

**Tourism Walla Walla  
Minutes  
September 18, 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: Dave Warkentin, Pat Keef, Rick Standard, Mark Hess, Michael Davidson, Michele Rennie, Tim McCarty, James Payne

Absent: Cory Hewitt, Shane Laib, Kay Wessel, Mike Paul, Skip Cundiff, Jay Brodt.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

Mark opened discussion on approval of the minutes for the previous board meeting held August 21, 2008. A motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded and passed unanimously by a voice vote.

**II. Tourism Indicators**

Revenue is up but sales and occupancy are down from last year. Also this trend should be expected to continue as The Hampton Inn opened August 1. The sample of rooms for the Dean Runyan Report will now be 760.

**III. Treasurers Report**

Expenditures for the month were less than received. Misc. income included \$326 from online sales commissions, \$600 in Webervations memberships, and \$1425 in web ad sales.

**IV. Opening of Downtown Visitors Center**

With the support of the executive board Michael brought forth the consideration of taking visitors services under the control of Tourism Walla Walla. The services have been performed by the Chamber of Commerce since the formation of TWW. In the new setup 26 E. Main would serve as the TWW Visitor Information Kiosk. TWW will manage operations and employees at the site including but not limited to the 800 number, generated leads, lodging availability, and other visitor needs. The cost of the rent of the space is \$250/month. The DTWWF has pledged to give \$400/month to help finance this operation. Lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of this effort was held. Patrick made a motion to accept the transition of Visitors Services to the control of TWW as presented to the board by Michael. The motion was seconded by Michele. The motion passed unanimously with David Warkentin abstaining.

**V. Marketing, Branding, and PR**

The committee discussed a meeting held with Gibson Media about possible expansions for internet marketing in the future. The board discussed the importance of spreading it's reach through the web but will have to research and explore the subject further in order to make the right decision about the future. The biggest question will be who is chosen to lead us in the future on internet marketing.

## **VI. President's Report**

### **a. Public Relations/Marketing Reports**

Michael submitted the Maxwell PR and Gibson Media reports to the board. Maxwell has attached a new report showing the status of projects they are working on: Pitch, Press, Visit, Relationship, and Misc. which covers stories that were not a product of their direct work.

### **b. Sightline**

Beth Swanson is the local point person for the sightline project. There has also been some traction on a retail location in Seattle for distribution. One proposed location is the Made in Washington Store. Sightline will be testing their advanced GPS style product in Walla Walla for 6 to 8 weeks. The service features audio and video ads and information as well as the ability to book restaurant reservations. This opportunity will also generate press for Walla Walla.

### **c. Board Resignations**

Paul Mobley- has sent in a letter of resignation. Board members are encouraged to submit names of replacement candidates from the restaurant industry.

Kyle Mussman- has sent in a letter of resignation.

### **d. Superhost**

Dan McConnen of WWCC has moved from his position and his replacement will soon be named. Michael and Chris will meet with the new coordinator to continue the next steps of the programs implementation.

### **e. Walla Walla Green Green**

Because of lack of funding considerations and the high cost of fuel to run the tour portion of the event, Walla Walla Green Green has been cancelled for 2008. Efforts will be made to hopefully have the event in 2009.

## **VII. Board Nominations**

Ron Anderson's name was brought forward to be voted on as a replacement for the open position left by the resignation of Kyle Mussman. Ron is the new General Manager at the MWH, which is the largest hotel in the area. Ron has many years of experience in the tourism industry and has previously been a member of the Spokane CVB Board of Directors and served as their President before coming to Walla Walla. A motion was made to nominate Ron Anderson to the TWW Board of Directors by James. The motion was seconded by Pat and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

## **Adjourn**

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

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, October 16, 2008

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