



Thurston County Hotel & Motel Commission Meeting Agenda

Monday, June 24, 2019 • 3:30 pm

ATTENDEES: Jeetu Chaudhry, Russ Hickey, Michael Gustaves, Angie Evans, John Hutchings, Craig Ottavelli (staff)

ACTION ITEMS:

- VCB will add the new AI decentralized visitor center the phone number business cards, and hoteliers can distribute it to people interested.
- VCB will assess whether there are competitors to the system. Front desk agents – let them take the program free.
- OrgSupport will consult the bylaws to see when the new commissioner needs to be in place.

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Call to Order – **The meeting was called to order by Chair Gustaves at 4:00 pm.**
2. Consent Calendar (items of a routine nature) – **Motion to approve consent calendar as presented raised by Russ Hickey, second by Michael Gustaves, unanimously approved.**
 - a. Approval of April 30, 2019 Minutes
 - b. Financials
3. STR Report
 - a. Shauna Stewart presented the VCB Scorecard and STR Report
 - i. Marketing and Communications scorecard is a bit behind goals currently. Certain elements things will take longer to see actualized and numbers will pick up in different seasons.
 - ii. Group Sales Goals
 - iii. Sports Goals – Flag Football World Championship Tour is a big draw to the area this year.
 - iv. STR Report – Yelm Prairie doesn't need to participate as there isn't any competition for occupancy.
4. 2019 Budget Adjustment
 - a. Shauna Stewart presented the amended budget and Carrie emailed it to directors on the phone.
 - b. Shauna Stewart presented on the prospect of moving from the centralized visitor center model to a decentralized visitor center model. Decentralizing the visitor center would integrate more technology.
 - c. *VCB will add the new AI decentralized visitor center the phone number business cards, and hoteliers can distribute it to people interested.*



- d. Recommendation for decentralization
 - i. Certified Tourism Ambassador Program – *VCB will assess whether there are competitors to the system. Front desk agents – let them take the program free.*
 - ii. Satellite VIC Partnerships
 - iii. Call Center or Specialty Answering Service
 - iv. IVY AI Website Chat Box
 - v. IVY AI Text
- e. Startup cost - \$38,000
- f. Ongoing – \$22,500 per year
- g. Businesses and services want to be mentioned first – there might be some kick back there.
- h. Timeline – The goal is that we can close the VIC on the Capital Campus by September (this is not set in stone). We would need one visitor center alternative in the works by that point. **Motion to approve the amended budget raised, seconded, unanimously passed.**

5. VCB Preliminary Budget Request

- a. Shauna Stewart asked the commissioners if they had any considerations that were worth noting for the budget
 - i. Revenue will be fairly flat and consistent
 - ii. Putting money back into hotel employees lives – awards dinner or acknowledgment event for hotel and service industry staff.
 - iii. Some hotel brands don't want branded materials on their front desks – something small that we can keep in a drawer that doesn't take up much space is ideal.

6. Marketing & Communications Report

- a. Tribal Funding Conversation – we have meetings scheduled in July, and Shauna Stewart will keep commissioners apprised of the progress.
- b. Annual Meeting & Sports Awards both were successful events.
- c. WIAA Golf Tournament was hosted recently.
- d. Shauna Stewart and Moira Davin both attended City/Nation/Place in West Hollywood in June. Take away from the conference – Shauna presented Lovability = Prosperity Presentation
 - i. Give them something to talk about
 - ii. Talk about it
 - iii. Help them talk about it
 - iv. These concepts will be the biggest guidepost for informing the 2020 budget.

7. Items from the Floor

- a. Replacement for Greg – the board discussed potential candidates. Could it be someone from LaQuinta Tumwater? Their engagement has been limited, but we will try to reach out.
- b. *OrgSupport will consult the bylaws to see when the new commissioner needs to be in place.*

8. Adjournment – **The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.**

Next Meeting: August 26, 2019