

# Wilsonville Tourism Promotion Committee

## MEETING AGENDA

May 17, 2016 • 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Willamette River Room  
Second Floor, Wilsonville City Hall

### VOTING MEMBERS

**Jeff Brown, Chair**  
General Manager,  
Holiday Inn  
Wilsonville

**Darren Harmon**  
General Manager,  
Family Fun Center

**Al Levit, Vice Chair**  
Bike Club  
Coordinator;  
Wilsonville Planning  
Commissioner

**Kathleen Mason**  
Community Relations  
Manager, Aurora  
Colony Historical  
Society

**David Stead**  
General Manager,  
Langdon Farms Golf  
Club

**Elaine Swyt**  
Principal,  
Mediaphysics;  
Wilsonville Parks &  
Recreation Advisory  
Board Chair

**David Stead**  
General Manager,  
Langdon Farms Golf  
Club

### ADVISORY / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

**City of Wilsonville**  
City Councilor  
Charlotte Lehan,  
Council Liaison  
Stan Sherer, Parks &  
Recreation Director  
Brian Stevenson,  
Parks & Recreation  
Coordinator  
(designee)

**Clackamas County  
Tourism & Cultural  
Affairs (TCA)**  
Danielle Cowan,  
Director  
Jim Austin,  
Community  
Relations Lead  
(designee)

**Washington County  
Visitors Association  
(WCVA)**  
Carolyn McCormick,  
President/CEO

**Wilsonville Area  
Chamber of  
Commerce**  
Kevin O'Malley, CEO

### STAFF

City of Wilsonville  
Mark Ottenad,  
Public/Government  
Affairs Director

- 1. Call to Order; Welcome & Introductions** **1:00**
  - Jeff Brown, Chair
  
- 2. Organizational Matters** **1:05**
  - Re-cap of last meeting — review meeting notes of April 4 \*
  - Committee appointments: Re-scheduled to Monday, June 20, City Council meeting
    - Kathleen Mason – Position #1: 7/1/16 – 6/30/19
    - Elaine Swyt – Position #2: 7/1/16 – 6/30/19
    - \_\_\_\_\_ (vacant) – Position #7: ending 6/30/18
  - Next Committee meeting: When?
  - Photograph of Committee Members for Annual Report
  
- 3. Tourism Action/Implementation Plan at City Council** **1:20**
  - Report on City Council Adoption on April 18 \*
  
- 4. Updates and Reports** **1:40**
  - Website prototype
  - Oregon Tourism Conference
  - How to advance Tourism Plan action items of greatest priority
  - Other matters

\* indicates relevant material in meeting packet

# Wilsonville Tourism Promotion Committee

## MEETING NOTES

**April 5, 2016 • 3:30 pm – 4:45 pm**

Arrowhead Creek Room, Second Floor  
Wilsonville City Hall

### 1. Call to Order; Add New May Committee Meeting Date

**Voting members attending:** Jeff Brown, Chair; Al Levit, Vice Chair; Darren Harmon; Kathleen Mason; and Elaine Swyt. **Excused:** David Stead.

**Ex-officio and guests:** Lynette Hansen, Carolyn McCormick, Kevin O'Malley, Mark Ottenad, Suzy Sivyer, and Brian Stevenson.

The committee proceeded to meet, and modified the order of agenda.

Committee members requested that the committee meet again in May to hear about the City Council adoption of the Plan on April 18, and discuss any progress made to date by staff on the action/implementation items. Ottenad said that he would conduct a Doodle poll of the committee to find a date for a May meeting.

### 2. Tourism Website Page Mock-up Review, Other Discussion

Elaine Swyt, Online/Marketing Subcommittee Chair, presented the tourism website prototype mock-up. Committee members were most impressed at the elegant look and feel of the prototype and liked the kinds of content categories and images chosen.

Elaine Swyt reviewed with the committee the use of Trip Advisory dining and lodging listings. She noted that various images and videos could be incorporated into the website based on subject matter, time of year, and other factors.

