

**Tourism Walla Walla
Minutes
August 21, 2008
Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Board Room**

Call to Order

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

Board of Directors

Present, Michael Davidson, Michele Rennie, Skip Cundiff, Patrick Keef, Jay Brodt, Tim McCarty, Dave Warkentin, James Payne, and Rick Standard.

Absent: Mark Hess, Paul Mobley, Kyle Mussman, Shane Laib, and Mike Paul, Kay Wessel and Cory Hewitt

I. Approval of Minutes

Jay opened discussion on approval of the minutes for the previous board meeting held July 17, 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. For the first time since we began issuing this report we showed a drop (0.8%) in rooms sold. Michael also handed out a graph that showed the inflation adjusted growth of accommodations revenue from 2004 - 2007

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 100.6% of budgeted revenue and at 94.5% of budgeted expenses.

IV. Community Awareness & Outreach Committee – Jay Brodt

At our August 7th meeting

- We reviewed ideas from CVBs around the country on how to promote the importance of tourism to the local community.
- We feel that the monthly tourism report card that appears in the UB Monthly Business publication does a good job of communicating our efforts to the business community but it has a limited circulation (3,500). We will develop a monthly *Face of Tourism* campaign that would appear in the regular edition of the UB. Jay will look into cost and possible design ideas.
- We would like to plan a major National Tourism Week (NTW) promotion for 2009. Next year's NTW is from May 9 -17th

V. Events and Promotion Committee – James Payne

At our August 12 meeting

- We discussed developing guidelines for supporting events / project.
- Much discussion about developing a Calendar of events that is viewable by industry and groups seeking to plan meetings and events. Committee members are reviewing different calendars
- Group is researching the development of a hybrid map and website with a focus on shopping. We think this should that Tourism Walla Walla should be the lead agency on this project.

V. President's Report

a. Public Relations/Marketing Reports

Michael submitted the Maxwell PR and Gibson Media reports to the board. The board would like to see a Public Relations report from Maxwell that shows success of their pr efforts in addition to listing all stories that they report through reporting services. The Marketing, Branding and Public Relations committee will speak to Maxwell.

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. Mike Wenberg

Mike Wenberg submitted a formal letter of resignation. We still believe that we need a representative of the arts community on the board. A number of suggestions were made, including Colleen Sargen and Ian Boyden. Michael and Pat will reach out to these individuals to see if they are interested in serving.

d. Superhost

Chris has taught two classes of the five Superhost classes taught to date. We are planning on offering these classes free to lodging properties and at a reduced cost to other businesses. We plan on allocating \$25,000 in the 2009 budget to fund this effort.

e. Festivals

Tourism Walla Walla has received positive feedback to both the new Shakespeare Uncorked and relocated Sweet Onion Festival.

Other

Dave reported on the city's **Lodging Tax Advisory Committee's** (LTAC) meeting. The group rejected the idea of funding the city's funding of Fort Walla Walla Museum with room tax revenue money. The concern is that this a slippery slope of raiding these funds for expenses not directly supporting tourism promotion. The LTAC would be interested in looking at one time projects that supports tourism development. They will be working on guidelines.

Adjourn

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

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, September 18, 2008

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