



Oregon Tourism Commission Meeting

Feb. 13, 2018

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

Vice-Chair Youngblood calls the Commission meeting to order at 9:03 a.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, Petra Hackworth, Alexa Carey, Bryan Mullaney, Sarah Watson, Jenny Hill, Harry Dalgaard, Kate Sappell, Scott Bricker, Allison George, Ladan Ghahramani and Lisa Itel.

Local Welcome

Gary Milliman, City Manager Brookings and Davey Lacey, Oregon Coast Visitors Association welcome the Commission to Brookings and shows several tourism videos promoting the southern Oregon coast. Gary discusses several tourism event and projects happening in Brookings: cites \$200,000 renovation project underway at Chetco Point given by a private citizen; cites Azalea Park improvement on sports field to attract more tournaments; discuss that the city just acquired the Salmon Run golf course after it was abandoned and that improvements have been made to the course as well as facilities to host events; Harris Beach State Park owns 58 acres on east side of Hwy 101 and an expansion of the park to improve that 58 acres is something the city is looking into with State Parks and Travel Oregon; forest service has proposed an increase in fees and the City Council has voted to propose a 2-year suspension on that fee increase.

Todd asks if the fee increase is statewide or just for the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

Gary Milliman states that it was for the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

Dave Lacey gives each Commissioner a Rogue River agate and discusses items of interest and important to Brookings and the southern Oregon coast: the 5 designated rivers in the Wild Rivers Coast area; discusses the "banana belt" part of the southern Oregon coast and that it tends to be 5-10 degrees warmer; discusses that there are people who are still trying to establish their own state of Jefferson; that the first week of August there will be first fat bike festival in Brookings; and that OCVA is also looking into the Humbug Mountain trail park gap so people will not need to walk on the highway anymore.

Public Comment

Sue Densmore states that the Oregon Caves Chateau did open for a short season, will be closing for about a year to do improvements to the Chateau, but the park and property will be open. Sue also discusses that the River Styx is the only wild & scenic underground river in the US National System.

Mark Gautreaux states that there doesn't seem to be many business owners, Chamber members or Port members attending today.

Commission Business

Vice-Chair Youngblood discusses the Commission packets and confirms that everyone has received their packets including the financials. In addition to receiving the current-year agency financials, we reviewed a draft of the independent CPA report on the 2015-17 biennium. This report, once finalized will be submitted to the Oregon Secretary of State's office by the CPA firm. Vice-Chair Youngblood is pleased to report that the independent review revealed no areas of material concern and assured us that financial controls and practices in place at Travel Oregon are excellent. Thanks Jeff Hampton for the work done on the financials and the clarity in which that information is presented to the Commission.

Commissioner Francisco states that accounting does a great job gathering data, communicating that to the Commission and that the budget forecast was right on and accurate.

Commission Action

Vice-Chair Youngblood confirms that everyone received the minutes from the last meeting. Commissioner Boyles moves to approve the December briefing and meeting minutes. Commissioner Sugahara seconds the motion. The December 4-5, 2017 Commission briefing and Commission meeting minutes are approved by unanimous consent.

Global International Sales Development Workshop

Petra Hackworth, VP of Global Sales provides the Commission with a PowerPoint on the International Sales Development Workshops that are commencing today on the south coast.

Julie Miller, Bandon Chamber of Commerce thanks the Commission for their investment on the south coast and provides the Commission with an update on those investments – 2 Rural Tourism Studios, a new scenic bikeway designation, and 11 miles of new bike trail. States that because of those investments and with the help of Travel Oregon international sales workshops they are now ready to welcome international visitors.

Commissioner Anway asks what the participation looks like for these workshops.

Petra states that there are about 10-15 people attending workshops in each area.

Julie states that for this area – that is actually a really good number.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if there are new maps available for the mountain bike trail?

Julie states that the maps aren't ready yet, but we do have a fat tire brochure available for the 4 established trails.

Commissioner Boyles asks what airport the sales team uses in creating these itineraries.

Petra states that it could be Medford or Portland airport, depending on the itineraries.

Commissioner Sugahara asks about bus tours in the area.

