



Oregon Tourism Commission

December 8, 2015

Inn at the Commons
Siskiyou Room

Commissioner Hughson calls the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

Commissioners present include: Alana Hughson, Don Anway, Nigel Francisco, Kenji Sugahara, Ryan Snyder, Scott Youngblood, Kara Wilson Anglin and Karen Utz via teleconference.

Staff present include: Todd Davidson, Scott West, Jeff Hampton, Kevin Wright, Katy Clair, Amy Walker, Mo Sherifdeen, Michael Sturdevant, Emily Forsha, Judiaann Woo, Elena Vizinni, Greg Eckhart, Harry Dalgaard, Petra Hackworth, Carole Astley, Kristin Dahl, Jenny Hill and Sarah Watson.

Local Welcome: Medford Mayor Gary Wheeler welcomes the Commission to Medford and thanks them for giving their time to serve the State of Oregon. Mayor Wheeler also thanks Anne Jenkins of Travel Medford for her work in the travel and tourism industry and discusses the vast construction that is currently happening in Medford including new and expanding businesses. Anne Jenkins welcomes the Commission and thanks them for coming to Medford and shows a short video regarding tourism in Medford.

Commission Business: Commissioner Hughson asks the Commission if they've had a chance to review their packets which includes the current financials. Commissioners confirm that they have received and reviewed the packet and financials. Commissioner Sugahara asks why some of the budget numbers are coming in low regarding Global Sales and Marketing. Todd explains that it is a timing issue due to the majority of those expenses happening in later in the spring. Commissioner Snyder asks about the Immediate Opportunity Fund (IOF) and if there is a dollar amount that we try to keep that amount to. Todd explains that if there is surplus revenue at the end of the biennium, the Commission has allocated some or all of that into that fund for immediate opportunities should they arise. Commissioner Snyder asks what amount was put into that this year. Todd states that no new appropriations have been added this biennium - the current balance is from money appropriated from last spring.

Commission Action: Commissioner Hughson asks if the Commissioners have had a chance to review the September 29, 2015 meeting minutes. Commissioners confirm they have received and reviewed the minutes. Commissioner Sugahara moves to adopt the

September 29, 2015 Commission minutes. Commissioner Anway seconds motion. Minutes are unanimously adopted.

Governor's Mission Update: Todd discusses the Governor's October Trade Mission to Asia. Todd states that Governor Brown is very engaged and very much appreciates the work of the Oregon Tourism Commission and what the tourism industry provides to the Oregon economy. Governor Brown's understanding of the relationships to our tourism partners and potential visitors is immense and she is very grateful of the work of all Oregonians who work in the tourism industry and welcome visitors daily.

Legislative Update: Todd discusses what is happening at the federal level regarding the travel and tourism industry: 1) FAST Act which is a long-term transportation funding plan; 2) National Travel and Transportation Infrastructure Plan, 3) State and municipal transportation planners must consult with Travel & Tourism industry on priorities. Discusses Sen. Wyden's summer tour to visit Oregon's 7 Wonders. From that tour the Senator has been pulling together ideas to incorporate into a recreation bill to help facilitate permits and access to public lands. Congress has been reviewing policies on immigration and the current Visa Waiver Program. The national travel and tourism industry is working with Congress to make sure that any changes made to the Visa Waiver Program – including changing the name to the Secure Travel Partnership Program – are being made to ensure safety.

Commissioner Sugahara asks about how long changes to the Visa Waiver Program might take. Todd explains that the bills to enhance the Visa Waiver Program have been introduced and now we are just waiting on the Congressional process.

Scott West discusses the upcoming 2016 short Legislative Session and several issues that may come up including: minimum wage.

Jason Brandt, Executive Director of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association discusses the minimum wage issue and that from an industry perspective the association has been engaging in those discussions to ensure and help Oregonians to get out of poverty.

Commissioner Snyder asks if the tip credit conversation is a two-way conversation.

Jason discusses that tip-credit conversations are happening with the legislature to inform them on the issue and why it's important the restaurant association.

Scott continues discussing potential issues that may arise during the legislative session: rent control, skier liability, value added tax.

