



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

City Hall
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Monday, October 10, 2016

3:30 PM

Room 207

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Julie Hankins called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Chair Julie Hankins, Committee member Russell Carstensen, Committee member Jack Kiley, Committee member Nathan Allan and Committee member Greg Taylor

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Committee Member Carstensen raised the topic of amending the agenda to add a discussion on whether to accept the PARC Foundation application because it was received five and half hours after the submission deadline. The Committee discussed and decided to table the application until the end of the review of all applications and not amend the agenda.

The agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.A** [16-1138](#) Approval of July 11, 2016 Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 6.A** [16-1137](#) 2017 Lodging Tax Funded Tourism Services

Chair Hankins suggested the Committee begin by reviewing all the applications in the order listed on the Chart of Olympia Lodging Tax Award History (which is in alphabetical order) and ask any questions of the submitting organization's representative. The Committee could then determine award amounts.

Capital City Pride Festival (Rainbow) - \$7,000

The Committee discussed with Pride Representative Anna Schlecht, the Festival's continuing struggle to get attendees to self-identify themselves as attendees of the Pride Festival at local hotels, for fear of potential discrimination. Ms. Schlecht raised the idea of a broad-based survey or tracker at hotels, managed by the Visitors and Convention Bureau, as a way to capture Pride attendees. Committee Member Carstensen asked why the estimated attendance for the 2017 Pride Parade (15,000 attendees) was 5,000 people lower than the 2016 Parade (20,000 attendees). Ms. Schlecht noted the 2016 Capital City Pride Festival was the first Pride event after the Orlando shootings and therefore more people attended the event to show their support for the LGBTQ community. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Greater Olympia Dixieland Jazz Society - \$25,000

The Committee had no questions regarding the proposal. The members praised Dixieland Jazz Society representatives Charlotte Dickison and Walt Bowen for a "solid, reliable event." The representatives said they were seeking \$4,000 more than the previous year to do more promotion of the event. They noted they lost money on hotel rates this year and some attendees struggled with hotel quality. They suggested creating a code system to track attendee stays at local hotels for a particular event. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Hands on Children's Museum - \$54,960

Executive Director Patty Belmonte was present to represent the Hands on Children's Museum proposal. The Committee had no questions on the proposal, but offered compliments to Ms. Belmonte for the quality of the application. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Harbor Days - \$25,000

Executive Director Carol Riley was present to represent the Harbor Days proposal. Committee Member Russ Cartensen noted his past relationship with Harbor Days and the Kiwanis and was willing to recuse himself on this proposal if his fellow Committee members would like. Otherwise, the Committee had no questions on the proposal, and offered compliments to Ms. Riley for the quality of the application. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Olympia Downtown Association - \$59,800

Event and Volunteer Coordinator Kim Combs and Boardmember Becci Welsh were present to represent the Olympia Downtown Association's (ODA) proposal. The Committee made note the ODA was requesting a substantially larger amount of money for 2017 than they have in the past. Committee members asked clarifying questions on several of the events listed in the application and their ability to result in overnight stays. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Olympia Film Society - \$8,000

No one was present to represent the Film Society proposal. Committee members noted their disappointment in the lack of data in the application. Chair Hankins noted the event the 2016 funds were supporting had not yet occurred and is scheduled for

November. The Committee expressed concerns about the seriousness of the proposal. They noted the Committee was looking for real numbers which could be counted. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater Visitor and Convention Bureau - \$100,000

Director of Marketing and Communications Moira Davin represented the Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) proposal. Committee Member Allan noted the Committee could not change the proposal, anyway. He asked if 2016 recipients of lodging tax funds had been working with the VCB as requested by the Committee last year. Ms. Davin noted every organization present had indeed worked with the VCB. The organization was also integrating a new tracking system into its website. They were also convening a "League of Festivals" meeting with everyone, and adding a tool to the website which could calculate the economic impact of a particular event. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

Olympic Flight Museum - \$6,000

Executive Director Teri Thorning was present to represent the proposal. The Committee had no questions on the proposal and moved to the next stage.

