



Oregon Tourism Commission Briefing

February 6, 2017

Allison Inn & Spa
2525 Allison Lane
Newberg, OR 97132

Chair Hughson calls the Commission briefing to order at 1:09 p.m.

Commissioners present include: Alana Hughson, Ryan Snyder, Kara Wilson Anglin, Don Anway, Nigel Francisco, Scott Youngblood, Kenji Sugahara and Richard Boyles.

Staff Present include: Todd Davidson, Scott West, Jeff Hampton, Teresa O’Neill, Kristin Dahl, Kevin Wright, Harry Dalgaard, Michael Sturdevant, Kathleen Steward, Kendra Perry, Carole Astley, Jenny Hill and Sarah Watson.

Alana welcomes the Commission, staff and guests to the Allison and provides a summary for the day’s events.

Revenue Forecast

Todd Davidson provides the Commission with a PowerPoint showing a draft Revenue Forecast for 2017-2019 biennium and explains that the Commission will take formal action on the forecast at the Commission meeting on Feb. 7, 2017. This forecast allows staff to start building the ’17-19 budget for our ’17-19 Strategic Plan which will both be formally adopted at the June ’17 Commission meeting. The 2017-’19 Forecast we will be asking you to adopt is:

2017-18 (Forecast)	37,216,542	(+4.7%)
2018-19 (Forecast)	39,002,936	(+4.8%)
Total TLT 2017-19	76,219,478	

Chair Hughson asks if the national numbers were gathered prior to the election and inaugural.

Todd explains that yes, they were.

Commissioner Sugahara asks when the next set of numbers will be out.

Todd explains that we believe they come out quarterly, so March. Based on what we continue to hear or information we gather, you may receive a different forecast to consider and adopt at the June ’17 meeting.

Commissioner Youngblood states that Todd's numbers are very similar to what his organization is also seeing and forecasting.

Commissioner Francisco asks about the revision of 5.1% and asks what that was originally.

Todd states that it was 7% (adopted in spring of '15) and that in June '16 that number was confirmed. At this time the revision to 5.1% growth is preliminary and only being used to set a basis for planning the 2017-19 budget. No formal Commission action is needed to revise the 2015-17 budget at this time.

RCTP RFQ Application Presentations

Todd Davidson provides background on the RCTP RFQ process, how this briefing will proceed and that the order of presentations will be as follows:

- Travel Southern Oregon for Southern Oregon
- Eastern Oregon Visitor Association for Eastern Oregon
- Oregon State Extension Services for Eastern Oregon
- Willamette Valley Visitors Association for the Willamette Valley
- Oregon State Extension Services for Willamette Valley
- Central Oregon Visitors Association for Central Oregon
- Travel Portland for Greater Portland
- Blue Collar Agency for Mt. Hood/Gorge
- Mt. Hood Territory for Mt. Hood/Gorge
- Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce for Oregon Coast
- Oregon Coast Visitors Association for Oregon Coast

Chair Hughson states that as the CEO of Central Oregon Visitors Association which is an applicant for the Central Oregon region, she will be recusing herself from deliberation on that portion of the meeting and is turning the meeting over to Vice-Chair Snyder.

Commissioner Wilson Anglin states that as a volunteer board member of the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association, she will be recusing herself from deliberation on that portion of the meeting.

Southern Oregon

Travel Southern Oregon (TSO) provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Southern Oregon. Presenters include: Kerrie Walters (Travel Southern Oregon), Bob Hackett (Oregon Shakespeare Festival & TSO Board) and Dani Raines (Seven Feathers Casino & TSO Board).

Commissioner Youngblood asks about the timeline for getting a new Executive director hired.

Ms. Raines states that they'd like to have the new Executive Director hired by May 1, 2017.

Eastern Oregon

Eastern Oregon Visitors Association (EOVA) provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Eastern Oregon. Presenter: Alice Trindle of Eastern Oregon Visitors Association.

Commissioner Francisco asks what EOVA's biggest challenges will be going forward.