Committee members indicated that they anxious to meet again and to get moving on the specific 'to-do' items in the Tourism Action/Implementation Plan scheduled for City Council adoption on April 18. Mark Ottenad indicated that Council adoption was technically needed before staff commenced action, but that staff nonetheless were looking into the various matters; however, he also said that staff were under impression that, since the Committee did not want to meet during the busy tourism season of May through September, staff had the entire Summer to research the various action items and report back to the Committee in the Fall.

A number of committee members complained that they did not understand why there would be a delay and staff could not get working on the items right away, and for example have the website ready to launch soon – especially given the spectacular and functional-appearing prototype website presented today. Brian Stevenson noted that a number of departments, such as Park & Recreation, are also most busy in the lead-up to and during the summer months, and that the tourism duties are being added to the current roster of ongoing work and duties already assigned to staff.

Ottenad noted that the tourism website presented a number of issues for consideration, especially by government that has more constraints than a private-sector organization would have imposed. Ottenad said that a number of management and operational issues were posed by adding yet another non-integrated tourism website to the City's existing five non-integrated websites; and that issues around paid advertising, how to manage directory listings or what (if any) vendor's listings and reviews to use,

how to obtain and update content, and other issues needed serious consideration. Ottenad indicated that he hoped to find a tourism website vendor that had already addressed these issues and had a robust content management system that would allow the City faster deployment.

Ottenad noted that the City's current website vendor said that it offered a tourism website product, but that the other City websites hosted by vendor would not be integrated with a tourism website, and thereby require additional time and resources for duplicative postings of content. Ottenad said that the current website vendor had never followed-up on the current roster of problems with the City websites and never followed-up with him on the tourism website product that vendor offered. Therefore, Ottenad was dubious that the current vendor was a good one to consider, which then would imply that a tourism website would not be integrated with current City websites; Ottenad indicated that City might need to acquire custom programming to take existing City website RSS feeds that could be then integrated into tourism website, especially for event listings.

### **3. Organizational Matters**

Committee members reviewed and approved the meeting notes of March 1 without amendment.

Ottenad reviewed the Committee appointments by Council that are scheduled for June 6, noting that the following positions were set for appointment/re-appointment: Kathleen Mason – Position #1, 7/1/16 – 6/30/19; Elaine Swyt – Position #2, 7/1/16 – 6/30/19; and vacant – Position #7, ending 6/30/18, that Lynette Hansen indicated an interest in.

### **4. Tourism Plan at City Council**

The Committee reviewed the April 4 presentation and discussion at City Council Work and discussed Council about recommendations of Draft Tourism Plan. Members thought that City Council was generally supportive of the Draft plan, and sought to advance.

Ottenad said that City Council Adoption of final revised Plan was scheduled for Mon, April 18, 8 pm (approximate timeframe). Chair Brown said that he would not be able to attend and had arranged for Vice Chair Levitt to present the Plan with staff.

Chair Brown and members discussed that as various action items become clearer, that the committee could consider recommending to bond a large portion of City transient lodging tax for a year-round sports and entertainment facility.

### **5. Tourism Grant Programs Updates**

Brian Stevenson gave an update on the results of City "Community Tourism Grant Program" grant awards by Parks & Recreation Advisory Board on March 12. Grant awards totaling \$24,995 were approved:

- Wilsonville Celebration Days for the Fun in the Park festival: \$9,165
- Wilsonville Arts & Culture Council for the Wilsonville Festival of Arts: \$5,665
- Wilsonville Rotary Club for the Summer Concert Series: \$5,000
- Wilsonville Kiwanis Club for the Kids Fun Run: \$5,165

Committee adjourned at about 4:45 pm.

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**APRIL 18, 2016, CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

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A regular meeting of the Wilsonville City Council was held at the Wilsonville City Hall beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 18, 2016. Mayor Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., followed by roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following City Council members were present:

Mayor Knapp  
Councilor Starr  
Councilor Fitzgerald  
Councilor Stevens  
Councilor Lehan

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **B. Wilsonville Tourism Development Strategy Five-Year Action Plan and Annual One-Year Implementation Plan (staff – Ottenad)**

Mr. Ottenad prepared the staff report. He introduced Al Levitt, who serves as vice chair of the Tourism Promotion Committee.

