



## **Oregon Tourism Commission Meeting**

**April 29, 2018**

**Riverhouse on the Deschutes**

**3075 N Hwy 97**

**Bend, OR 97703**

Chair Snyder calls the Commission meeting to order at 12:37 p.m. Chair Snyder welcomes the Commission, staff and guests to Bend and provides a summary for the meeting.

Commissioners present include: Ryan Snyder, Scott Youngblood, Don Anway, Richard Boyles, Alana Hughson, Al Munguia, Kara Wilson Anglin and Kenji Sugahara joins by phone.

Staff Present include: Todd Davidson, Sarah Watson, Jenny Hill, Scott West, Teresa O'Neill, Petra Hackworth, Greg Eckhart, Meredith Williams, Christina Tuchman, Stephanie Lewis, James Lowder, Lisa IteI, Lorna Davis, Staj Olson, Kevin Wright, Jeff Hampton, Kate Sappell, Harry Dalgaard.

### **Local Welcome**

Kevney Dugan of Visit Bend welcomes the Commission to Bend and discusses what's new and what's changing in Bend. Tourism in Bend is up 5% year to date and Deschutes county is up 9%. Increase in supply and healthy demand. Discusses challenges with fires and weather which effects TLT. Industry is so important to economic impact - 15% of jobs in region are due to travel and tourism. What's new – balancing growth from sustainability standpoint: launch of Bend Pledge, new Bend Visitors Guide, new website coming for Visit Bend, 5 new development projects – will increase amount of rooms by 10%. What's changing: the retirement of Alana Hughson. Thanks Alana for her service to Bend and Oregon and states how much she will be missed.

### **Public Comment**

Sue Densmore states that the Oregon Caves Chateau is open and that she'd welcome the Commission to come and take a tour either before or after the June Grants Pass Commission meeting.

### **Commission Business**

Chair Snyder discusses the Commission packets and confirms that everyone has received their packets including the financials.

Commissioners Youngblood thanks the staff for the financial update and states there were no concerns or questions regarding the current financials.

Chair Snyder states that every year the Commission completes a review of the performance of the Travel Oregon CEO. The process to inform that review includes seeking input from statewide stakeholders, tourism professionals, other agencies and of course, direct input from the Tourism Commissioners themselves. This is completed through an anonymous survey distributed and collected confidentially. Chair Snyder directs Travel Oregon VP of Operations to meet with he and Commissioner Youngblood to develop a timeline for the confidential survey, and begin outreach process for gathering information. Results will be provided to me and Vice-Chair Youngblood who will formally conduct the review on behalf of the Commission. In addition to being surveyed, individual conversations will happen with each Commissioner to discuss action on the review. This survey work and the final review will be completed no later than July 31, and the results of the CEO review will be included for report out at the September public Commission meeting.

### **Commission Action**

Chair Snyder confirms that everyone received the minutes from the last meeting. Chair Snyder thanks Vice-Chair Youngblood for stepping up and handling the meeting when he could not be there during the February Commission meeting.

Commissioner Boyles moves to approve the February 12 briefing and February 13 meeting minutes. Commissioner Munguia seconds the motion. The February 12-13, 2018 Commission briefing, and Commission meeting minutes are approved by unanimous consent.

Chair Snyder discusses the Nominating Committee stating that the purpose is to vet and put forth names of those Commissioners who are interested in serving as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Tourism Commission – a one-year term, with the ability to serve a total of two terms. Those serving as the Nominating Committee are ineligible to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair this term. Both Vice-Chair Youngblood and I will complete our first term at the end of June. I would like to ask Commissioner Hughson and Commissioner Boyles to serve as the Nominating Committee and put forth names at the June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting to be voted on by the full Commission.

### **Commission Action – Scenic Byway Approval**

Todd Davidson discusses a one-page document outlining the Oregon Scenic Byway Program. He discusses the importance of the Scenic Byway Program as it helps drive tourism to all 7 regions in a powerful way, stating it is a strong tool for our rural communities and it is successful for both our domestic and international travelers.

Todd introduces Pat Moran, Program Manager for Oregon's Scenic Byways Program with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Pat introduces Amanda Peets, ODOT Program, Transportation and Analyst who walks the Tourism Commission through a Powerpoint showing the 3 recommended Scenic Byways: McKenzie River, Mary's

Peak to Pacific, Tillamook Trees to Seas, and confirms that the Transportation Commission approved these byways at their April 19, 2018 meeting.

Natalie Inouye, Travel Lane County, provides background on the proposed McKenzie River scenic byway.

Phil Warnock, of the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, provides background on the proposed Mary's Peak to Pacific scenic byway.

Nan Devlin, of Visit Tillamook Coast, provides background on the proposed Trees to Seas scenic byway.

Pat confirms that the Oregon Scenic Byway advisory committee and the Transportation Commission have already approved these byways.

Chair Snyder asks if there are any questions or discussion regarding the three Scenic Byway designations.