Petra states that there aren't many international bus tours.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if there is enough tourism infrastructure in place.

Petra states that there needs to be more hoteliers willing to work with the group market.

Julie states that Coos Bay and Gold Beach do a good job, but the other small towns need the education on working group business.

South Coast Wildfire Recovery Update

Todd thanks the Commission for being willing to move this meeting to Brookings at such a short notice. We felt it was important to support the south coast and see the impact of the fires first-hand. Thanks Dave Lacey for the hike and tour the day before.

Court Boice, Curry County Commissioner thanks Brad Niva for the work he and his team have done to promote southern Oregon. Commissioner Boice provides the Commission with a history of what the Rogue Valley has meant to his family, provides an update on the wildfire recovery efforts happening along the south coast and discusses the need for forest recovery and preservation.

Gary Milliman, City Manager of Brookings shows a map to the Commission of the summer '17 burn area around Brookings. Discusses the impacts of the fire to trails, streams and the amount of emergency responders that were needed to fight the fire. Discusses the economic impact the fire has had on local businesses and that the impacts have been especially significant to restaurants, hotels and guides. States that they have contracted for an economic impact analysis of the fire impact and are also looking at what mitigation options are available to help with the recovery. Discusses what it was like to sit down with police and fire chiefs to plan the evacuation of Brookings and what went into the process of creating that plan. There is a need to look at forestry practices so that communities don't have to deal with this kind of damage.

Todd thanks both Commissioner Boice and Gary for their time today and for providing the Commission with the realities of the impact of the fires.

Commissioner Sugahara states concerns on the sedimentation issue and asks if the county and city have looked at what preventative things can be done to help with that.

Gary states that the challenge is looking at the impact of the city water system. The dilemma being that the city and county have no jurisdiction to mitigate conditions on that river area, nor do we have the resources – it is a federal jurisdiction.

Commissioner Boice states that 80% of the Brookings watershed was affected by the fire. Under the stewardship contract system, the forest service has to give 25% back to the county. Our biggest concern is the impact to the rivers and fish because of the shade being depleted and the rise of river temperatures. Given the amount of dead timber that is there now has also accelerated the risk for potential new fires.

Vice-Chair Youngblood recesses the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

Vice-Chair Youngblood reconvenes the meeting at 10:36 a.m.

Grant Program Update

Teresa O'Neill, Vice-President of Global Strategic Partnerships and Michelle Woodard, Grants Manager provide the Commission with a PowerPoint of the Grant Program. Discussion of Wine Country License Plates matching grants as well as the medium and small grant programs. Michelle provides an update on the grant program outreach and workshops Travel Oregon is hosting to help local businesses develop, write and submit relevant grant applications. Provides a few success stories on grants that have been

funded by Travel Oregon – Visit McMinnville, Go West Delegation and international websites updates for regions.

Commissioner Sugahara asks about the small and medium grant timelines and how those timelines were decided.

Teresa states that it was simply a matter of setting a timeline that worked for staff and applicants. Assures the Commission that those timelines will be evaluated once a full grant cycle has been completed.

Commissioner Sugahara states his appreciation for having the medium grant roll over into the next cycle to allow for additional grants to be funded.

Commissioner Boyles asks what role grant writers played in the small and medium grant applications. Asks if a preference was given if a grant writer was used. States that he'd like to see dollars being given to those communities that need it, rather than giving it to those who use a grant writer.

Michelle states that most of all the large and small grants received were direct from communities, not from grant writers. Travel Oregon is holding workshops to help people gain skills to be competitive when submitting a grant as well as providing funding to people to use a grant writer.

Commissioner Boyles asks if the focus of the Governor's Conference grant workshop will be for professional grant writers.

Michelle state that is for anyone hoping to submit a grant application.

Kenji asks if there will be any improvements to the small grant process.

Michelle explains that modifications will be made for for-profit businesses submitting applications as well as including example timelines for people to review to help those applying for small grants.

Todd states that the other change that was made was to increase the small grant money available to \$400,000 to fund more grants.

Vice-Chair Youngblood states his appreciation for the work being done on outreach to regions and communities learning how to leverage the grant money available.

