

Tourism Development Council
Meeting Minutes – APPROVED 10/11/23
Wednesday September 13, 2023

2:05– 4:04 pm

Virtual + In Person: 150 Beaver Creek Rd RM 401

[Zoom Recording Link](#)

Members Present: Luke Spencer, Catherine Nyland, Tessa Koch, Katen Patel, Holly Pfortmiller

Staff Present: Samara Phelps, Ithaca Janzen, Jim Austin, Aaron Liersemann, Danae Jones, Janice Nilson

Others Present: Thelma Haggemiller – Slow Poke Tours, Nancy Dunis

2:05 – 2:08 pm

Welcome/Call to Order/Introductions & Declaration of Conflicts - Luke Spencer, Vice Chair

2:08 – 2:32 pm

FY22/23 Year End Financials Presentation - Samara Phelps, Executive Director

- For all programs; \$4,489,951.63 was budgeted, \$4,100,693.15 was spent, leaving \$389,258.48 not disbursed.
- Feeling good about yearend having successfully implementing plan laid out in 22/23 budget - big work ahead in 23/24

2:32 – 2:46 pm

Program Recovery Update - FY23/24 programming relative to pre-pandemic – Samara Phelps

- Tourism recovery from the pandemic has been faster than forecasted. FY18/19 is used as the baseline for financial reporting and calendar year 2019 for economic impact numbers.
- Transient Room Tax collections surpassed pre-pandemic levels in FY21/22, and FY22/23 exceeded those collections. This is driven by room rate. Occupancy still lags behind FY18/19.
- In 2022, visitor spending reached 98% of 2019 spend. Average daily spend is equal to 2019 and length of stay has increased.
- With the FY23/24 budget the Tourism Program surpasses FY18/19's program budget and retains a contingency equivalent to approximately one year of TRT revenue. In addition to funds programmed for this year's tactics, there are special project funds and lost revenue funds with flexibility. Staff will recommend how to program these funds later in this fiscal year.
- The department has fewer staff compared to 18/19 but consider the tourism department at full capacity for current program when contracted services are included.

2:46 – 3:13pm

Lost Revenue Fund – Background and programming approach - Samara Phelps

- Decisions for lost revenue spending must be made by end of 2024, with all reporting and finances distributed by December 2026.
- Discussion of how to spend funds included: Strengthening organization, increase messaging & advertising spend, exploring opportunities that include a greater diversity of partners, OTAs/hospitality, FAMs, Encouraging sporting and recreation, Cazadero Trail & other trail development, Rivers & river guides, partnering with Amtrak & genealogy tourism.
- Next steps: Staff will take TDC suggestions and come back to the TDC with recommendations.

3:14 – 3:52pm

Program Updates - Harvest Trail, Strategic Investment Program, STRs & timely updates- Tourism Staff

- 3:14 – 3:35 - Aaron presented new Harvest Trail passport program launching in October including background information, goals, success measurements and marketing plan.
- 3:35 – 3:50 - Jim gave updates on Strategic Investment Program. Goal is to do two grant funding cycles. Review committee will include partners their recommendations will be brought to the TDC to discuss with TDC award decisions.
- 3:50 – 3:52 – Samara mentioned new county has a new short term rental registration system that will go live on December 7th.

3:52 – 4:04

TDC Updates –

Overall things are going well. Large interior remodel about to start at Best Western Rivershore. Milwaukie Inn is looking to encourage more out of town guests to their location & workforce issue continue to be a factor. Oregon City working on a spring FAM tour. Experiences continue to outsell retail items at Clackamas River Outfitters and they had a great summer season.

4:04 pm Meeting Adjourned

Requested Project Update

The TDC made a strategic investment in February 2023 to support the National Forest Foundations work to reopen a trail and campground on the Clackamas River destroyed in the 2020 Riverside Fire. Here is the project update from Jeff Malik of the NFF on October 3, 2023.

work has resumed on the Riverside Trail now that we're outside of fire season. Everything remains on pace for a spring 2024 completion.

The Rainbow Campground design and bidding process took far longer than anticipated, as the blueprints the Forest had from before the fire did not accurately reflect the post fire landscape, and basically had to be redone after many site visits. However, finally, we have a contractor selected and they can get to work this week. The campground construction should be finished this year; but it will be up to the Forest Service to decide whether to open it right away for late Fall camping, or to wait until next year.