



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

City Hall
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Wednesday, October 23, 2019

3:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bateman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Chair Jessica Bateman, Committee member Nathan Allan, Committee member Jack Kiley, Committee member Theresa Thorning and Committee member Meghan Payne

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.A** [19-0965](#) Approval of July 31, 2019 Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff Liaison Kellie Purce Braseth offered thanks for Committee member Allan's service, who would be stepping down from the Committee effective with the completion of 2019 Committee work due to Council-approved term limits.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 6.A** [19-0962](#) Review of 2020 Lodging Tax Funded Tourism Services Proposals

The Committee discussed how it would move through the review of applications considering there were more funds available than requested in the proposals. Chair Bateman suggested proceeding one-by-one in alphabetical order, and moving quickly on those proposals that were clearest to decide upon. They would then vote to recommend the proposals as a whole. The Committee agreed to the approach.

Arbutus Folk School

Requested \$7,000

The request was for support for the Olympia Old Time Festival. The Committee was pleased with the date of the event, to held Feb. 13-16, 2020. The organizers were encouraged to update the list of lodgers and to apply for more Lodging Tax funds in the future. Committee member Thorning asked about the reduction in overnight stays noted on the application. The organizers said they wanted to be conservative. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Capital Lakefair

Requested \$8,000

Karen Griggs and Bob Barnes were present to represent the Capital Lakefair proposal. The Committee was impressed that funds would be used to promote Olympia in other communities through Lakefair's mobile float work. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Greater Gateway Rotary

Requested \$10,000

Brats, Brews and Bands Event Planners Shelley and Dan Nicholson were present to represent the Greater Gateway Rotary proposal. The Committee was disappointed with the completeness of the applications, noting that whole sections had been submitted incomplete. The Committee had more detailed questions about the event budget and Committee member Kiley expressed concern about the answer in the application about how they would promote Olympia. The organizers apologized and said they believed they had submitted the wrong version of the application. Rather than make a recommendation, the Committee decided to set the proposal aside and return to it at the end.

Greater Olympia Dixieland Jazz Society

Requested \$32,500

Dixieland Jazz Society representative Charlotte Dickison and Carla West were present to support the proposal. The Committee had no questions on the proposal, and praised the event. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Hands on Children's Museum

Requested \$68,923

Executive Director Patty Belmonte was present to represent the Hands on Children's Museum proposal. Ms. Belmonte updated the Committee on the Museum's latest activities. The Committee had no questions on the proposal and recommended fully funding the request.

Olympia Kiwanis Foundation

Requested \$50,000

Executive Director Carol Riley was present to represent the Harbor Days proposal. Ms. Riley spoke about her work to make the festival more sustainable. The Committee praised the quality of the application and recommended fully funding the request.

Harlequin Productions

Requested \$30,000

Finance Director Joe Hyer was present to represent the Harlequin Productions proposal. Mr. Hyer and the Committee conversed about the Lodging Tax application form briefly. Committee members asked and a discussion followed on the use of single-ticket

promotions and memberships. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Lake Run Organization

Requested \$2,000

Bob Brennand and Nick Schmidt were present to represent the Lake Run Organization's proposal. Committee Member Allan asked about a rule the Committee discussed several years ago to not accept applications of less than \$5,000 because of the use of staff time. He mentioned the discussion happened prior to the current staff's service. Staff Liaison Braseth noted she had not seen the rule documented anywhere and Committee member Thorning thought the discussion happened about seven years ago. Committee member Allan thought the \$5,000 threshold should be noted on the application. The organizers noted this is the first year the run is under a unified brand. Committee member Allan expressed concern that funding the event would open the door to all the 5K runs in the community seeking Lodging Tax funds. Mr. Schmidt noted the Lakefair races had drawn participants from as far as the east coast. The Committee inquired if the event was funded at a higher rate of \$5,000 could they put heads in beds. The organizers though they could expand the geographical area of the marketing with the extra funds. The Committee recommended funding the request at \$5,000.

Olympia Downtown Alliance

Requested \$6,000

Executive Director Todd Cutts was present to represent the Olympia Downtown Alliance's (ODA) Sip, Savor and Stroll proposal. Committee member Kiley asked about the event's success in bringing in people from outside of Olympia. Mr. Cutts noted there had been interest on their website from beyond Olympia. Committee member Thorning urged the ODA to use a measurement tool to better capture the overnight stays at the event. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Olympia Downtown Alliance

Requested \$7,500

Executive Director Todd Cutts was present to represent the Olympia Downtown Alliance's (ODA) Downtown Visitor's Guide proposal. Mr. Cutts described the distribution process of the publication through local hospitality venues and all Downtown businesses. Members of the Committee noted visitors seeing and using the Guide. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Olympia Film Society

Requested \$25,000

Executive Director Audrey Henley was present to represent the Film Society proposal. Committee members offered their compliments to the Film Society for the quality of the application. Ms. Henley noted the film festival was moving to April and in 2020 would focus on art house theaters. She also mentioned a new point-of-sales system would provide better data. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater VCB

Requested \$100,000

Executive Director Shauna Stewart represented the Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) aka Experience Olympia and Beyond. The Committee had previously allowed the VCB to not submit an application for their funds because it was agreed upon to fund the VCB at that level. Ms. Stewart thanked the Committee. The Committee recommended

fully funding the request.