Global Marketing Update – Visitor Lifecycle Management

Kevin Wright, VP of Global Marketing and Bryan Mullaney, Manager of Insight & Planning provide the Commission with a PowerPoint of the Visitor Lifecycle Management (VLM) project and how establishing the Travel Oregon business

intelligence platform helped develop the VLM project. Bryan discusses the VLM development, hiring of a consultant, implementation timeline and next steps.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if the marketing emails will be in English only or will other languages be available.

Bryan states that this project will have multiple phases and while the first several stages will only be in English, we will be looking at other languages in the future.

Kevin states that once we better understand our visitors, we can then start focusing on their needs.

Vice-Chair Youngblood asks if there are other state DMO's working on this kind of visitor personalization.

Bryan states that Travel Oregon communicated through US Travel asking if others were developing this and no one seems to be. As far as a state platform, this is the first.

Todd confirms that having this level of personalization in the tourism space, Travel Oregon is the first to initiate.

Commissioner Boyles states concern about how well a customer can be understood and if too much personalization limits presenting other opportunities.

Bryan states that while there will be focused messaging – it is an underlying level of personalization. We have some learnings and we will learn more as it is implemented.

Commission discussion on the development of customization and how to send content that visitors "might" like based on their profiles rather than just what they've signed up to receive. More of a "In addition to," rather than "instead of."

Commissioner Sugahara asks about data sets and how those are limited.

Bryan discusses that they've reviewed those data sets and could look at those more in depth in the future.

Vice-Chair Youngblood asks what the hope of this work will bring in the future for functionality and results.

Bryan discusses that the hope is to send out personalized emails starting June '18.

Kevin states that long-term, it will be managing KPI's and implementing those goals based on customization.

Todd asks what the call to action is for our industry partners.

Bryan states that one of the most important things partners can do is make sure their listings are updated. Trainings for our partners are currently happening and Travel Oregon staff will continue to help our partners.

Commissioner Sugahara asks if there will be tools to have a personalized dynamic itinerary development.

Bryan states that we will be looking at all of those options as the work continues.

Rural Tourism Studios Follow-Up Results

Alexa Carey, Community Based Services Specialist introduces Joh-Paul Bowles, Interim Director of Travel Southern Oregon Coast, and provide the Commission with a PowerPoint reviewing the Rural Tourism Studios (RTS) projects currently happening, planned in the future and the follow-up being done in the communities to help implement the work that was developed.

Joh-Paul continues with PowerPoint and shares some of the results from the implementation of the RTS programs: creation of 2 new positions through OCVA, OSU Extension help and RARE placements; Wild Rivers Coast Farm Trail, Scenic Bikeway development; and visitor spending survey through investment by Wild Rivers Coast Alliance; creation of Travel Southern Oregon Coast.

Commissioner Sugahara asks about the Whiskey Run trail and if that will be turned into a longer trail system?

Joh-Paul states that because of the planning that has been done – a regional mountain biking trail plan has been developed – Whiskey Run is just the crown jewel of that plan. Cites another project that is under development which would allow taking a bike up on a jet boat and then single-track riding down the riverside.

Commissioner Sugahara asks about action team follow-up and what support Travel Oregon can provide when capacity or funding fails.

Alexa states that those problems do arise, but Travel Oregon continues communication and support where it can.

Commissioner Boyles asks how the 4 RARE positions were created and if that is a model for the state.

Alexa explains the 4 RARE positions and that those are based on regional needs.

Commissioner Boyles asks if more of these placements will be created.

Alexa states that yes, it is our hope that more of these positions can be created based on the effort and work started by the RARE placements, with the intention of getting a more permanent position in place.

Commissioner Sugahara asks how the AmeriCorps funding is done.

Alexa states that the federal funding can be difficult – but our RARE placements are placed with RCTP, local and TO funding, who are then regionally or locally supervised.

Governor's Conference Update

Carole Astley, Director of Industry Services provides the Commission with a PowerPoint previewing of the upcoming April 29-May 1, 2018 annual Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Todd thanks the commission for being willing to move locations and hold this meeting in Brookings.

Vice-Chair Youngblood adjourns the meeting at 11:52 a.m., Tuesday February 13, 2018.