Alice states that balancing the needs of product development and coupling that with finances to be able to hold individual suppliers and be able to market that on the region's behalf. Coming through the RCTP process they've realized it is now individual product development help and being able to help the marketing that.

Commissioner Youngblood states that having sat through the presentations at the review committee, that Alice did a beautiful job.

Alice states that EOVA has been in conversation with OSU extension and that they are highly involved in the agritourism space for Eastern Oregon and that she sees a continued relationship happening with them moving forward.

Oregon State Extension Services provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Eastern Oregon. Presenters include: Lindsey Shirley, Eric Dunker, Jeff Sherman and Jon Paul Bowles.

Commissioner Boyles discusses his involvement with the extension services, asks how their move into tourism promotion would work.

Lindsey states that as the extension services has evolved, they realize that keeping and supporting the livelihood in rural and urban communities is important. There are other state extension services that have stepped into this realm and there is a strong approach to evaluate the work and gather feedback to the work we do.

Commissioner Sugahara states that the extension services provide a great support structure. What would you do differently that what EOVA does?

Jon Paul discusses destination development, destination management and business support.

Lindsey provides an example of how they could be supportive: discusses coastal counties that came forward asking for help high school graduation rate. Jeff states that with their access to students and faculty, they can provide internships back into those communities to provide those "back home" opportunities.

Commissioner Youngblood asks for an Open Campus example and how that could benefit a particular region.

Jeff states that the rural innovation partners will be meeting monthly to look at community opportunities for collaboration.

Commissioner Youngblood thanks the panel for their examples and thorough response.

Commissioner Anway asks how EOVA and OSU are already working together.

Alice discusses partnering with OSU on agritourism and rural business development grants. We brought national funds matched to local funds to hold workshops which has enabled hiring of professionals to do the work needed. OSU has been involved with eastern Oregon counties and we would hope that collaboration could continue moving forward.

Commissioner Sugahara asks about structure of EOVA, is it possible to bring on OSU as a contractor?

Alice states that it could be possible should they submit contractor proposal when that contract is available.

Commissioner Sugahara states that he really likes the holistic approach that OSU was able to present.

Willamette Valley

Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for the Willamette Valley. Presenters include: Jimmie Lucht (Albany Visitors Assoc.), Natalie Inouye (Travel Lane County), Irene Bernards (Travel Salem), Jeanine Breshears (Clackamas County), Mary Pat Parker (Visit Corvallis), and Becca Barnhart (Will. Valley Visitors Assoc.).

Commissioner Sugahara asks what their biggest challenges are.

Irene states that their biggest challenge is the amount of opportunities, and developing a larger staff to help with those opportunities.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if they would go through a reorganization should they be awarded.

Mary Pat confirms yes.

Commissioner Boyles asks how WVVA is partnering in the southern Willamette Valley.

Mary Pat states that they are working on a partnership with Enterprise for car rentals and the Eugene Airport and San Jose airport for wine opportunities.

Oregon State Extension Services provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Eastern Oregon. Presenters include: Lindsey Shirley, Eric Dunker, Jeff Sherman and Jon Paul Bowles.

Commissioner Boyles asks how OSU would see a transition working if they were selected.

Lindsey states that they have brought in a tourism expert to help.

Jon Paul states that would really look to destination management and use all the partnerships available to really carry out the work that needs to be done.

Commissioner Boyles states that if funding goes to OSU, that potentially others who currently receive funding might not participate – how would that work?

Lindsey provides example of Oregon's outdoor school - we manage and move funds to the correct implementer. Continuity is important, we don't want to take away, but continue efforts

Commissioner Sugahara states that it looks like you'd be forming a destination marketing committee – what would be the timeline?

Joh Paul states that those efforts would start alongside the implementation process.

Commissioner Boyles asks about the funding and how volunteers would be utilized.

Jeff states that they have over 13,000 trained volunteers in the state – we bring along human capital to train additional people to help. With OSU you get certain economies of scale.

Commissioner Boyles states that the infrastructure of most RDMO's relies heavily on volunteers, but that OSU would have a higher cost for infrastructure.