The City Council adopted Resolution No. 2541 in June 2015, to create the new 12-member Tourism Promotion Committee composed of seven (7) voting members drawn from the area hospitality and tourism industry and five (5) ex-officio members who provide expertise, advice and assistance to the committee.

One of the tasks that the City Council requested of the committee through Resolution No. 2541 was the creation of a Five-Year Action Plan and Annual One-Year Implementation Plan (“Plan”) that is to be updated annually. The Plan is to describe the actions needed over the next one to five years to implement the “Visit Wilsonville” Tourism Development Strategy adopted by Council in May 2014.

On April 4, 2016, Tourism Promotion Committee Chair Jeff Brown, General Manager of Holiday Inn Wilsonville, and Vice Chair Al Levitt, a Bike Club Coordinator and Wilsonville Planning Commissioner, appeared on behalf of the committee at City Council Work Session to review the Plan with City Council. Committee members understood that City Council was generally supportive of the Draft Plan as presented.

The Plan reviews the work results to date and specifically makes a set of recommendations to be executed starting this year and through Year 2, 2016-17, that seek to implement the longer-range, five-year components of the larger Tourism Development Strategy.

The one-year implementation plan seeks to advance the top priorities of the larger five-year action plan. The first-year work plan is segmented into three main sections:

- 1. Organizational Framework / Staffing Resource:** The committee seeks to have a dedicated human resource as staff or contractor for tourism development and promotion in order to advance the Strategy and the implementation/action plan.

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The committee also intends to assume responsibility for overseeing the tourism grant programs in Fall 2016.

- 2. Online / Marketing:** The Committee seeks to have the staff or contractor focus on online/Internet website products and processes as a primary task that the Strategy identified as a top priority and the committee strongly supports.

Creating an authoritative website for Wilsonville tourism was one of the top recommendations of the Tourism Strategy. Such an online product can also complement City efforts to advance business recruitment and to welcome new residents.

- 3. Study Efforts for City to Advance Tourism Development:** The committee makes four specific recommendations to the City Council for study efforts to advance tourism:

- Visitor profile study.
- Feasibility study for an all-weather/indoor, multi-purpose playing fields facility for sports tournaments and other recreational/entertainment purposes.
- Destination marketing strategy plan.
- Hotel/conference center study as part of Town Center Master Plan redevelopment project.

The longer-range five-year plan shows an increasing workload and level of activity, progressing towards the launch of the recommended nonprofit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) to be named “Visit Wilsonville.” In the meanwhile, the City’s Park & Recreation Department will be doing business as “Visit Wilsonville,” a label that is reserved as both an assumed business name and dot-com website.

Adoption of the Plan satisfies a requirement of Resolution No. 2541 (2015) to advance the Wilsonville Tourism Development Strategy adopted by the City Council in May 2014.

In essence, City Council adoption of the Plan provides a road-map forward to develop action plans to advance components of the Tourism Strategy. Staff will look in detail at the Plan recommendations to develop specific plans, timelines and cost estimates for further review by the committee and City Council as may be needed to advance projects. For example, some of the studies recommended by the Plan need further clarification and research in order to have an accurate sense of a scope of work and potential budget.

A total of \$125,000 was budgeted for tourism promotion in FY2015-16, in addition to \$25,000 for the Community Tourism Grant Program. The City has supported the work of the Committee to-date through existing general fund staff in the City Manager’s Office and Parks & Recreation Department.

Meetings and materials of the Tourism Promotion Committee have been posted timely online at the City’s website, which uses “e-notifier” function to notify interested members of the public who are subscribed to the Tourism Promotion Committee distribution list.

Mr. Levitt indicated the Tourism Promotion Committee formed two subcommittees whose work focused on Organizational Structure and Marketing and Web Priorities.

