

Oregon Tourism Commission Meeting June 15, 2022

The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts
868 High St.
Eugene, OR 97401

Broadcasted via YouTube Live

Tourism Commissioners present included: Scott Youngblood, Erin Stephenson, Mia Sheppard, Lucinda DiNovo, Greg Willitts, Richard Boyles and David Penilton joining via Zoom.

Chair Youngblood calls the Commission meeting to order at 9:00 am and notes that the in person and virtual public meeting is in accordance with state public meeting requirements. He states that there is a sign-up sheet in the back of the room for public comments.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Youngblood asks each Commissioner to introduce themselves and introduces Travel Oregon CEO, Todd Davidson.

Chair Youngblood acknowledges that Commissioner Don Anway and Maria Ponzi are unable to make today's meeting due to commitments but that they have received and reviewed the meeting materials and will be informed of any decisions made.

Chair Remarks

Chair Youngblood acknowledges how great it is to be here in Eugene just days from the opening of the World Athletics Championships OR22. Yesterday, the Commission held a briefing and heard several reports regarding OR22 and the impacts it is having - and is expected to have - on our state. We are grateful for everyone who has poured their time and energy into this event and are excited to watch it unfold. This event brings not only economic development, security and prosperity to the people of Oregon, but also brings a sense of Oregon's magic and possibility to people visiting from around the US and the world, and to those witnessing a glimpse of Oregon on their televisions and tablets in more than 200 countries.

Local Welcome

Andy Vobora, Vice-President of Travel Lane County's Stakeholder Relations discusses the community's excitement for all the events coming to Eugene and Hayward Field. Andy also recognizes The Shedd Institute and their commitment to accessibility allowing and encouraging events in their facility that can't be held in other locations.

Dawnielle Tehama, Executive Director of the Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) provides the Commission with PowerPoint recognizing tribal lands and explaining that WVVA has taken a sustainability management stance over the region instead of a marketing stance. Dawnielle reviews past challenges for the region as well as recent successes including PR circulation and circulation for the last 6 months. Dawnielle states that in reviewing the PR results they have data to support where WVVA is making investments, drawing visitors to the Willamette Valley. Dawnielle also discusses a new program that is being launched to support the training of front-line workers with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and reviews WVVA's goals for 2022-2023. Dawnielle thanks Travel Oregon's work with the AmeriCorps Program as two of the RARE placements in the Willamette Valley turned into full-time employment at WVVA. Dawnielle discusses highlighting outdoor recreation in the Willamette Valley including: creation of an adventure map, creation of the Willamette Water Trail which will include installing signs along the Willamette River, support shuttle services and an increase in cycling improvements in the region.

Commissioner Stephenson thanks Dawnielle for her presentation and as an AmeriCorps alumnus recognizes her efforts to utilize the RARE placements. Commissioner Stephenson also thanks Dawnielle's team for the work they are doing diversifying tourism assets in the Willamette Valley.

Commissioner DiNovo thanks the WVVA team for their thoughtful work on DEI.

Todd also thanks Dawnielle's team for the work they are doing in the regenerative tourism space as well as DEI space – stating how much the Travel Oregon team is learning from the WVVA team.

General Public Comment

On Friday, May 27, the Commission meeting notice and materials were posted on Travel Oregon's Industry website with instructions for public comment. No general public comments were submitted online and Chair Youngblood confirms that no one has signed up to provide in person general public comment today.

Commission Business

Chair Youngblood asks if everyone has received their Commission packets including Travel Oregon financials; Commissioners confirm they have. He thanks Vice Chair Boyles for reviewing the financials with Kathleen Stewart, Comptroller of Travel Oregon, Todd, Commissioner DiNovo and himself and asks Vice Chair Boyles to provide an update to the rest of the Commission.

Vice Chair Boyles notes that the most current financials FYTD were included in the Commission materials and have been posted to the industry site. States that the May deposit came in a little lower than expected but that it could just be a processing issue and should there be any additional funds, they will be deposited with the final accrual in July. We have received 80% of the budget, which when adjusting for the TLT rate

change – put us up 3% from the same time as FY20. With the most recent deposit, fiscal year-to-date transient lodging tax revenue is \$34.9M; this equates to 114% of our \$30.7M budget and 98% of the revised revenue forecast of \$35.6M. While we have received the final 2022 deposit, total FY2022 TLT revenue will include any revenue accrued by the Oregon Department of Revenue as they close their books in July. We are on pace with the Feb. revenue forecast and look forward to hearing the 21-23 biennial budget modification later this morning. Additionally, the SB 5561 – Outfitter Guides grant awards will be going out as soon as awardees have been notified (this week or next) and the last OR22 grant payment will go disbursed in July.