Joh Paul states part of OSU's infrastructure are the current extension employees spread throughout the state, which doesn't have to come out of an RDMO budget.

Eric states that we see this as a catalyst opportunity to align funds and rely on resources already in place.

Lindsey states that OSU's philosophy is to disseminate as much money to programs as possible and then adjust staffing as necessary based on those community needs.

Commissioner Youngblood thanks OSU for their transparency and modesty in the work that they do and how they could support the travel and tourism industry.

Commissioner Boyles asks WVVA if OSU extension was selected, would you be able to co-exist in those efforts.

Irene states that WVVA is very collaborative in current efforts, and would be open to those conversations. Destination marketing is what WVVA does and we are laser focused in doing that. When WVVA comes together, those vast relationships are already in place and we are used to aligning and collaborating on marketing investments.

Todd states that the Commission will be taking a ten-minute break – recesses the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Todd reconvenes the meeting at 3:33 p.m.

Central Oregon

Central Oregon Visitors Association provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Central Oregon.

Presenter: Alana Hughson (Central Oregon Visitors Association).

Commissioner Sugahara states their application was outstanding and is representative of what an outstanding organization COVA is.

Commissioner Wilson Anglin asks what some of the key marketing areas are going to be for the coming year.

Alana states the key marketing areas of focus.

Greater Portland

Travel Portland provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Greater Portland. Presenters include: Bill Moser (Travel Portland), Jeff Miller (Travel Portland), Danielle Cowen (Oregon Mt. Hood Territory), and Megan Conway (Travel Portland).

Commissioner Hughson thanks Travel Portland for their collaborative efforts.

Mt. Hood/Gorge

Blue Collar Agency provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Mt. Hood/Gorge. Presenters include: Tom Lehman and John Mitchell of Blue Collar Agency.

Commissioner Sugahara states that being an RDMO is a big commitment, and it's not all marketing – it also takes DMO coordination and development. Do you have the staff capacity and why did you apply?

John states that their references in Mason County are spotless and they've worked hard to partner with community partners, local officials, and police on how to make their places special and unique. If we can do it there where we didn't know anything about it – we can do it for the area we live in.

Commissioner Youngblood states that OSU cited the Town Hall finding of the Oregon Tourism Commission – have you reviewed those findings?

Blue Collar states they have not reviewed those.

Commissioner Youngblood states that Hood Canal needs customers, what you find during those listening times is that you're in a region being loved to death. The proposal you are making is narrow in focus and it may best be used to approach the current RDMO in how you can help. There is a bit of naivety in your sense of what it might take to partner, develop and maintain this region.

John states that they realize there would be a lot of unknowns. Sometimes the best approach is a fresh one. We've worked hard to get into a project, get dirty and do what it needs to get it done. Gives Nike Golf product development example.

Commissioner Wilson Anglin asks to share about relationship in your region that you could use.

John states how and who they worked with to develop and create "Explore Hood River" which partners in knowing each other and each other's business. We are passionate and have a lot of relationships along the whole Gorge.

Mt. Hood Territory provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for Mt. Hood/Gorge. Presenters include: Jeanine Breshears (Clackamas Country Tourism) and Lizzie Keenan (Mt. Hood Territory staff).

Commissioner Wilson Anglin what were some of the developments from the recent Rural Tourism Studio, and how will you implement?

Jeanine discusses opportunities and challenges of how to utilize funds to collaborate with Washington in those efforts, continues discussing the Gorge Tourism Alliance. PR and messaging, content and international efforts were the largest efforts discussed.

Lizzie discusses partnering with the Columbia River Gorge Visitors Association to create one visitor guide, that includes the Washington side of the Gorge, rather than have multiple throughout the region.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if they have been working on the Towns to Trails project.

Lizzie states that, yes they have been working on that project and that they are excited to see how new partnerships, including with ODOT, can help mitigate transportation issues.

Commissioner Anway asks how often they are in the region.

Lizzie states that she is there multiple times a week (weather pending). Once a week or up the mountain and talking to partners in those communities multiple times a day.

