



LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

DATE: April 3, 2014
TIME: 7:30 am
LOCATION: Gig Harbor Civic Center, Conference Rooms A/B
SCRIBE: Maria Tobin
MEMBERS PRESENT: Sue Braaten, Tom Drohan, Kathy Franklin, Jannaie Mitton, Lindsey Munson, Councilmember Tim Payne
MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary DesMarais, Warren Zimmerman
STAFF PRESENT: Karen Scott, Maria Tobin
OTHERS PRESENT: Casey Demory, Kati Wright

INTRODUCTION

Councilmember Tim Payne called the meeting to order at 7:40 am. Presented to the LTAC were the following handouts: lodging tax sales figures from January 2014; a presentation summary on the Go West Summit presented to City Council on March 24th, 2014 LTAC meeting schedule, 1st quarter Marketing Department highlights and potential advertising opportunities aboard the Gig Harbor Trolley.

1. Budget planning for 2015-2016

Karen advised the committee about the new City Biennial Budget adopted by City Council on March 24th. She added that planning is already underway for next budget cycle. Karen asked that budget recommendations be emailed to her in preparation for the July 1st LTAC meeting. Councilmember Payne advised the committee that, if a new opportunity comes up even after the budget has been approved by Council, the committee may still petition City Council for an amendment to the budget, but this biennial budget will require a shift in planning and projecting expenses further out. Councilmember Payne continued by stating this process will alleviate the drain on staff time during budget planning.

2. Visit Gig Harbor Video Update

Karen announced to the committee that she has begun researching different production companies to replace the current video for the website and television broadcasts. The following three proposals were received and reviewed: EVI Digital - \$6,925, Ballasiotes Media - \$12,000, Vortex Productions - \$8,500, Medici Studios Wedding Cinema - \$7,250. Karen advised the committee that they are not required to accept the lowest bid and after reviewing work from each production company, she believes that Vortex Productions is the most qualified. Near the end of the meeting, Karen was able to show a sampling of each production company's work. Those remaining to view the video were Sue Braaten, Lindsey Munson, Kathy Franklin, and Tim Payne. All remaining members agreed that Vortex Production, based on the work submitted,

was the most qualified to produce a high-quality video on Gig Harbor. Following the meeting, an email was sent out to all committee members with links to the videos. Karen asked for those who could not stay to view the videos to please view the videos at their earliest convenience any comments be submitted to her by 21 April. Two versions of the Visit Gig Harbor video will be produced for broadcast and another version, tailored for each hotel in Gig Harbor, is expected to be completed by September 2014.

3. Trolley Advertising

Karen presented the committee with the possibility for advertising on the ceiling of the Gig Harbor Trolley, which is due to begin service Memorial Day through Labor Day 2014. Karen advised that the cost would be \$1700 per spot on the roof and 1/6 of leaflet produced by Pierce Transit. The City has already produced a trolley rack card. The committee was not enthusiastic about this advertising opportunity and the consensus was that it would not be efficacious to spend limited ad dollars advertising on the trolley.

4. Marketing Department highlights from first quarter

Karen advised the committee that the Marketing Department has had a very busy first quarter. Major events taking place in the first quarter were the Go West Summit, linking international tour buyers with tour suppliers in the Western United States, as well as WTA's Tourism Day in Olympia, Two Nations trade show in Seattle and Portland, and Military Appreciation Day, which brought in soldiers and their families into Gig Harbor from JBLM. Finally, January 2014 sales tax numbers were up 8% from last year indicating that the year is getting off to a very good start. Karen announced that as an added bonus, within the Washington State Visitor Guide, Gig Harbor was the first city to be listed in the *Peninsula Section* under *Small Towns*.

5. Skansie update

Karen advised the group that there is a new and exciting development for the Skansie House in Downtown Gig Harbor: prospective tenants at the House are Harbor WildWatch and a Visitor Center Satellite Office. The City is shooting for all parties to move in and operations be to be up and running by June 2014. The Chamber will still have their operations of managing the Visitor Center on Judson Street throughout the week, and the Skansie Visitor Satellite Office will be open on weekends plus some weekdays to be determined. The Skansie center will be manned by volunteers with scheduling coordinated by Harbor WildWatch and oversight from the Marketing office. Karen advised that currently, there is not a budget in place to pay someone to manage the Skansie House. Further discussion took place on the importance of filling the Visitor Center Satellite Office with qualified and knowledgeable staff. Training and logistics are coming together. Watch for announcement and open house information soon.

6. Presentation by Danny Sink, USGA Championship Director of the 2015 US OPEN

Danny Sink presented the LTAC with information on the history of the US Open as well as economic impact that results from the US open being hosted at Chambers Bay. The US Open is

a seven-day event that brings in more than 235,000 on-site visitors and \$76 million in direct spending and \$68 million in indirect spending. Media coverage of the events consist of over 2,000 credentials issued and a worldwide audience of over 150 million viewers. The US Open will have over 30 hours of live coverage on Fox Sports. Chambers Bay is a special location for the US Open because it is one of the only public courses were the event will be played. Danny advised the committee to please direct any questions about the tournament to www.chambersbaygolf.com , www.usga.org, and www.usopen.com.

Accommodations- the US Open will require 9,000 room nights throughout Pierce County and these rooms will be booked for integral players within the US Open. Over 900 room nights in Gig Harbor have been booked and most guests will stay 5-7 nights. Guests from the US Open staying in Gig Harbor will include future sights groups and rules officials.

Long term benefits- World-wide television exposure to Pierce County with over 150 million viewers over seven days. Economic impact is estimated at \$140 million. Regional impact will include places as far out as Spokane, Seattle and Portland. Danny encourages local businesses to market to volunteers by reaching out and offering discounts. Councilmember Payne asked about how to better gain exposure to Gig Harbor during the US Open. Danny suggested that providing the US Open with a media kit on Gig Harbor would be most efficient means of advertising Gig Harbor to those involved with the US Open. Find Danny's PowerPoint presentation [here](#).

7. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 am and the next meeting was announced for July 1st, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,



Maria Tobin
Marketing Assistant
City of Gig Harbor