

**Tourism Walla Walla  
Minutes  
December 17, 2009  
Chamber of Commerce Board Room**

**Call to Order**

Mark called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Board of Directors

Present: Mark Hess, Jay Brodt, Ron Anderson, Michael Davidson, Dave Warkentin, James Payne, Jeffrey Townsend, Nancy Mitchell, Rick Standard, Michele Rennie and Shane Laib.

Absent: Cory Hewitt, Skip Cundiff, Kay Wessel, Elizabeth Martin Calder, Leroy Cunningham and Tim McCarty.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from November 19, 2009 minutes were reviewed and approved by unanimous vote.

**II. Tourism Indicators**

Rooms sold and Occupancy rates for the month of October were down by 5.6%, while room revenue was down by 7.2%. Room Tax revenue was up by 10%. Michael suggested to the board that a new monthly report tracking our social media efforts was available if the board wanted it. It was agreed that this would be added to future tourism indicator reports.

**III. Treasurers Report**

Michele went over the financial statements for November. Numbers are in line for our revised budget. At our last board meeting it was discussed that we might need to cash in one of our CDs to cover upcoming expenses. By working with our vendors and delaying payments for three weeks we were able to avoid this.

**IV. Events and Promotions Committee**

By unanimous vote the following recommendation of the events and promotions committee adopted the following Matching Funds Grants for 2010:

• Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance	\$ 3,000
• Downtown Walla Walla Foundation	2,000
• Shakespeare Uncork'd	2,000
• WW Bed & Breakfast Inns Association	1,500
• Walla Walla Chamber Music Festival	1,500
• Kirkman House	1,000
• Gran Fondo Walla Walla	500
• Daily Market Co-op	500

**V. Funding & Sustainability**

The funding & sustainability committee did not meet.

## **VI. Sports Committee**

Skip Molitor from SMC Consulting gave an overview of the activities of the sports committee. The goal of the group is to attract new sporting events at times of the year most needed. Among the issues the group needs to resolve as it moves forward is to determine the size of events we are trying to attract. Rick will be working with area hotels to help establish the minimum number of room nights that a sporting event should generate.

## **VII Nominating Committee** – By unanimous vote of the board the following slate of offices and directors were approved:

For a two year term expiring December 31, 2011

Jennifer Skoglund – Walla Walla Regional Airport

For a three year term expiring December 31, 2012

Ron Anderson – Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center

Jay Brodt – Union Bulletin

Mark Hess – Baker Boyer Bank

Justin Wylie – Va Piano Vineyards

Elizabeth Martin-Calder – Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance

The Executive Board for 2010 will be:

Michele Rennie - Chairperson

Nancy Mitchell - Vice-Chairperson

Jay Brodt - Secretary / Treasurer

Mark Hess - Immediate past chair

## **VII - President's Report**

Michael reported that the annual meeting will take place on Wednesday January 27, 2010 and will be held at the Faces tasting room.

The retreat will take place the next day at Blue Mountain Cider in Milton-Freewater.

A meeting of the Arts Community was held (to come) at the Jimgermanbar bar in Waitsburg. The group would like to explore the possibility of forming an Art Council for the Walla Walla Valley. Tourism Walla Walla is helping to plan the next meeting which should be held something in January.

A discussion was held about the Association of Washington Cities position to push for expanding the use of local lodging tax beyond its current uses. Dave explained the decision by the Chamber of Commerce to not take a position on this issue at this time. Mark expressed his disappointment with this choice.

Dave also informed the board that the Chamber will be working with area hotels to further the discussion of the possibility enacting a local TPA.

James work like to see a report from Maxwell Public Relations that includes a running total of all articles that the PR firm played a direct role with the writer.

## **XII. Other Business**

With no other business the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING BOARD RETREAT – Thursday January 28, 2010

9:00 am - 4:00 p.m. – Blue Mountain Cider – Milton Freewater