

**Tourism Walla Walla
Minutes
March 19, 2009
Chamber of Commerce Board Room**

Call to Order

Mark called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

Present: Mark Hess, Kay Wessel, Michael Davidson, Michele Rennie, Leroy Cunningham, Elizabeth Martin Calder, Nancy Mitchell, James Payne, Skip Cundiff, Ron Anderson, Rick Standard, Cory Hewitt

Absent: Shane Laib, Dave Warkentin, Tim McCarty, Jay Brodt, Jeffrey Townsend

Staff: Chris Erickson

I. Approval of Minutes

Board minutes were not available to be approved.

II. Tourism Indicators

Michael went over the totals which included revenue being up 16% which was 46% up from last year. It should be noted that these rises were due to a payment for a two month period being paid at one time. Smith Travel reported that the market is appx. 30% behind in occupancy. TWW will need to be cautious in spending money, and looking to cut costs if these trends affect Walla Walla.

III. Treasurers Report

Michele went over the financial statements for February and submitted them for approval of the board. There was some discussion about the current state of the economy and how we will need to watch expenses closely in this budget year. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was seconded and passed unanimously by a voice vote.

IV. Events and Promotions Committee

The events and promotions committee did not meet, but one question was brought forward, based on an application submitted by a group of for profit businesses. The question was, "Are for profit businesses available to receive monies under the Matching Fund Grant program. Chris will research and report back to the committee.

V. Funding & Sustainability

The Funding & Sustainability committee met and discussed the idea of finding some grants to apply for through the help of Kate Bray who sits on the committee. It was also decided that Ron Anderson will be the chair of the committee. He will work with Chris to have a mission statement for the group ready for the next meeting which will meet at it's regular time of noon the day before the board meeting.

VII. Local Transportation

Leroy reported on the Transportation committee meeting. The group decided to look at the data that was available to them to gauge the amount of providers and vehicles to answer the question of, “What does the valley need” in the way of transportation. The group developed the following Mission Statement:

To facilitate a transportation partnership between public - private industries that promotes and encourages the development of tourism transportation needs within the Walla Walla Valley.

President’s Report

a. Public Relations/Marketing Reports

Michael submitted the Maxwell PR and Gibson Media reports to the board.

b. UB Editorial Board

Members of the board met with the UB Editorial Board to discuss a “Bring your meeting home effort”, focusing on having local people giving us the lead to bid for their meeting or conference.

c. Walla Walla VIP Card

To stick with the value added efforts that TWW has been focusing on there will be a shopping discount card for visitors only that will be distributed through hotels. The lodging association has paid for their members to be a part of this program. Sales for the card’s participants and promotions will be a joint venture between TWW and the Downtown Foundation.

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday April 16, 2009

3:30 p.m. – Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Board Room