

**Tourism Walla Walla  
Minutes  
July 17, 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, Patrick Keef, Jay Brodt, Kay Wessel, Tim McCarty and Dave Warkentin, Cory Hewitt, James Payne, and Rick Standard.

Absent: Paul Mobley, Kyle Mussman, Michael Wenberg, Shane Laib, Mike Paul and Skip Cundiff,

**I. Approval of Minutes**

Mark opened discussion on approval of the minutes for the previous board meeting held June 19, 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. We are at 101% of expected Revenue and 90% of expected Expenses. Motion was made and seconded to accept the report.

**IV. Marketing, Branding, and Public Relations Committee**

This committee met with Gibson Media during a break in the black box survey unveiling. The expressed their recommendation that after a lengthy discussion with Gibson that we stay with Walla Walla, Surprise, surprise as the campaign has shown results and increased revenues. They also acknowledge that we will need to address the website as it will continue to grow as a quintessential piece of our marketing viability. Also, Portland was pinpointed as an under tapped market with many positive advantages to extending our advertising there. The last discussion item was the idea of coming back to conduct some focus groups to help with research and development of our product since it has been three years since we have done that

**V. President's Report**

**a. Public Relations/Marketing Reports**

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

## **b. Tour of Walla Walla**

It was announced that the Tour of Walla Walla will now have an extended Criterion loop through Whitman College, which will open up the possibility for 100+ new riders to compete. The Criterion will be held on Saturday night instead of Sunday morning. On Sunday there will be a long road race that should result in an extra night stay for many riders.

## **c. State Travel Guide**

Michael announced the state's new proposal for the Washington State Travel Planner. This will be the official state guide for Washington State. The WSH&LA will still be printing their guide. Discussion on advertising options relating to this announcement will be held in the future.

## **Other**

James started a discussion about listing shopping options on the website. There was great discussion over the types of businesses that could be included with an importance on what would be important to the visitors. This issue has steadily grown in importance over the past few years until now when the black box survey has placed shopping of one of the most important activities of tourists while they are in town. This issue was referred to the Events and Promotions Committee for further review.

Dave also talked about the commercial air travel coalition that has been working with Alaska/Alaska Airlines to ensure our air travel industry is secure. Alaska just announced that they will be upgrading the size of their planes to close to double the current passenger capacity. WW will need to raise rider ship 10% to ensure we keep our three flights per day. If we were to lose flights we could potentially lose large industry employers that rely on air travel to do business here. The coalition will introduce the **Fly Walla Walla First Campaign** to help make sure we meet our goals for passenger increases.

## **Adjourn**

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

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, August 21st, 2008  
3:30 p.m. – Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Board Room