Jason explains that ORLA is actively engaged in opposing the value added tax measure while keeping the conversation open to how to best support Oregon.

Todd discusses a legislative concept that is being referred to as Tourism 2.0.

Jason Brandt discusses the Tourism 2.0 concept to enhance and protect the transient lodging tax and how because of Governor Brown's work - Eugene got the bid for the World Track Championships for 2021 which is a win for Oregon as a whole. Discusses the importance of keeping ORLA partners and regional tourism partners engaged in the conversation for how the increased money would be spent if the 1% tax increase happens.

Scott explains that Travel Oregon has been waiting to hear the final word from the Governor's office on how the bill would proceed before making any decisions or engaging in too many external conversations.

Commissioner Hughson asks about the timeline of the regional meetings around the state.

Jason Brandt discusses that some meetings are currently scheduled for early January and that due to the concerns heard at a meeting yesterday, earlier listening session meetings will be scheduled. This conversation is not only about Eugene. These funds could not be used for any infrastructure needs that Eugene may have in order to hold this event, but to enhance leisure travel for those who visit all parts of Oregon.

Commissioner Wilson Anglin asks if one of those meetings will happen in Eastern Oregon.

Jason explains that he'd be happy to make a meeting in Eastern Oregon happen.

Commissioner Hughson thanks Scott and Jason for helping explain the issues around the potential legislative concept. We are happy to have Tracktown and what the possibilities are for this 2021 event, and know that Travel Oregon will continue its work selling the state first, and not just one specific location.

Commissioner Youngblood asks if during those meetings, people are actually listening and willing to engage in the lodging tax conversation.

Jason explains that while only one meeting has happened, it seems that just hearing about a tax increase has people fairly skeptical of what might happen, but that he is trying to turn that conversation into an "investment" dialogue on how it would make Oregon better as a whole.

Commissioner Hughson recesses the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Commissioner Hughson reconvenes the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Siskiyou Welcome Center update: Todd Davidson introduces Art Anderson of Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Jeff Hampton who have been working on the Siskiyou Welcome Center. Jeff Hampton discusses the work between Travel Oregon and ODOT for the last several years to ensure this project moves forward in the best way

possible to welcome visitors to Oregon. Art provides the Commission with a Powerpoint regarding the Siskiyou Safety Rest Area and Welcome Center.

Commissioner Youngblood asks about the Welcome Center rendering and why the state map in the middle of the courtyard is angled.

Art states that he's not sure but will find out.

Commissioner Sugahara asks who will manage the facility.

Art states that it will be managed by ODOT and Travel Oregon for the time being but could change during the next long legislative session.

Jeff explains that the Welcome Center was purposefully planned to be bigger than normal to have the opportunity for coffee service and potential maintenance service as well.

Todd thanks Art for all of his work on the Welcome Center and all the collaboration he's engaged Travel Oregon in moving forward on many other issues.

Asia Update: Greg Eckhart and Commissioner Sugahara provide the Commission with a Powerpoint regarding the Asia market and a recent JATA mission that Commissioner Sugahara participated in.

Commissioner Sugahara discusses how valuable it was to attend JATA to be involved in tourism promotion in Japan.

Greg continues with Asia Powerpoint presentation.

Advertising Update: Katy Clair and Michael Sturdevant provide the Commission with a Powerpoint regarding the current Wintercation campaign.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if the sweepstakes is open to people from outside the U.S.

Katy explains that Travel Oregon is working with our Attorney General to make sure the sweeps are open to all Canadians except Quebec because of the translation issue.

Kevin Wright provides the Commission with a Powerpoint revealing Travel Oregon's new Brand Campaign.

Commissioner Anglin Wilson asks when industry toolkits might be available.

Kevin states that those will be available today and more assets will be pushed out when developed and ready.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if those assets have already been developed for international markets.

Kevin states that those assets are in development for specific markets based on the needs for those markets.

Commissioner Snyder states his appreciation for the team in not just resting on the success of the 7 Wonders campaign but to be innovative and move forward.

Other Business/Business-at-Large: Commissioner Snyder thanks Jason Brandt for the work the ORLA is doing to be the face of the industry as these tough issues move forward.

Chair Hughson adjourns the meeting at 11:56 a.m.