

**Tourism Walla Walla  
Minutes  
October 16, 2008  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Baker Boyer Bank**

**Call to Order**

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

Board of Directors

Present: Shane Laib, Pat Keef, Mark Hess, Michael Davidson, Michele Rennie, Tim McCarty, James Payne, Skip Cundiff, Jay Brodt, Ron Anderson

Absent: Rick Standard, Dave Warkentin, Cory Hewitt, and Kay Wessel.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

Mark opened discussion on approval of the minutes for the previous board meeting held September 18, 2008. A motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded and passed unanimously by a voice vote.

**II. Tourism Indicators**

Website activity continued to be strong and click-throughs are up. Hotel revenue is up 12% from last September, room sales are also up from last September. Hotel occupancy continues to be down as a result of the 200+ rooms that have been added in 2008.

**III. Treasurers Report**

TWW received two payments from the city during September.

Other revenues came from hotel commissions and money received through a coop with gourmet getaways. Expenditures of note were payment of insurance policies covering liability and board of directors. Pat made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by mark and passed by a unanimous voice vote.

**IV. Downtown Visitors Center**

TWW has taken visitors services in house and opened its first self contained Visitor Information Kiosk located at the old symphony ticket window located at 26 E. Main called Destination Walla Walla (a partnership between TWW and DTWWF.)

While Michael set up the office, Chris interviewed and hired 5 new employees to staff the booth which will be open from Monday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Chris also conducted a SuperHost training for these employees and will continue to train staff .The booth officially opened on Wednesday, October 15, 2008. The location is great for walk up traffic and will be a great service to the tourists and locals of Walla Walla looking for visitor information.

**V. Discussion of 2009 Marketing Direction**

Mark led a discussion about the direction of the marketing plan for 2009. It was the sentiment of the conversation that next year could bring a slow down of visitor traffic under the current economic downturn. In the midst of the possibility of lower numbers it is important that Walla Walla keep its dedication to its current branding and marketing strategies and not offer ourselves up as a discount destination.

**VI. President's Report**

**a. Public Relations/Marketing Reports**

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

**b. Sightline**

Sightline has delayed its trial of the GPS service it will be testing in Walla Walla. There is has not been an answer on when the program will be ready. An update will come when the project is ready to resume.

**c. Superhost**

Michael and Chris met with the new coordinator of the SuperHost effort at WWCC. A tentative schedule of 2 trainings per month will be scheduled for next year. Also, the new coordinator was positive about adding SuperHost to the curriculum of the enology and viticulture, culinary, cosmetology, and nursing programs. The next meeting is set for Oct. 22.

**Adjourn**

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Thursday, November 20, 2008

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