

**Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee
March 16, 2021**

Meeting conducted via electronic communication

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donna Beverage, Union County Commissioner Appointee
Sean Lerner, Retail Appointee
Nicole Howard, City Council Appointee
Michael Rysavy, Small Lodging Appointee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT EXCUSED:

Krystie Davidson, Large Lodging Appointee
Caleb Sampson, Union County Chamber Appointee

STAFF PRESENT:

Suzannah Moore-Hemann, Union County Chamber of Commerce Director
Robert Strobe, La Grande City Manager

ROLL CALL

The meeting came to order at 3:10 p.m. with a quorum of the Committee present via electronic communication

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted without changes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Nicole Howard moved approval of the minutes of February 23, 2021, as presented, Sean Lerner provided the second. All members voted in favor, motion carried.

REVIEW OF FINANCIALS

The Committee reviewed the Financial reports thru February, 2021. Suzannah reported that the County's payment was received and posted to the Chamber's budget and will be moved to the Tourism budget. There were no questions.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON RARE APPLICATION

Suzannah provided the Committee with a copy of the application for a RARE participant for the coming budget year and inclusion in the Program of Work. It was noted that involvement in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training would e

added to the scope of work. Nicole commented that it was a robust opportunity for whoever is selected to be the RARE participant.

Sean Lerner moved to approve applying for the RARE position, Nicole Howard provided the second. All members voted in favor, motion carried.

REVISED CONTRACT AND SCOPE OF WORK FOR WORTHY

Suzannah had been asked at the February 23rd meeting to discuss a revised scope of work for a contract with Worthy. Suzannah reported that she had negotiated an agreement for \$3,500 that would provide more of a quarterly focus than monthly actions with an emphasis on content and continuity with the Style Guide. There would be content rotation for Spring, Summer, and Winter seasons. The plan would be to implement the contract now and it would continue into the next program year. It was clarified that the work was not training Chamber staff on how to update or maintain the new website, it was strictly to update content. Donna stated she felt the cost was too much and that the staff should be able to do the work as opposed to outsourcing the tasks. Nicole indicated she would like to try having Worthy do the work and that it was worth the cost to do it well and Worthy had demonstrated they have the capability of doing it. Mike agreed with Nicole. He also suggested the timing of the updates should coincide with the transitions of the tourism seasons. He also stressed the importance of having flexibility and rotating content with adjustments.

Sean Lerner moved to proceed with the new contract, Nicole Howard provided the second. Three (3) members voted in favor, one (1) opposed, (Donna Beverage) motion carried 3-1.

FY 2021-2022 BUDGET REVIEW

Suzannah provided the Committee with copies of the proposed budget recommendation that would accompany the Program of Work for City and County consideration. She explained how the cash carry forward (beginning cash) was validated.

The Committee discussed suggested revisions to the budget including a \$25,000 contingency in the proposed budget and increasing training \$3,000. The Committee supported the revisions.

FY2021-2022 PROGRAM OF WORK REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Suzannah provided the Committee with the updated Program of Work. She indicated the proposal will include information from the Marketing Research and integrating the Oregon Travel Information System (OTIS) into the new website. The new tourism website will be highlighted and the Visitor's Guide will pull heavily from the Style Guide. The old website only had 5 to 19 fulfillment requests in total, the new site is seeing 5 to 10 per week. The new site will be

doing SEO and the consensus was not to include data from the new website in the Program of Work because it was too soon for the data to be meaningful.

At the next meeting Suzannah will provide updates on grant programs and policies.

It was suggested that the new website include funding opportunities on the calendar and that intake forms be available to make it easier for people to apply.

The importance of tailoring the messaging on the website to the tourism market was stressed as was using the Style Guide to build a catalog of professional images that we own and can use as we choose. A brief discussion regarding the merits of owning the images and paying for the rights to use them ensued.

In response to a question, Suzannah clarified that the Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Membership actually isn't a membership dues expense, but rather sponsors advertising efforts.

Donna Beverage moved to recommend approval of the Budget and Program of work as amended at today's meeting, Sean Lerner provided the second. Three (3) members voted in favor, one (1) abstained, (Donna Beverage because of her role as a County Commissioner) motion carried 3-0-1.

Mike commented regarding the cost of professional photography that he had paid \$1,500 for two days of work to get marketing photos, plus paid for lodging, and that it was well worth it based on the quality. He mentioned that the cost of the camera alone that was used for the shoot was \$20,000. Donna Beverage emphasized that her position was that it was important to be frugal especially in a post-COVID-19 environment. Nicole shared her support for investing in the professional photography and the higher quality that comes with it.

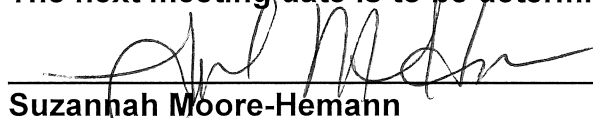
Suzannah indicated she would provide the Committee with the revised Budget and Program of Work that were voted on.

ADJOURN

Without further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting date is to be determined.



Suzannah Moore-Hemann
Union County Chamber of Commerce Director