There are no questions.

Chair Youngblood asks if the Commission has reviewed the March 14, 2022, Commission meeting minutes and if there are any questions or comments.

Commissioner Stephenson moves to approve the March 14, 2022, Commission meeting minutes and Commissioner Boyles seconds the motion.

The motion to approve the February 15, 2022, Commission meeting minutes is unanimously approved and the minutes will be posted to the Commission section of the Travel Oregon Industry website.

Nominating Committee Recommendation

Chair Youngblood states that a nominating committee is appointed annually to submit recommendations for who should serve as the next Chair and Vice Chair of the Oregon Tourism Commission. As was stated during the March 14 Commission meeting, Commissioner Anway and himself were designated and served as the nominating committee. The process that brought us to our recommendation today involved reaching out to each member of the Commission and enquiring of their interest to serve in a leadership capacity, as well as discussions of the responsibilities and commitment required.

Serving on the Oregon Tourism Commission is, in itself, a tremendous honor. Serving in a leadership position and working closely with Travel Oregon staff to deeply understand the operations and business side of the agency is an additional honor, and certainly requires a significant personal commitment.

I am grateful that Commissioner Boyles and Commissioner DiNovo have agreed to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

Chair Youngblood ask if there is any discussion or questions.

Commissioner Penilton states that he is in full support of the recommendation.

Chair Youngblood states that if there is no further discussion, he will welcome a motion to approve Commissioner Boyles as Chair, and Commissioner DiNovo as Vice-Chair for 2022-2023, starting July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023.

Commissioner Stephenson moves to approve the recommendation and Commissioner Willitts seconds the motion.

The motion to approve Commissioner Boyles as Chair, and Commissioner DiNovo as Vice-Chair for 2022-2023 is unanimously approved.

Chair Youngblood congratulates incoming Chair Boyles and Vice Chair DiNovo and states his excitement for their leadership in the coming year.

CEO Evaluation Process

Chair Youngblood asks Vice Chair Boyles to review this year's CEO evaluation process.

Vice Chair Boyles states that the CEO review committee which includes Commissioners DiNovo, Chair Youngblood and himself supported by Travel Oregon's HR Manager have undertaken refinements to the CEO review process. Specifically, the process will move forward with separate surveys for the industry at large, Commissioners and Travel Oregon staff. The various surveys will include questions that better reflect the nature of the survey group's interaction and relationship with the CEO. Through these refinements we hope to make the surveys more relevant to the specific group receiving the survey and hope to increase both the number of surveys and the quality of information coming to the review committee.

We expect to have surveys out to industry members and Commissioners later this month and to Travel Oregon staff members in July. The balance of the process, including Commissioner interviews and review of Todd's self-evaluation will follow.

There are no questions.

Commissioner DiNovo thanks Vice Chair Boyles efforts in revising the CEO review process.

Proposed Budget Modification for 2021-2023 Biennium

Chair Youngblood asks Todd to review the proposed budget modification for the 2021-2023 biennium.

Todd thanks Chair Youngblood and walks the Commission through a PowerPoint presentation outlining the proposed budget modification for the 2021-2023 biennium that was sent to the Commission and posted to the industry website prior to this meeting.

Todd states that the total funds available for modifying the Travel Oregon budget for the 2021-2023 biennium for programs is \$8.8 million. This amount is already adjusted

for the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP) and the competitive grant program according to statute.

Todd states that the request today will be for funds on balance sheet FY 2021 and the funds available for revised revenue for FY 2022. No action is being recommended today regarding the revised revenue for FY 2023; that request will come before the Commission at the October 2022 meeting.

Todd outlines that the current 2021-2023 budget is \$64,2000,000.

The new budget with the proposed modification is \$69,100,000 / a delta of \$5.8 million; \$2.4 million from FY21 and \$3.4million from revised forecast for FY22.

All departmental fund balances will rollover to FY23, but no action is being requested to shift funds from one department to another. Todd walks the Commission through the departmental budget increases and what some of those new program dollars may be used to support.

Chair Youngblood asks if there are any questions.

Commissioner Willitts asks Todd to expand on the proposed workforce initiative.