Commissioner Youngblood talks about the unique set of needs in the Mt. Hood/Gorge region. What are those areas that are currently underserved?

Jeanine states that the two most underserved communities are The Dalles and Estacada. Most of the underserving is due to time and resource and transportation routes. She gives Fam/Media tour examples and states that it is hard to get people to those places due to time resources.

Commissioner Francisco asks where would you invest new dollars?

Jeanine states staffing, getting full-time position, PR and Communications and international efforts.

Oregon Coast

Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for the Oregon Coast. Presenters include: Lorna Davis and Courtney Rand (Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce).

Commissioner Sugahara asks what are some of the opportunities along the coast and how quickly could you scale your staff to meet the needs of being an RDMO?

Lorna provides example of small scale chef product to meet local needs. Also cites urban renewal projects and how to leverage those. Regarding staffing issues – states that they would likely use own resources.

Commissioner Wilson Anglin asks how the Chamber would work with and interact with whole coast.

Lorna states that they would develop advisory board to meet vast needs of coast.

Commissioner Youngblood states that there might be emotional resistance to what having the Newport Chamber representing the entire coast and what that might mean. How might you embrace and commit to working with those areas and gathering their trust?

Lorna states that they are confident in developing that trust as they have over the years in developing those relationships and meeting their needs.

Oregon Coast Visitors Association provides a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission regarding their application to be the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program designee for the Oregon Coast. Presenters include: Marcus Hinz (Oregon Coast Visitors Association) and Dave Lacey (South Coast Destination Coordinator). Dave reads letter of support by Donna Quinn of the Cannery Pier Hotel, for OCVA to remain the Oregon Coast RDMO.

Commissioner Francisco asks about the additional funding OCVA has been able to raise over the last several years.

Marcus discusses the new funding areas, video co-op, winter summit and the store are ready to be invested in. We are having discussions with communities/organizations regarding coastal positions. The strategic advisory board has realized that OCVA can reach a marketing level they can't achieve alone. States that there is about 100,000 of new money coming in this year.

Commissioner Sugahara asks for further explanation of Oregon Coast Trail.

Marcus discusses that the Oregon Coast Trail is about 380 miles. State Parks has asked OCVA to help partner and create MOU's to be able to utilize this hiking trail.

Dave states that fat tire biking would be a huge part of the trail. States that a grant has been submitted to help fix part of trail.

Marcus states that Oregon Coast trail will intersect with the Salmonberry Trail to allow someone to hike or bike from Portland all along the coast.

Commissioner Francisco asks what other positions would be created to help staff this effort.

Marcus discusses seeking every opportunity to leverage and co-fund positions. States need for North Coast destination manager, as well as Director of Communications and PR. It is very important to not have staff all in one location, but spread throughout and along the coast – that is what is creating regional trust.

Commissioner Youngblood asks if anyone performs an annual review and who does it.

Marcus states that his board of directors performs his review and implements any needs or changes.

Commissioner Youngblood asks what Marcus would describe as his areas of opportunity in his leadership.

Marcus states that it would be a challenge to grow and expand the network to implement the RCTP dollars. Some of the government processes are hard to figure out, as well as social media needs and strategic decisions.

Commissioner Youngblood asks Newport Chamber of Commerce in consideration of proposals for other regions that have multiple applicants – have you given any thoughts to how OSU could benefit the coast region?

Lorna states that they have considered and would need to look at opportunities available and how to implement those.

Marcus and OCVA have been discussing partnership opportunities specifically regarding co-funding staff positions and physical staff office locations.

Todd states that at tomorrow's meeting will be the time for deliberation and designation for the RCTP designees.

Commissioner Snyder thanks all the applicants and especially OSU for coming to the table and being a potential opportunity throughout the state for partnerships and collaborative efforts moving forward.

Todd thanks Harry for all his professionalism and hard work shepherding this process.

Todd reviews the Tuesday, Feb. 7th Commission meeting agenda.

Alana adjourns Commission briefing at 5:24 p.m.