs and Beckham. It will have our branding and will help 5 of our hardest hit wineries. Air date and times to follow.
- Casey – The upcoming November-December the AAA VIA magazine will focus on destination, culture and history museums for their editorial content. We took out a full page advertorial putting focus on our heritage sites and museums that are recovering from COVID. This will direct readers to our heritage page. Also, in preparation for winter we are working on a full page advertorial in the Portland Monthly encouraging stopping and dining in restaurants in the Villages. We are working on getting the word out there are great restaurants to hang out and stay a while. This will go in preparation with the work Jim and Aaron are working on and our partnership with Travel Oregon and the HWY 26 corridor.
- Kristen – This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year the DMO led the region on a thank you event handing out bags of cookies to those working in the region to thank them and show our appreciation. The cookies were made by Packer Orchards in the Hood River Valley and we accompanied them with a hand written note from Lizzie and others. The thank you bags were prepped by volunteers. It was timed to center around the Oregon Travel Commission meeting so we were able to get Travel Oregon staff including Todd Davidson and 5 commissioners, along with our own David Penilton. These people teamed up with other DMO leadership to assist in the delivery to businesses in the communities. Thanks to all. It turns out one of teams in Hood River were approached by a reporter that was in the barber shop for an on the spot interview. They said it was a great thing happening and they wanted to share with others. David – It was one of the best experiences by far and I enjoyed it the most. The businesses were very appreciative. It was a moving experience in many ways and I would do it again. Kudos to you for that.

#### **TDC Updates – TDC Members**

- Thelma – Still Here. There's OTTA meeting coming up the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> in Ashland. Four of us will be going down for that from the Oregon City area. Looking forward to that. Samara – I want to interject and put the spotlight on Thelma as it's your birthday month. Hope you celebrate all month long. Ninety is a big year. I haven't celebrated my birthday in 40 years.

Holly – October still been busy. Construction is driving me crazy and the hotel is being affected. I need to put it on our website and it will affect us.

- Luke – Had an extended good weather so we are making up for losing rentals at Milo McIver due to the fire and will continue at the state park as long as weather continues. Numbers are comparable to last year. Attended the commission meeting. Got some good information there. Overall we're pretty mellow but still doing rentals and waiting for rain so boaters will come out to do some paddling.
- Gail – Fully staffed and open 7 days a week. Having a lot of fun training. New person that does visitor center. We're ordering fun things. People are coming. Numbers are pretty good. People are having fun. Came up with about 15 new activities for school groups. It's just been fun creating new things and having visitors come.
- David – You are amazing. You do great. Janice, the financial report is excellent. Kudos to you. Travel Oregon Commission in Hood River and Hood River did an excellent job. Samara and I have started the process of engaging with the commissioners 1 on 1 to open a line of communications and listen to some of their concerns and what is on their minds. We've met with Commissioner Shull and will meet tomorrow with Commissioner Savas. I had the opportunity to drive up to Estacada and see what it really looks like. The devastation is unbelievable. It will have an impact on you to see the losses from the forest fires.
- Samara – Just a follow up with the meetings with the commissioners, we will have a meeting with the commission in February after elections. Luke – Thank you for opening up that conversation with the commissioners. Thanking for taking the time to do that.

Adjourned 3:52 pm