Todd states that the program is being developed recognizing that nationally, the workforce pipeline is lacking and likely broken. The efforts would include alignment with other state agencies and educational institutions to develop workforce initiatives. Todd invites Jason Brandt, President & CEO of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association (ORLA) along with Teresa O'Neill, Vice President of Global Strategic Partnerships to discuss the workforce initiatives being developed across Oregon.

Jason Brandt states that indeed, the workforce system for the tourism and hospitality industry is broken. Jason discusses the kinds of programs being developed for community college and high schools identifying and promoting the variety of jobs available within the tourism and hospitality industry.

Teresa states her excitement to work with ORLA and the Oregon Hospitality Foundation board chair, Eric Aebi in developing this program. This work and program is also being done in alignment with the state of Oregon's Workforce Board which allows potential access to federal funding supporting the program to grow.

Todd states that research has shown that workers who start in the tourism industry, actually have increased earning power because of the skills developed working in this industry.

Commissioner Willitts states that the Oregon State University Cascades campus offers a 4-year degree in Sustainable Hospitality and that not many people in the tourism industry are aware of this program. States the getting word out about this program is really important to get more people passionate about the tourism industry.

Jason notes that not all young people will go to college so there needs to be emphasis on trades and workforce development outside of a 4-year degree.

Jason and Teresa discuss efforts in working with partners to understand what workforce resources already exist and then working to amplify awareness and promote those programs will be key.

Commissioners DiNovo and Stephenson thank Jason and Teresa for their passion to elevate Oregon's workforce and how important it is because without these workers, assets throughout the state may not be able to function due to workforce shortages.

Todd states that one aspect of Travel Oregon's 10-Year Strategic Visions is to have remarkable experiences. Without the properly trained workforce available, those tourism assets aren't enough to ensure the remarkable Oregon experience we want to provide. Todd states that this current proposed budget modification is in light of the 10-Year Strategic Vision and how to accomplish those things outlined in the vision.

Chair Youngblood states his appreciation to the Commission for how much they, as leaders in the tourism industry, take seriously the charge of asking hard questions on such a granular level around investment of resources. States that he was a non-college story and is grateful for the focus on workforce development, because it really matters. Chair Youngblood thanks Todd for his ability to provide a thread through budget information in a way that focuses on the good work that is happening and tying it to the strategies and objective laid out in the 10-Year Strategic Vision.

Commissioner Willitts asks that in comparing 2019 levels, what is Travel Oregon's workforce levels to carry out the amount of work ahead.

Todd states that roughly 30% of Travel Oregon's staff were laid off due to COVID impacts – taking staffing levels from 62 to 44. We are currently around 50 staff and have several recruitments pending. The resources has come back, Travel Oregon is currently running about 3% ahead of 2019 levels, but the resource lag is in staffing. The organizational design being considered is about people, processes and programs and once the 10-Year Strategic Vision is adopted, leadership can start looking at how to identify and prioritize strategies including adding potential staff. There are identified positions in the current budget modification and we expect additional positions being identified in future budget modifications.

Chair Youngblood states that on Friday, May 27, the Commission meeting notice regarding the potential budget modification was sent through our Industry Communications, and the meeting materials were posted. Ensuring that we had the most recent figures from the Oregon Dept. of Revenue informing this proposed modification, this past Friday, June 10, the proposed budget modification was posted to the Commission meetings page.

Chair Youngblood opens the public hearing on the proposed Travel Oregon budget modification for the 2021-2023 biennium. No written comments were submitted via the

online comment page and no one has signed up to provide comment either virtually or in-person. If there is no further discussion, I will take a motion on the proposed budget modification as presented; approving \$5.8M which is comprised of \$2.4M currently on the balance sheet and \$3.4M resulting from the revised revenue forecast for FY22; and to carry-forward all departmental fund balances from FY22 into FY23.

Commissioner DiNovo moves to approve the budget modification as identified by Chair Youngblood and Commissioner Penilton Seconds the motion. The motion to the proposed budget modification of \$5.8M as presented; and to carry-forward all departmental fund balances from FY22 into FY23 is approved by unanimous consent.

Chair Youngblood recesses the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

Chair Youngblood calls the meeting back to order at 10:13 a.m.

Travel Oregon Strategic 10-Year Vision

Chair Youngblood asks Todd to review the draft 10-Year Strategic Vision.