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The Committee assessed the priorities developed by the Wilsonville Tourism Strategy adopted by the Council in 2014, and started work on a one-year implementation plan. Top priorities include:

- Obtain a professional in the tourism development field well versed in the subject matter and who should be able to advance programs with minimal Committee oversight. This would either be a staffer in the Parks and Recreation Department, or an independent contractor reporting to the Parks and Recreation Department Director. Mr. Sherer is willing to use existing staff resources until capacity is exceeded or until a dedicated person is obtained.
- The Committee has evaluated the need for online marketing and a tourism specific website. Recently a mockup of a website has been developed for Committee member comments; however this website is not “live”.
- Agreement was reached on a five-year action plan, which will progress steadily on several fronts:
  - Moving dedicated staff person to full time.
  - Committee will assume responsibility for the tourism grant programs, including evaluation of results and increasing attendance of people from further than 50 miles, a requirement for the use of the TLT.
  - Continue establishing an internet website and social media presence.
  - Recommend to Council in the third year that a nonprofit DMO titled “Visit Wilsonville” be formed and implemented during the following two years.
- Funding will come from the Transit Lodging Tax, 44% has been used for tourism and related visitor services over the past ten years, and in the next five years it is projected to be 50% of revenue. If additional revenue is needed Council should consider dedicating a larger portion of the TLT to the Committee’s work.

The Committee is requesting four major studies to be funded from the TLT:

- Visitor Profile study to provide a bench mark, and learn what attracts people to Wilsonville now.
- Feasibility study for an all-weather/indoor, multi-purpose playing field facility for sports tournaments and other recreational/entertainment purposes to attract visitors during the shoulder seasons.
- Destination marketing strategy plan.
- Hotel/conference center study as part of the Town Center Master Plan redevelopment project.

The Committee encouraged the Council to continue with the current with existing tourism programs.

Mr. Ottenad added the Planning Division is looking at the scope of the Town Center Redevelopment Plan, and that a hotel/conference center could be part of that. They believe a more detailed study may be needed specifically on the market demand, since the redevelopment plan will focus on the Town Center and potential uses, but not the market demand for a new hotel.

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Councilor Starr asked what the tourism website would cost.

Mr. Ottenad did not know, the Committee was hoping for direction from the Council to go forward to look at those items, which is what staff and the Committee members will be doing – determining what the costs are for the website and studies. Council approval will provide an outline of action for the Committee; any recommendations would be brought back to Council for consideration.

Councilor Lehan was impressed with the work of the Committee, and the prototype of the website. She mentioned the website was another interface with the arts and cultural events.

Councilor Stevens asked how success would be measured.

Mr. Levitt stated the surveys would provide that baseline information with the initial survey, and build data over time to see trends.

Mr. Ottenad felt a professional consultant who has access to aggregated data from both counties would be beneficial. The Committee was not clear if the clientele at the Holiday Inn was totally representative of all the visitors to Wilsonville, so there was a desire to have something that dug deeper at the visitor profile.

Mayor Knapp understood the recommendation from the Committee is contained in the packet for both the one-year implementation and the five-year strategic plan adopting the recommendation would enable that Committee to go forward with some concrete work, but does not end Council's engagement with the Committee.

**Motion:** Councilor Lehan moved to adopt the development strategy for the five year action plan and one year implementation plan of the Wilsonville Tourism Development Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgerald.

Councilor Starr was uncomfortable with several undefined factors, and felt strongly the position should not be a City staff position; rather it should be a consultant position with that particular expertise. The Councilor was also concerned about the cost of designing and maintaining a website. He thought the profile study was not as important as the feasibility study. Councilor Starr thought destination marketing strategy will provide what was needed in the future versus what was in place now.

Mr. Cosgrove explained if the Committee moved to a DMO model, the staffer would not be a City position; but right now, with the existing work load, the work could be managed with existing staff. He assured the Councilor that Council's opinion would be sought on expenditures, and any hand off to a DMO if one is created.

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The Mayor pointed out these efforts are being funded by the hotel-motel tax collected with the rationale to promote the area enticing more people to come to stay in those same facilities, and we have an obligation to expend those funds in a way that is related to their original intent.

Councilor Starr agreed, but asked why one would spend money now when the hotels are full. He was interested in the destination marketing strategy and creating opportunity to maximize and build upon what is in place.

Councilor Fitzgerald was impressed with the amount of time spent and the level of commitment of the Committee. She felt the study was a good way to find out why people were traveling to Wilsonville and how to attract more and build on that, but until we can find ways to maximize the occupancy year round, reinvestments and expansion of the hotels would not occur.

**Vote:** Motion carried 5-0.