

**Tourism Walla Walla
Minutes
June 19, 2008
Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Board Room**

Call to Order

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

Board of Directors

Present, Michael Davidson, Mark Hess, Michele Rennie, Kyle Mussman, Shane Laib, Patrick Keef, Michael Wenberg, Jay Brodt, Kay Wessel, Tim McCarty and Dave Warkentin,

Absent: Skip Cundiff, Cory Hewitt, James Payne, Paul Mobley and Rick Standard.

I. Approval of Minutes

Mark opened discussion on approval of the minutes for the previous board meeting held May 15, 2008. A motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded and passed unanimously by a voice vote.

II. Tourism Indicators

Michael reviewed the Tourism Indicators report.

III. Treasurers Report

Michele went over the budget numbers and reported that with current projections we are on track with budget projections. Motion was made and seconded to accept the report.

IV. Community Awareness and Outreach Committee

We discussed a number of ideas to increase the local awareness of the value of tourism to the Walla Walla Valley. We want to give tourism a "public face". We reviewed a current program the Seattle CVB is currently running. Called "Tourism Matters" its focus is to give a public face to the industry. You can see their campaign at www.whytourismmatters.com. The committee is also looking at other ideas from around the country. The committee will also look at doing a Tourism Week celebration for May of 2009.

V. Events and Promotions Committee

The first request of the Events and Promotions Committee is that all new events that come before the board will be sent to the E&P Committee for consideration before coming before the board for a decision.

- **Identify Comprehensive List of Events**
 - a. Identify key organizations
 - b. Identify key properties persons
 - c. Identify key venues

- **Community Calendar**
 - d. Be a key instigator in development
 - e. Research best input collaboration methods
- **Promotions**
 - f. The main goal of promotions will be to look for programs and events that have a wide appeal to community resident, but will also be a draw that tourists would attend and enjoy during their visit, or travel to attend.
 - g. The events will be education based and open to food, wine, cooking, agriculture, with emphasis of researching and marketing agri-tourism and heritage.

VI. Funding and Sustainability Committee

The two key questions that this committee spoke about at their first meeting were:

- How much money do we need to operate an effective tourism organization?
- How will a fee for service structure fit into our overall mission of providing unbiased information to visitors?

As a result of these discussions the committee has asked the staff is gather information on the budget of similarly sized tourism destinations / communities / tourism infrastructure

VII. Marketing Branding and Public Relations Committee

The committee will be meeting with Gibson Media (June 25) to discuss current marketing efforts and what if any adjustments should be made in the future.

VII. President's Report

a. Public Relations/Marketing Reports

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

b. Walla Walla Chamber Music Festival

This first Walla Walla Chamber Music Festival concludes this Friday. The festival which ran for twelve days seemed to be well received. We will provide some statistics at the next meeting

c. Black Box Survey

Jim Lillstrom and representatives of RRC Associates will be presenting the finding of the winter black box survey on Wednesday June 25th. A discussion followed of what type (s) of future visitor research Tourism Walla Walla should undertake. The Marketing, Branding, and Public Relations Committee will do research and report back to board.

d. Fort Walla Walla Amphitheatre

As a followed up to our discussion at the last board meeting we have learned that the City, Walla Walla Community College and Shakespeare Uncorked to seek funds to make improvements to the amphitheatre. Tourism Walla Walla will monitor the progress and provide support as needed.

e. Walla Walla, Green, Green Fall Festival

We are working with the Downtown Foundation on the expanding the Fall Festival of Foliage and Feathers to a bigger event. We are looking at adding a green focus to the festival.

Other

Mike Wenberg reported on the great success of the Walla Walla Symphony's Mare's and Music program at the Fairgrounds, it was a sellout. Interest has been expressed from around the region to get involved next year. Tourism Walla Walla will look at how it might be able to support this event next year.

Adjourn

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, July 17th, 2008
3:30 p.m. – Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Board Room