Olympia & Beyond Sports Commission/ VCB Requested \$15,000
Executive Director Shauna Stewart represented the Olympia & Beyond Sports Commission/Visitor and Convention Bureau. Committee member Allan expressed support for the proposal, and Committee member Kiley emphasized the importance of the sports commission, noting the Committee is playing catch up in that area. Committee member Payne expressed excitement about the future for the sports commission. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Olympic Flight Museum Requested \$10,000
Board of Directors Secretary Paul Faul was present to represent the proposal. Committee member Thorning recused herself from commenting and voting on the proposal due to her affiliation with the event. Mr. Faul mentioned that moving the event commercials to Q13 provided a bigger bang for the buck and a larger reach. Committee member Payne said she liked the timing of the event on Father's Day and that they were hitting a needed market. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

South Sound Reading Foundation Requested \$11,000
Executive Director Jennifer Williamson Forster, Author Jim Lynch, Vice President Mary Ellen Jones and Development Director Emily Ecker were present to represent the proposal for the OlyLit Festival of Books. Mr. Lynch mentioned that just Portland and Spokane offer similar events. The Committee and representatives discussed the timing of the event in September. The organizers thought September was the best time because Olympia "sparkles" then. Also, it is still dry enough for event participants to move around Downtown. Ms. Williamson Forster noted 2020 is a year to build infrastructure and have a soft launch of the event. Committee member Allan asked if there were capacity to make the event bigger. Ms. Williamson Forster said they wanted to first focus on making the event successful. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Washington State Senior Games Requested: \$20,000
Washington State Senior Games Board of Director's President Jack Kiley was present in his capacity as a member of LTAC and noted his affiliation with the event. He recused himself from commenting and voting on the proposal. The Committee noted it was a proven event and had no further questions. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

Greater Gateway Rotary Requested \$10,000
The Committee return to the proposal for Brats, Brews and Bands. In the intervening time, Event Planners Shelley and Dan Nicholson were able to provide the missing application information for the Committee. The Committee was pleased with the additional information. Committee member Kiley asked them to work on out of town promotion and Committee members Payne and Thorning expressed interest in improved measurement tools and what would be generated by a two-day event. The Committee recommended fully funding the request.

The Committee moved to final funding recommendations as follows:

Amount	Agency
\$7,000	Arbutus Folk School
\$8,000	Capital Lakefair
\$10,000	Gateway Rotary Club
\$32,500	Greater Olympia Dixieland Jazz Society
\$68,923	Hands On Children's Museum
\$30,000	Harlequin Productions
\$5,000	Lake Run Organization
\$6,000	Olympia Downtown Alliance - Sip, Savor & Stroll
\$7,500	Olympia Downtown Alliance - Visitor's Guide
\$25,000	Olympia Film Society
\$50,000	Olympia Kiwanis Foundation
\$100,000	Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater VCB
\$15,000	Olympia & Beyond Sports Commission
\$10,000	Olympic Flight Museum
\$11,000	South Sound Reading Foundation
\$20,000	Washington State Senior Games

7. REPORTS

Strategic Communications Director Kellie Purce Braseth shared with the Committee that the City was recruiting for a lodger to fill the seat being vacated by Committee member Allan. She asked Mr. Allan to pass on any recommendation of a small hotelier who might have an interest in applying for the vacancy.

8. OTHER TOPICS

Carol Riley asked from the audience if she might share some information with the Committee. She updated the Committee on former Committee member Russ Carstensen and how he could be reached. She noted discussions were underway on the formation of a Thurston County chapter of the Washington Festivals and Events Association. She also noted a group was being formed to work on the Tugboat Parthia. She said the Port of Olympia would be deciding on a place on land to put the Parthia. Ms. Riley mentioned she is creating a tugboat walk that the Parthia might be part of. She also spoke about Olympia being part of an upcoming Maritime Heritage District.

Chair Bateman and the Committee discussed ensuring that the application is a fillable PDF for next year's round of applicaitons and adding the \$5,000 minimum proposal on the application.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bateman adourned the meeting at 4:41 p.m.