Commissioner Hughson moves to approve the McKenzie River Scenic Byway, Mary's Peak to Pacific Scenic Byway, and the Tillamook Trees to Seas Scenic Byway. Commissioner Youngblood seconds the motion. The three Scenic Byway designations are approved by unanimous consent.

Todd provides additional background on the Oregon scenic byway program stating that it was created prior to the Federal Scenic Byway program – allowing for millions of dollars in funding to be provided and put toward the Oregon Scenic Byway program, as it was the first of its kind in the nation. Thanks Pat Moran for his years of service at ODOT and specifically to the Scenic Byway program and congratulates Pat on his retirement and provides him with a plaque to commemorate his service.

Pat thanks the Tourism Commission and Todd for the recognition stating that the partnership between ODOT and Travel Oregon is what has made the program work.

Chair Snyder recesses the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Chair Snyder reconvenes the meeting at 1:52 p.m.

### **Update from Governor Brown's Office**

Jason Lewis-Berry, Governor Brown's Jobs & Economy Policy Advisor thanks the Commission for the opportunity to be before the Commission today. Thanks the tourism industry for the work supporting Oregon's economy creating good, family-wage jobs. States that Governor Brown is sorry she isn't here in person. Two things that are talked about most in the Governor's office – kids and jobs; how to ensure kids are getting the education they need, and how to make sure this economy continues to grow and grows in those areas (rural) who might need it most.

Jason discusses the Future Ready Oregon Initiative that Governor discussed in her State of State address. Acknowledges that part of challenge is a tight labor market, companies still struggling to fill jobs and workforce development. Progress needs to be made on workforce development to match needs of employers today and jobs of future of Oregon. States that he has been traveling most of last year – visited 33 of 36 counties, noting equitable and inclusive economic development for both urban and rural communities. Discusses an analysis completed by State Economist Josh Lehner describing the

positive trend in Oregon's overall economy, but noting that in rural and some groups (minority), the gap is not closing in terms of jobs and wages.

States that Business Oregon just completed a strategic planning process identifying where they add the most value: rural development and more staff in those rural areas. Also looked at innovation to "grown your own" to support local innovators and entrepreneurs.

Discusses importance of international trade and that in October 2017 he attended a trade mission to Asia to help connect Oregon companies (manufacturing or food/bev) to markets abroad and to find foreign direct investment. States he will be going to Germany in June with Business Oregon and to China in May with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Discusses his work with Regional Solutions Team – an economic and community development program to help local areas advance their own economic and community development priorities. These teams are tasked to finding solutions and saying "yes" and are made of Governor coordinators and members from other state agencies including: Business Oregon, Oregon Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Land Conservation and Development, Dept. of Environmental Quality, and Dept. of Housing and Community Services.

Top priorities for the Governor include:

1. Wildfires – The Governor visited 3 fire areas and created wildfire recovery councils identifying biggest needs to help those communities recover; including providing an additional \$1.15M to help support wildfire recovery, which was administered during short legislative session;
2. Emergency preparedness – cites eclipse planning example;
3. Workforce Housing - to create initiative to find solutions to affordable housing, potentially using a public-private partnership model, which will be reported on during the 2019 Legislative session.

Commissioner Hughson thanks Jason for being here today and for their support for the Oregon State University Cascades campus.

Commissioner Youngblood thanks Jason for the work being done to help with workforce housing.

Jason thanks Commission Anway for his service and willingness to serve an additional term to the Tourism Commission and announces the Governor's intent to appoint Maria Ponzi to the Commission, filling the vacancy created when Alana Hughson completes her second full term.

### **International Visitation Statistics**

Petra Hackworth, VP of Global Sales at Travel Oregon welcomes Geoff Lacher of Tourism Economics provide the Commission with a Powerpoint update on Oregon's International Tourism Market.

Commissioner Hughson asks about the National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) numbers and asks how that is being perceived by the US government.

Geoff explains that NTTO has acknowledge that there are some number problems and that we are losing market share. The U.S. had a 2% growth in international travelers in 2017, whereas international traveler growth was up 6-7% in the rest of the world.

### **Global Marketing 2017/2018 Update**

Kevin Wright, VP of Global Marketing at Travel Oregon, provides the Commission with a Powerpoint update on the Winter and Spring '18 Marketing Campaign.

Commissioner Wilson Anglin congratulates the team for the new campaign.

Chair Snyder states that the numbers are astounding – excited to see what we do next.

### **Governor's Conference Update**

Carole Astley, Industry Services Manager at Travel Oregon provides the Commission with a Powerpoint preview of the 2018 Governor's Conference on Tourism.

### **Other Business**

Chair Snyder provides Commissioner Hughson with a picture of Central Oregon in recognition of her service to the Oregon Tourism Commission 2010-2018 and serving as chair in 2015-2016.

Commissioner Hughson states what an honor and privilege it has been to serve and thanks the Commission and Travel Oregon staff for the work that goes into welcoming the world to Oregon.

Chair Snyder adjourns the meeting at 3:09 p.m.