



Tourism Development Council Meeting - Final
Wednesday April 13, 2022
2:00 – 3:15 pm
Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Penilton, Catherine Nyland, Holly Pfortmiller, Gail Yazzolino, Betsy LaBarge, Hans Wipper, Tammy Thompson

STAFF PRESENT: Samara Phelps, Janice Nilson, Jarrod Lyman, Aaron Liersemann, Jim Austin

Additional Present: Commissioner Martha Schrader and Tracy Moreland

Action Items:

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

Action Items:

- **Approve March 23, 2022 Minutes** – Janice Nilson, Management Analyst
 - Motion to approve by Tammy Thompson and 2nd by Catherine Nyland – Voting was unanimous

Discussions:

Development Program Update – Business to Business Outreach and outcomes – Aaron Liersemann, Tourism Specialist, Senior

- Presented a slide show covering
 - Travel Trade/RTO/International
 - Partner Outreach
 - Projects & Programs
 - The presentation showed the continued growth of the Receptive Tour Operator Program and tour operator's desire to sign additional activities partners.
 - Through the attendance to GoWest 2022 had the ability to have 22 appointments and interest in 29 hotels.
 - TMK Creamery signed with Destination America 2023 contract with 9 motorcoach tours and an ROI of \$8,775.
 - Attended the Vancouver Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show along with Luke and Lizzie. Canadians are READY to visit Oregon.
 - All agree this is a good show to continue to participate in.

- Still to come IPW in Orlando, FL this year with funding provided by Travel Portland. This show is great exposure not only for us but the state as well
- Through our Partner Outreach we are trying to be more proactive in talking about the work we are doing and let partners know how they were included.
- We've found it's a great way to reconnect with partners.
- Portland Region does monthly international newsletter in the region that they request input from us for. We've featured 5 different areas through this.
- Continued focus on collaboration between partners and making connections to get them to work together.
- Since Jim and Aaron came back they've worked with 9 different partners on projects
 - Specifically we are working on
 - Soul River – Pathfinder Course on Mt. Hood.
 - Highway 224 webpage for opening on May 1
 - Destination Ready Program – bringing recognition to Molalla Area

Betsy – Is the entire Hwy 224 being reopened or just part?

- Just to Ripplebrook. Harriet Lake and Timothy Lake need to be accessed via Hwy 26.

David – Is there an opportunity for a Clackamas County partner to participate in IPW as well?

- 3 different partners from the area and are funded by the Portland Region. HUB World Tours, McMenamins Hotels and Provenance Hotels are confirmed.
- Is the Why Guides from Travel Oregon something you push? Is there interest?
 - Yes, Clackamas County guides are well represented in the Why Guides program. Travel Oregon contracted with Karen Viehoever to support guides pursuing the Why Guides programs.
- Does St. Josef's offer food in the work with others?
 - They have wine tasting every weekend. They like to have food carts on the property but has proven difficult due to the food cart minimum. Would like to expand to the outdoor dinners with partners.
- During COVID-19, Kitchen at Middleground Farms switched to outdoor dining and are now partnering with wineries in the area.

Marketing Program Update – Action & analytics - Jarrod Lyman, Tourism Specialist, Senior

- As expected things have changed a bit.
 - The web audience has had 58K visits this year vs 30K last year at the same time.
 - Mobile last year had nearly 20K visitors, 65% of all users. This year is just over 46K and 78%. Again majority of users are mobile.
 - Paid social and Organic search are the top traffic to the channels.
 - Top 5 driving keywords driving traffic are Mount Hood and Mt. Hood followed by things to do in Portland followed by Timberline Lodge
 - What's new? Google Analytics 4 is new from Google and will change the way analytics are reported. Everything will change with this update and we are lucky to have Drozian and their expertise to help us out with this.
 - Facebook continues to be the biggest driver, however it is not performing as well as in the past. They have removed a lot of options over the past years. We are

looking at ads with different goals – conveying the message in a way to make Facebook happy and keep the audience in Facebook instead of driving traffic out to our website. We will still direct traffic to website but video views also count as a conversion. Video views have always been a conversion point for us. REELS have become a big deal on Facebook and Instagram. They are the most likely to get organic reach. This type of content actually gets higher reach currently.