Todd welcomes and thanks Staj Olson for guiding Travel Oregon through the Strategic Vision process. Staj walks the Commission through a PowerPoint presentation outlining the process for drafting 10-Year Strategic Vision including: the creation of a strategy revision committee, the revision of key themes for the vision's focus, review of the timeline for the revision. Staj thanks the Commission for their guidance as well as states her appreciation for an engaged industry to provide comment and suggestions along the way.

Todd states that Travel Oregon's 10-Year Strategic Vision will be used as a map or guidebook for Oregon's tourism industry. This Strategic Vision will be a roadmap to help determine Travel Oregon's work over the next decade. The Strategic Vision is intended to concentrate on high-level priorities, allowing us flexibility as we move through actionable 2-year budget cycles and biennial plans. Travel Oregon is still rooted in economic development – that will not change.

Todd reviews Travel Oregon's newly created Vision and Mission along with the Destination Stewardship approach that employs three lenses to focus and decide work through: Prosperity Lens, Racial Equity Lens and Regenerative Tourism Lens.

Todd reviews additional changes made to the Strategic Vision based on public comment received – mostly focused on identifying differences between Oregon's urban and rural areas, along with tribal areas, and better clarifying and defining the Regenerative Tourism Lens to include leaving a "net positive impact" rather than "no harm." Other comments received were more tactical and will be considered as Travel Oregon undertakes the action planning work to implement the objectives in the Strategic Vision.

Chair Youngblood thanks both Todd and Staj for walking the Commission through the process and the proposed changes, and thanks the Review Committee members and industry partners who submitted comments. This vision is designed to lead Oregon's

entire travel and tourism industry, and so engagements and insights are greatly appreciated.

As has been stated, on Tuesday, May 24, notice regarding the revised draft vision was sent through our Industry Communications, and the draft vision, along with the public comment form and instructions were posted.

Chair Youngblood opens the public hearing the draft Travel Oregon 10-Year Strategic Vision. No one has signed up virtually to present.

Jason Brandt, President and CEO of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association thanks the Commission for all the work that went into revising this Strategic Vision. Being a participant in the revision work group proved humbling and efficient as the Travel Oregon staff met and provides support to the work group members. Jason states his appreciation for the work of Oregon's DMOs and all the work they do as part of the fabric for Oregon's tourism industry.

Alana Hughson, Manager Director of Oregon Destination Association states her appreciation for participation on the revision work group and states her support for the 10-Year Strategic Vision. Alana thanks Travel Oregon's staff for their diligence in listening and understanding for the complexities of the state and its tourism landscapes. Alana states her appreciation to the partners at the DMO level for their insights and comments to the plan and how well received the comments were by Travel Oregon staff and the review panel and were integrated into the new Strategic Vision.

Commissioners DiNovo and Penilton thank Jason and Alana for their commitment to and working through the process for this Strategic Vision.

Chair Youngblood also thanks Vice-Chair Boyles for his contributions to this Strategic Vision process as well.

Commissioner Penilton thanks the Travel Oregon staff for their work and commitment to draft the 10-Year Strategic Vision – it is a good roadmap to operationalize and stay adaptable as we move forward. It shows our focus on economic development as well as our commitment as stewards to our environment and our communities and I am in full support of adopting the Vision.

Commissioner Boyles states his agreement for the Commissioners comments already stated. States his appreciation for staff to slow down and taking input to create the best Vision possible.

Commissioner DiNovo thanks the staff and review team for the work that went into providing a draft 10-Year Vision for the Commission to consider today.

Commissioner Stephenson states that she saw people "care hard" for this process and this vision and that it speaks volumes to the hard work that went into crafting this Vision which she feels is transformational.

Commissioner Willitts congratulates Todd on guiding a successful process and thanks Commissioner Boyles for the reminder, in tasking the Commission to take this process seriously as it is our role.

Chair Youngblood discusses what a remarkable undertaking this process has been and this Vision is an essential step in moving into the next step of developing the 2023-2025 biennial plan.

Vice-Chair Boyles moves to approve the Travel Oregon 10-Year Strategic Vision and Commissioner Willitts seconds the motion. By motion to approve the Travel Oregon 10-Year Strategic Vision is approved unanimous consent.

Todd reflects and thanks Chair Youngblood for his leadership and commitment to the entire Travel Oregon staff during his tenure as Chair over the last three years.

