

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
August 9, 2015
City Hall NW, Cedar Room

Members Present: Paul Winterstein (Chair), Jim Davis, Erica Maniez, Will Parkinson, Skip Rowley

Staff: Andrea Snyder, Economic Development Manager and Tina Eggers, City Clerk

Members of the Public: None

Agenda:

1. Commissioner training
2. Funding Policy Changes
3. Discuss Tourism RFQ

Minutes:

Eggers provided the City's standard commissioner training, including the Open Public Meetings Act. She indicated that she would send out a link following the meeting that committee members would have to sign.

Councilmember Winterstein led the discussion on policy changes:

Snyder reviewed where LTAC left off, noting that committee members realized that the criteria listed on the funding application for projects to have "alignment with the Roger Brooks tourism recommendations" has been interpreted multiple ways by the applicants. Committee members had asked for a chance to review the Roger Brooks tourism recommendations and discuss further.

Maniez suggested that because there were different interpretations of this criteria, perhaps LTAC should only refer to the document as background info and the Committee could be more directive with the funding. Winterstein, Davis and others agreed it was important background material.

Maniez then asked the group if they thought the general call for projects was meeting the committee's goals of progressing tourism.

General discussion among all the members concluded that a more directive approach to funding would be best. The members then voted on whether LTAC should still reserve some of the money for small grants to nonprofit tourist amenities in Issaquah. The vote was unanimous: the committee ruled that there would be no general call for projects as was done in the past.

Winterstein then led the discussion of funding priorities. The following was generally agreed upon by the committee, but awaits further discussion and development:

1. The event recruitment and tourism coordination contract (with future development into a stand-alone Destination Marketing Organization)
 - a. This includes a separate pot of money to be used to help create package deals and targeted promotions with Issaquah attractions such as the Zoo, Hatchery, etc.
2. City branding
3. Wayfinding (with the desire to contribute towards city funds)

4. The Visitor's Information Center

Parkinson stated he did not believe that LTAC funding should be spent on a city branding effort. Rowley disagreed, stating that branding has to happen before wayfinding. Both members agreed these efforts should not be fully funded by LTAC.

The committee then agreed to meet again in two weeks to further discuss these priorities and determine funding recommendations to city council for the 2017 budget process.

Winterstein transitioned the group to discuss the RFQ. Snyder went over the highlighted changes to the document, including an update about additional Port of Seattle funds. Committee members ruled unanimously to accept the changes and to issue the RFQ as soon as possible.

Snyder stated that the committee would have to select representatives to be on the review panel for the applicants.

Winterstein closed the meeting at 5pm.