- We are also changing the website a bit. People are moving away from clicking text links, so we are refreshing the site to keep up to date with current trends.
 - Instagram stories continue to be reshared on our stories to help amplify messaging and share with new audiences.
 - Looking ahead we will continue to use Drozian analytics to determine targeting of campaigns, will continue to change the website as necessary to keep up with trends.
- Betsy – noticed in the analytics the where to stay page had a very low bounce rate. That means when people get there, they stay there?
 - Yes but as we send more people there the bounce rate will increase, which is natural.
 - Holly – For lodging is it only hotels or is it the camping and vacation rentals, the full lodging window?
 - When it comes to the button, it depends on where it is being used. If it's an article on camping, it will go to camping, etc.
 - Betsy – Will the red bar at the top come off once Hwy. 224 reopens?
 - Yes
 - David – Has there been much of an increase in the cost of utilizing Facebook?
 - The click rate is low, .08-.32. Targeting with Facebook has been a little bit less concise.
 - Are there any areas other than Portland that have opportunities?
 - That was just 1 of 5 pages of keywords. Portland is higher on the list due to searches. There are others on the list as well and we use those to target and attract people.
 - Betsy – Looking around the website, curious when looking at our listing, I see the logo for the Sandy River Watershed Council, why?
 - Right now Drozian is working on listing and trying to find a way to coordinate with the map to help. I will forward this on to Drozian to check into. Sees other as well, the problem is random. It is probably time for an audit.
 - Samara – we have been trying to stay on this but the Part-time admin coming in the New Year will be working on keeping listings updated.

Program Reminders– Tourism Staff

- Samara – There is a table for TDC and Staff at the Travel Portland State of the Industry. I will send an update on that. Look to Jim for more information.
- Barb has invited us to the Tulip Fields for an in person event on April 27th from 5-7 with your families. Sign up will be run through Janice and Jim.
- May 11th is the next meeting. Location is to be determined. Would like that to be in person.

- Last Tuesday, April 5th Ithaca had her baby daughter, Ruby.

TDC Updates – TDC Members

- Commissioner Martha Schrader – Great meeting, Thanks for letting me come. I will try to be in more regular attendance. Looking forward to in person meeting. Great presentations today.
- Hans Wipper - We're busy again. Had busy March. Expect April and May to be slower. 7 days a week in June. Summer camps moving. Getting over negative social media campaign.
- Gail Yazzolino – Moving ahead and taking in school groups. Going full steam and looks like we will reopen in the middle of May. I've hired 3 people and still hiring. Not everyone wants to work 5 days a week. Doing an opening for a French Visitor. We will open with more reservations.
- Betsy LaBarge – Crazy April snow. Best powder for skiing the last couple of days. We had to order a snow plow for 2 of the driveways at our rentals. Business is good. Seeing more of pre-COVID trends. More back to weekend warrior. Travelers are more back to normal. Tax reports look good; there are more vacation rentals now. Real Estate guys have gone crazy. I believe a lot of that will drop off when people find it's not Covid. Concerned but it will balance itself out. Also, with Hans people want part-time hours. Getting more interest in housekeeping type jobs. Wages have increased in last 2 yrs. about 25%. Base now is 18-19 for start.
- Catherine Nyland – We are staying busy. Business is up. We are also looking for employees. Everything is great.
- Tammy Thompson – Nothing exciting. Will be in Louisville helping with the Derby.
- Holly Pfortmiller – Very excited for in person meeting. Looking forward to that. Fabulous information today. Gearing up for the season
- Luke Spencer – Is traveling and sorry he is not able to attend today. Whitewater has been really good this season. Had travelers from the Ukraine and the UK as well as the Northeast to come paddle in the area. They are hiring and looking forward to the highway opening May 1st.
- Thelma Haggenmiller – Just joined. Just came from Metro Trails quarterly meeting, there were 49 people at that meeting from trails all over Oregon. Recently caught my eye and attention is an attraction we are ignoring, Curtis Wagon. They are here in Oregon City and have since been trying to figure out how we can use that display for both economic development and tourism. I've given several ideas to Don who is head of the display. Go and see it.
- David Penilton – As far as Hub tours, bookings are outstanding but we want to get engaged and out there mask free, we still have to monitor how things are progressing here and abroad. Hopefully, things will move forward. Workforce is an issue for all of us, yes we see people wanting to work 1, 3 and 5 days. Our system can actually work with that but there are so many that show up that are not fully engaged, but from a business perspective we've got to move forward. We need to be patient that will change. I've upgraded my fly fishing equipment and been out on the Clackamas River and in 2022 get my fly fishing back to where it should be.

Our next event is the 27th, please plan to support Barb.

Adjourned at 3:15 pm.