

Wilsonville Tourism Promotion Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018 • 10 am – 12 pm

Willamette River Room, Wilsonville City Hall

1. Welcome

a. Voting members attending: Jeff Brown; Darren Harmon, Chair; Al Levit; Dave Pearson, Vice Chair; and Brandon Roben. David Stead excused.

Ex-officio members, staff, consultants and guests attending: City Councilor Charlotte Lehan; Letwina Fushai; Trev Naranche; Sylke Neal-Finnegan; Kevin Ferrasci O'Malley; Samara Phelps; Mark Ottenad; and Brian Stevenson.

b. Summer updates:

Brandon Roben reported that revenue at Oak's Park was up this summer.

Sylke Neal-Finnegan reported that new Washington County events center in Hillsboro has broken ground; Washington County was number-2 tourism destination in Oregon in 2017.

Dave Pearson reported that ESPN filmed a show on site.

Jeff Brown reported that Hotel Eastlund to add a wine cellar and that new Metro Convention Center 600-room hotel has started work.

Darren Harmon reported that business at Family Fun Center is up 20% this summer. Facility to undergo some remodel to remove batting cages and add bowling. Fun Center to be renamed and rebranded, maybe as Bullwinkle's Entertainment.

Brian Stevenson reported on Parks & Recreation Master Plan update that includes tourism strategy items such as Willamette River access, indoor sports facility assessment and 10 acres of new sports fields by new Meridian Creek Middle School, providing a total of 10-13 sports fields scattered around Wilsonville.

Mark Ottenad reported on progress by the Planning Division's Signage and Wayfinding project.

2. Committee Business and Updates

c. Election of Committee Chair and Vice Chair: Mark Ottenad noted that election of Committee Chair and Vice Chair is required by committee charter at first meeting of new fiscal year, and that prior Chair Jeff Brown sought to pass the baton to another member.

Jeff Brown moved for Darren Harmon as Chair and Dave Pearson as Vice Chair; motioned seconded by Brandon Roben. Motion approved unanimously.

d. Approve Meeting Minutes of Prior Meetings: Committee members reviewed the draft meeting minutes of May 31, 2018. Dave Pearson moved and Al Levit seconded the motion to adopt the meetings minutes as presented. Motion approving minutes passed unanimously.

e. Committee Positions: Mark Ottenad reported that Mayor Knapp re-appointed with Council confirmation Darren Harmon to Position #5 and David Stead to Position #6, both with term expiring 6/30/2021. Position #7 with term expiring 6/30/2021 remains vacant.

Samara Phelps reported that Best Western Wilsonville hotel has a new GM who also serves as vice chair of the Clackamas County Tourism Development Board that guides the work of OMHT.

f. Upcoming meetings — scheduling issues: Mark Ottenad noted that October was a busy month with several tourism related meetings occurring, including Town Center Plan Economic Summit Panel on Oct. 11; Clackamas County Water Tourism Findings meeting on Oct. 12; and Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategy Community Meeting on Oct. 29. Members decided to skip holding a separate committee meeting in October and to seek a good date in November.

3. Vertigo Marketing Report

g. Pocket Trips marketing collateral final-draft review: Trev Naranche reviewed draft final copy for print production of the 12 themed pocket trips. Al Levit noted that Disc Golf should be included for Memorial Park (as well as Champoeg State Heritage Area), and he suggested that pickle ball be added as an activity. Members were invited to review materials and send in comments by the following Wednesday.

h. Print and online promotions: Trev Naranche reviewed various print and online advertisements that have run or are planned to be run.

Committee members suggested that news releases should be issued when the Pocket Trips materials and website is re-launched. They also suggested that the website contain a disclaimer about not sharing subscriber's personal data with other vendors.

Suggestion that Explore Wilsonville order form contain a check box to request information from other local area tourism DMOs, including Travel Oregon, Travel Portland, OMHT and WCVA.

i. ExploreWilsonville.com tourism website re-design preview: Trev Naranche presented previewed pages from the ExploreWilsonville.com tourism website re-design project. He noted that populating custom, local directories was taking considerable time.

Each pocket trip is linked to a separate page with more extensive information on the suggested destinations. Members suggested that ExploreWilsonville.com site allow readers to suggest a destination that matches the Pocket Trip theme or to suggest a whole new Pocket Trip.

A question arose if site should list criteria for being listed on the site; or if ExploreWilsonville.com should develop criteria for being listed and/or for pocket trips. [Subsequently, Samara Phelps reported that OMHT "does not have written listing policy" and instead has "defined working policies."]

j. Visitor Profile Study: Trev Naranche reported that the RRC Associates report from the summer months would be delayed and not be ready until the holidays. Trev Naranche also presented about the winter questionnaire, and if the committee had any changes. Committee members indicated that they preferred to see the report on the summer survey results prior to making suggestions for changes to the questionnaire — did the current questionnaire produce the kinds of answers and results desired?

k. STR lodging trends report: Mark Ottenad presented the August 2018 YTD lodging occupancy and rates report that showed a downward trend of occupancy and room rate over past year for Wilsonville, and less of decline for Troutdale, Wilsonville's comparable.

Committee members wondered how to track data for VRBO and AirBnB lodging. Trev Naranche noted that STR reports show data only for participating properties.

Samara Phelps noted that the Demand and Tax Collections metrics are the most important ones. She also noted that unusual events, such as Eclipse or summer wildfire smoke, can impact STR reports.

Members suggested that Explore Wilsonville should emphasize the convenience of Wilsonville lodging—proximity to metro area and wine/bike country, free parking—rather than the room rate.

Members wondered about developing a comprehensive benchmarking lodging report with metrics that includes all lodging tax activity, including transient lodging tax collections.

4. Adjourn

The meeting ended at 12:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Mark Ottenad on October 9, 2018.