Oregon Tourism Leadership Academy

Jason Brandt, President and CEO of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association recognizes the people that help lead the Oregon Tourism Leadership Academy (OTLA) in building the workforce development program: Travel Oregon Staff – Teresa O’Neill, Lisa Itel and Matthew Finn; Alana Hughson, Oregon Destination Association; Commissioner David Penilton; and Michelle Leedom, Clinton Street Consulting. Jason states that we are one of the first programs in the country to support and develop leaders in Oregon’s tourism industry.

Teresa O’Neill, Vice President of Global Strategic Partnerships discusses the history of the OTLA program, reviews participants by region and industry sector. Teresa thanks Jason Brandt and Commissioner Penilton for their leadership and work continuing to move this program forward.

Todd thanks Teresa and Jason for their leadership and their continued work in the space even through the pandemic.

Vice-Chair Boyles states that it is important to continue using the full name of the program, Oregon Tourism Leadership Academy, to inform people what the program is about. Vice-Chair Boyles discusses his own team’s participation in the program and how valuable the sessions were to their development and that they have been promoted since participating.

Jason discusses that this program happened and continues because of Todd’s leadership. Jason states that as they head into the third cohort, the program continues to evolve and grown in programming and in numbers of participants. Discusses the diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) aspects of the program and how valuable those session have been for the participants growth as well.

Commissioner Willitts states how valuable his staff’s participation in the OTLA program was and how transformational it was for their growth.

Commissioner DiNovo asks if having government participants was a purposeful outreach group to involve in the program?

Jason states that it wasn't intentional, that they found the program on their own, but that having the government participants involved and become advocates for tourism has been invaluable.

Commissioner Penilton discusses that his expectations for participation in the program have been exceeded and that the DEI programming has been exceptional. State his hope for having every Commissioner attend at least one session to witness the program.

Advertising Update – Extraordinary is Ordinary

Kevin Wright, Vice-President of Global Marketing and Katy Clair, Director of Marketing Services walk the Commission through a PowerPoint presentation providing background and showcasing the new Extraordinary is Ordinary (EisO) campaign. Kevin and Katy review the objective behind the EisO campaign of propelling Oregon toward statewide economic recovery; the advertising strategy throughout the World Athletics Championships will be based on the pulsed approach of launching the campaign.

The Commission previews the 3 pieces of creative for the Rock, Water and Soil creative. Katy discusses the intentionality that went into the creative from representing a diversity of abilities to specific product and sign placement being truly authentic and vetted by Travel Oregon partners to ensure alignment and authenticity.

Katy provides the Commission with the behind the scenes preview on the production of how the video assets were created. Katy discusses how additional funds that were made available for the campaign went towards paid, owned and earned media channels during summer and fall.

Katy reviews the vast amount of DEI exploratory work that went into building the creative assets including the process for outreach and insights, what was learned from those outreaches, along with the timeline for campaign launch.

Commissioner Sheppard thanks the Global Marketing team for the exciting new campaign.

Commissioner Willitts asks about the b-roll assets that were created and if those assets are available to everyone.

Katie states that yes, the assets that were created is owned, are available and those have helped provide content for other projects already.

Commissioner Willitts asks who the two key YouTube partners are.

Katy states that Zephyr and Logical Positions.

Chair Youngblood thanks the team for learning from past efforts in capturing the behind the scenes assets.

Other Business

Chair Youngblood states that this meeting is Commissioner Don Anway's last meeting and although he wasn't able to join today, his service these last 8-years were remarkable and the Commission would like to present a plaque in gratitude for his service.

Commissioner DiNovo states that the Coquille Indian Tribe will be opening a new Margaritaville venue this month.

Vice-Chair Boyles states that they will be opening a new property in Medford this fall.

Chair Youngblood states that the newest Commissioner, David Gremmels of Rogue Creamery, will be joining the Commission on July 1, 2022. Chair Youngblood also discusses that both Governor Kate Brown and legislative members have come to visit with the Afghan refugees staying at his hotel, Embassy Suites at Washington Square, and what an honor it has been to connect his guests with these leaders who care about Oregon's immigrant communities. Chair Youngblood also states his excitement for the workforce developments as they matter to help perpetuate the lives of people and bring those who may start at the service levels but aspire to career development and entrepreneurship to provide prosperity for generations to come.

The next Tourism Commission meeting is set to take place in October in Hood River, Oregon.

Chair Youngblood adjourns the meeting at 12:18 p.m.