Parrot Heads of Puget Sound - \$12,500

Event Co-Chair Rob Hill was present to represent the proposal. The Committee asked clarifying questions about the proposal. They asked particularly about the \$3,500 targeted toward "Courtesy Airport Transport." Mr. Hill explained moving the event from Seattle to Olympia meant there was no commercial airport serving the city. Providing complimentary limousine service to arriving attendees was a cost-effective courtesy and added to their experience. He said the event was doing a good deal of outreach to the southeast United States and to southern California, and they were selling the destination as much as the event. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

St. Martin's / Dragon Boat Festival - \$6,000

Director of Fundraising Events & Corporate Sponsors Dana Pethia and Director of Grant Development and Management Dr. Erin Holland represented the proposal. The Committee had no questions on the proposal and moved to the next item.

Washington State Senior Games - \$20,000

Washington State Senior Games Treasurer Fran Melzer was present to represent the proposal. There was discussion around the success of the event and it was attracting competitors from around the country. The Committee moved the proposal on to the next stage.

Wolf Haven International - \$10,000

Director of Development Patt Poinsett was present to represent the proposal. A typo was noted in the "2016 Actual Number of Paid Lodging Room Nights Resulting from Their Activity" figure. Instead of 6,000, the number should be 600. Ms. Poinsett and the Committee discussed Wolf Haven's new reservation system and survey system and its success for the organization in terms of customer service. Ms. Poinsett noted

the lodging tax funds were necessary to support a major advertisement they run in the Washington State Visitor's Guide. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

PARC Foundation/Olympia Adventure Race - \$15,000

Executive Director James Reddick and Heather Antanaitis were present to represent the PARC Foundation proposal. The proposal was submitted late and was tabled for the Committee to discuss more completely whether they would consider it for funding at all. Ms. Antanaitis apologized for the late submittal. She said the organization was staffed only by busy volunteers. Committee Member Carstensen noted it was the case for many organizations who met the deadline. Other Committee members argued the event was good and brought overnight stays to local hotels. The representatives let the Committee know 2016 was a rebranding year for the event and the size had tripled. They will require participants to disclose where they are staying next year. They are also moving the date of the event from August to September and plan to partner with a brew house to create an event. Their partnership with Brewfest in August 2016 was not as successful as they had hoped. A Committee member noted a typo on their answer to Question 12 in the application: It should read "...3 key areas ..." instead of "...2 key areas"

After deliberating, the Committee agreed to consider the PARC Foundation proposal for lodging tax funds. However, the Committee was adamant this would be the last year late submissions would be accepted. They requested the 2017 application explicitly state an application received after the deadline will not be considered. The proposal was moved on to the next stage.

The Committee noted the 13 accepted proposals totaled \$349,260 and the projected available funds for 2017 totaled \$287,000.

The Lodging Tax Advisory Committee's final recommendations were as follows:

Agency/2017 LTAC Recommendation

Capital City Pride Festival (Rainbow)/\$7,000
Greater Olympia Dixieland Jazz Society/\$25,000
Hands on Children's Museum/\$51,500
Harbor Days/\$20,000
Olympia Downtown Association/\$25,000
Olympia Film Society/\$0
Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater VCB/\$100,000
Olympic Flight Museum/\$6,000
PARC Foundation/\$10,000
Parrot Heads of Puget Sound/\$11,500
St. Martin's / Dragon Boat Festival/\$6,000
Washington State Senior Games/\$20,000
Wolf Haven International/\$5,000

The discussion was completed.

7. REPORTS

Strategic Communications Director Kellie Purce Braseth shared with the Committee the City's Community Planning and Development Department noted the Hilton Garden Inn was slated to open in Olympia in the next week.

Ms. Purce Braseth also noted no members had committee terms set to expire on March 31, 2017; however, Committee members Kiley and Carstensen's terms would expire in March 2018.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hankins thanked the Committee and adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.