

## **VISITORS AND CONVENTION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

### **March 21, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Visitors and Convention (V&C) Commission was called to Order by Chairman Lanty Jarvis on March 21, 2006, at 4:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of Roseburg City Hall, 900 SE Douglas.

Present: Commissioners Jane Green, Lanty Jarvis, Terri Klein, Dotty Randall-Stapleton, Ellen Whitaker, Paul Zegers and Georgia Stiles.

Others Present: City Manager Eric Swanson, Human Resources Director Barbara Gershon, Finance Director Cheryl Guyett, Visitors and Convention Bureau Director Jean Kurtz and Administrative Assistant Debi Davidson.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Whitaker moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 21 continued to March 2, 2006. Motion was seconded by Stiles and carried unanimously.

#### FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

Gershon reported that Staff researched issues related to the source and use of the transient room taxes. Commissioners also received correspondence from the Lodging Association expressing concern about appropriate use of the tax funds. A copy of the legislation related to taxes collected after June 2003 was provided and reviewed. There are differences of opinion as to the definition of marketing, research and support. Staff will continue to work on those matters.

The \$155,000 currently available to the Commission was levied and collected prior to 2003. Therefore, use of those funds to assist the air show and other events supported by the Commission is not subject to the legislative guidelines and is, therefore, appropriate. The Commission may use both pre-2003 and post-2003 funds to serve their charge. However, we must work on a means of replenishing that \$155,000. One method may be use of funds returned to the Commission by grantees.

It was noted that the Lodging Association letter questioned the allocation of a portion of the tax for administrative costs. The City's Attorney has issued an opinion that such an allocation is appropriate under the law.

#### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SERVICE CONTRACT REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Gershon explained that this Commission and the former Commission were formed to serve as support and oversight for the success of the tourism program. The former Commission worked in partnership with the Chamber, and we would expect the program to be equally successful with the new Commission. She emphasized that there is not a "competition" between the Commission, the Chamber and/or Bureau; it is simply a matter of oversight and teamwork.

Discussion was held on the evolution of the Commission and its relationship with the Chamber. The former Commission was disbanded when the majority of the Commission's funds were used to build the new visitor center and future income was dedicated entirely to the Bureau. It was believed there was some duality between the Chamber's Advisory

Committee and City Commission. That relationship was misunderstood by many and seen as a duplication of functions. Therefore, since the tourism program was functioning well and the Chamber was receiving all the money, the Council chose to have the City Manager oversee the program by contract. Swanson indicated the Commission was re-established to address Council's desire to build on the success of local events and expand that success with promotion of new events, with the Chamber continuing to perform the outside marketing piece of the program.

Swanson met with Chamber Director Debbie Fromdahl to work on suggested amendments to the service contract. Staff will coordinate those recommendations, with any that may be forthcoming from Commission members, for Commission review at their April meeting.

#### EVENT GUIDELINES AND FUNDING REQUESTS

The Commission reviewed grant documents which were used by the former Commission with some Staff recommended revisions. Former references to "beautification" were removed since that fits within the new funding restrictions. Discussion was held on whether to restrict funding for charity fundraising events. It was noted that these events, i.e. the Jet Boat Races, have the potential to bring a lot of visitors to town. Therefore, it may be reasonable to provide funding assistance to those events, but require repayment of some or all of the funds. Consensus of the Commission was to add an evaluation criterion, with a value of 20 points, for potential repayment of Commission grant funds. The evaluation sheets would be provided to grant applicants so they will be able to judge whether their applications comply with the Commission's goals.

Whitaker moved to accept the grant documents as revised by staff and the Commission. Motion was seconded by Zegers and carried unanimously. Stiles moved to: 1) give consideration for funding the Fourth of July Fireworks Show in furtherance of the City Council's previous support of this event (to be placed on April agenda); 2) proceed with efforts to establish the Harvest Festival; and 3) take no action on all other financial requests (Jet Boat Races, Chamber Greeters, Music on the Half Shell, Glide Wildflower Show) until all budgetary issues have been resolved. Motion was seconded by Whitaker and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Debi Davidson  
Administrative Assistant