



Oregon Tourism Commission Briefing

Feb. 12, 2018

Southwestern Oregon Community College
Krieger Community Room
96082 Lone Ranch Parkway
Brookings, OR

Vice-Chair Youngblood calls the Commission briefing to order at 1:06 p.m. Vice-Chair Youngblood welcomes the Commission, staff and guests to Brookings and provides a summary for the day's events.

Commissioners present include: Nigel Francisco, Scott Youngblood, Kenji Sugahara, Richard Boyles and Don Anway and Kara Wilson Anglin on the phone.

Staff Present include: Todd Davidson, Scott West, Jeff Hampton, Teresa O'Neill, Michelle Woodard, Kevin Wright, Sarah Watson, Jenny Hill, Harry Dalgaard, Kate Sappell, Scott Bricker, Petra Hackworth, Ladan Ghahramani and Lisa Itel.

Todd thanks Dave Lacey of the Oregon Coast Visitors Association (OCVA) for leading a group on a hike this morning through Samuel Boardman State Park and states that Dave will also be on hand to lead the Commission and staff on a tour of the fire impact area later this afternoon.

Tourism Commission Feb. 13th meeting agenda review

Todd Davidson reviews the Feb. 13th Commission meeting agenda and asks the Commissioners to stop him should they have any questions regarding specific agenda items.

Todd confirms that due to Chair Snyder's absence, the appointment of a nominating committee will be postponed to the April Commission meeting.

Global International Sales Development Workshop - Petra reviews the report that will be given tomorrow regarding international sales development workshop and what those events look like: gathering local DMO's and creating itineraries with Travel Oregon staff.

South Coast Wildfire Recovery update - Todd discusses the fire report that Travel Oregon is undertaking and that those results should be available later this spring.

Commissioner Francisco asks about the economic impact study and which fires will it cover.

Ladan explains the statewide fire survey that is being completed including surveying partners throughout the state which will show a breakdown by region and fire impact to those regions.

Todd states that Dean Runyan is doing the report and that the fire survey will look at the 13 major fires.

Grants Program Update – Jeff reviews pg. 36 & 37 of the Staff Report citing the program review asked for by the Commission regarding the grants program. Jeff cites that \$2.9M of \$3.14M have been awarded in this fiscal year and explains that the projected grants budget for 2018 is just under \$3.5M.

Teresa states that the staff point of view for the grants program is that all the grant cycles should be allowed to run their full cycle to ensure each are working as they should. Based on how the industry responds and how many grant applications are received –once that full cycle is completed, the Large grants can reopen again.

Jeff states that we are looking at combining the remaining \$250,000 medium grant funds available in this fiscal year to the \$500,000 available for medium grants for 2018 which would allow for \$750,000 to be awarded in 2018.

Todd states that when we opened the small grants we had \$200,000 set aside, but application requests received totaled \$1.9M, so we increased the small grants funding to \$400,000 to cover some of those needs. We have \$500,000 set aside for medium grants in 2018, but with the additional \$250,000 from last year, more medium grants will potentially be funded. Once the first round of small, medium and large grants have been awarded, we can then determine in the fall of 2018 what changes could or should be made to the grant program.

Commissioner Sugahara states that it is great to see the demand of grant needs.

Commissioner Boyles asks what the dollar range of the small grants were?

Michelle states that a significant portion went to the higher end of the request (\$20,000). In total, 29 small grants were awarded monies tallying \$400,000.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if the geographical base of the applicants was broad?

Michelle states that we received about 25 applications per region.

Teresa states that we've just completed findings to the RDMO's on key learnings and how we can support those grant applications being submitted.

Scott West states that a number of the regions are getting ready to launch their own grant programs as well – through their regional program.

Todd states that our grant program is unique in that we allow regions to use those RCTP dollars to do their own grant program.

Commissioner Boyles asks if the RDMO's grants are alignment with Travel Oregon?

Michelle states that yes, they all want to be in alignment with the Travel Oregon grant process and program. Michelle explains that each region may be going about the grant program slightly differently: variances between conventional grants and immediate investment opportunities.

Vice-Chair Youngblood states his gratitude for the work put into the grant review and those that lead the process through a complete cycle.

Global Marketing Update, Visitor Lifecycle Management – Kevin states that while they've been looking at this kind of program for a while, it is with relief that they weren't able to complete it earlier, allowing for focus on data and analytics, putting Travel Oregon ahead of the competition. Getting what information our customers want as they want it. Kevin reveals that the time on site – playing the game – is incredible. Travel Oregon cost is based on traffic to the site, but the conversion rate is good as well – so the balance is good.

Commissioner Sugahara asks when they'll be able to see the Spring campaign.

Kevin states that the creative is being built – but it's certainly not complete, so we decided to wait until you can see it in full. We will share it with the Commission when we can and explains that they will be sharing a preview with the RDMO's tomorrow to help them prep and see some of the assets to be used in alignment.

Commissioner Anway asks if we know the demographics of those playing the game.

We know the demographics of who we were going after, but I'm not certain if we can tell who is playing.

Commissioner Anway asks if we found any additional information about referring consumer to Expedia or having the ability to do our own reservations.

Kevin states that we have been talking internally of putting a booking widget on our site to allow that. We have reached out to ORLA to explore that idea.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if there be an activation in our Asian markets once the spring campaign is live.

Kevin states that we are looking into that – would likely be more of a fall activation. We are working with Wieden +Kennedy on a brief to see if we could make it work based on budget that could drive the Asian traveler to Oregon in the fall.

RTS Follow-up – Todd states that the report tomorrow will be from Alexa on the history of the Rural tourism studios and how it has grown from it's original inception.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if the RTS are working with OSU Extension.

Todd states that it will be covered tomorrow.

Scott W. states that we are doing some potential research with OSU on public perception.

Vice-Chair Youngblood reviews the afternoon and tomorrow's schedule.

Other Business

Vice-Chair Youngblood states that this section is for general discussion and he's intrigued by the Expedia conversation previously discussed today.

Commissioner Anway states that if someone is on Travel Oregon's website and wants to book a hotel – it directs them to Expedia, but wouldn't we prefer directing those consumers to Oregon hotel sites rather than have to book through an online travel agent (OTA).

Todd explains that Travel Oregon used to have a booking engine on TravelOregon.com but it didn't perform well.

Kevin states that it's a larger issue, one we are working with Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association on.

Scott West provides a legislative update including the status of HB 4120 which is still moving through the chambers.

Vice-Chair Youngblood closes the briefing at 2:10 p.m., Monday, February 12, 2018.