

Meeting location: Chamber of Commerce conference room.

Meeting called to order by Michele at 3:35 pm.

Present: Michele Rennie, Mark Hess, Jay Brodt, James Payne, Jennifer Skogland, Skip Cundiff, Ron Anderson, Michael Davidson, Rick Standard, and Kay Wessel.

Absent: Tim McCarty, Shane Laib, Nancy Mitchell, Justin Wylie, Cory Hewitt, and Jeffrey Townsend.

Minutes – James pointed out two typographical errors. Ron moved to accept the minutes. James seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Tourism indicators -- Michael

Website – total number of visitors up 20% in July; new visitors up 23%; click-throughs were up 4% -- Michael would like to see that higher. YTD, total visitors up 20%; new visitors are up 29%, but rooms booked on line are down 63%.

Rooms – room revenue up 18% for July, rooms sold up 10%, room occupancy up 10%. YTD, room revenue is up 6%, rooms sold up 4.7%, hotel occupancy up 4.7% at 48%.

Visitor Center traffic was up 8% for July and is up 7% YTD.

Treasurer's Report – Jay

July was way above in costs compared to revenue. July is a heavy advertising month. We've done a good job in controlling costs and Andrew does a good job with web sales so we're in a good position.

James moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Mark seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept

Meeting with Wine Alliance -- Michele

Michele, Michael and Elio Agostini (Director of the Downtown Foundation) attended the meeting with interim Executive Director Devin (to come)

We believe that there's a new feeling of cooperation coming from the Alliance.

At the meeting we suggested that the board chairs serve on each board.

We are looking forward with working with the Wine Alliance and Grapeline on developing regularly scheduled wine tours

Tourism Promotion Area – Kay/Rick/Ron

Ron stated that the state Department of Revenue will begin collecting the TPA funds on October 1st, 2010 and the disbursements of funds to the hoteliers should begin at the start of the New Year. He added that October should be a good month for lodging revenue but it will then drop off after that.

Rick reported that Michael had met several times with the TPA commission about a marketing plan and meetings will continue until a marketing plan is developed.

Ron also said that the hoteliers need to decide how much of their projected revenue they want to dedicate to a Sports Commission before they can tell Tourism WW how much of the budget will be dedicated to non-sports tourism marketing. He believes that is the first thing that needs to happen before a complete marketing plan can be created. He projects that gross revenue from the TPA for the budget year should fall between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

Signage – Michael

The signage committee created the parameters for an RFP. That RFP was created. Four companies were identified as candidates. Three have responded. The project is solely for assessment purposes – not design. It should commence by October of this year and be done in early 2011.

The total cost of phase one is \$30,000. Tourism WW had contributed \$8,000. The City of Walla Walla has pledged \$3,000, the Wine Alliance \$1,000, and the Walla Walla Downtown Foundation \$1,000. Other potential partners: the County is considering \$3,000 (although that may come from the \$8,000 it already pledged as general funding), the City of College Place has been asked for \$1,000, the Port of Walla Walla \$3,000.

Marketing Committee – Michele, Jay, Rick

Michele stated that the marketing meeting that preceded this board meeting involved some healthy debate about the focus groups. She stated that Gibson Media feels it's very important to do research before developing the next phase of TWW's marketing plan. The focus groups are scheduled to take place in Seattle and Portland.

New Board Members – Michael/Michele

The resignation of Elizabeth Martin-Calder from the Wine Alliance and with Ron Anderson leaving the Marcus Whitman there are a number of seats (2) that needed to be filled. Adding to the confusion Ron's seat is actually the Chamber of Commerce designated seat and not a hotel seat.

Kyle Mussman has expressed an interest in returning to the board.

After some discussion it was felt that we that there is no need to rush to fill the vacant seats, and it makes sense to wait to see what happens with new hires at both the Wine Alliance and the Chamber of Commerce.

President's Report

We have had met again with WWCC representatives to better solidify a working structure for the Super Host program. The meeting went well and he got the sense that someone would take ownership at WWCC for the program, at least in the short term. He is still concerned about not having someone who has been designated to oversee the program on a permanent basis.

We are still attempting to have the Super Host program become part of the curriculum at WWCC but that remains to be seen.

Website advertising is going well. TWW is having more success this year than in year's prior selling the button ads and is above revenue projections YTD.

The Art Initiative is still moving forward. Some recent meetings have been held but the wine community has still not determined what they want their organization to look like.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:36.