



Lodging Tax Advisory Meeting  
March 8, 2013  
Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Erik Erichsen, Shelli Robb-Kahler, Marcella Stachurski, Diane Schostak, Toni Skinner, Barbara Hanna.

Guests: Kathy Gay, Scott Nagel

**December 14 Meeting Minutes** –Marcella moved and Toni second that the minutes from the December 14, 2012 meeting be approved as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**YTD Lodging Tax** – YTD Lodging Tax was reviewed. The latest report from February showed the year-to-date Lodging Tax is up 6% over budget and 6% over 2012 YTD. Toni and Marcella both reported very strong bookings at their establishments for this year already.

**Tour de Lavender TEG Application** – the application was reviewed. Scott introduced the new event to the committee. The goal of the Sequim Lavender Farmers Association is to take advantage of the full lavender season and bring visitors to Sequim throughout the growing season. The event will be held on the same weekend as Ride the Hurricane. Tour de Lavender includes two events; 100K Ride from the Kingston Ferry to Sequim, and the Lavender Family Ride. They are expecting 100 – 200 participants in the events and are coordinating transportation of luggage and bikes with local hotels. The event highlights the Olympic Discovery Trail and will be marketed regionally in cycling publications and newsletters, both print and electronic, and to support a public relations effort. The event is also being supported by the Olympic Peninsula Visitors Bureau and the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce. Diane moved and Shelli second that the grant be approved for the maximum of \$1000. The motion passed unanimously.

**Wedding Promotion** – Barbara represented Sequim at the Tacoma Wedding show this past January. Andee Clancy loaned props for the display and helped man the booth on Saturday afternoon. Barbara is going to solicit more help from the wedding businesses to staff the booth this year. Toni said she would send a staff person and Marcella agreed to help. Barbara questioned whether they should consider a different location and different time of year. It was agreed that the Fall show in Seattle would be good to try this year. Barbara will send out an email to the bridal business community.

**Lodging Tax Use Update** – Barbara reminded the committee that the legislation that allows more flexible use of Lodging Tax funds, including the operation of special events, is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2013. There are now bills introduced in the house and the senate that would extend the expanded uses for lodging tax funds, which benefits a small city like Sequim. The bills do have a more extensive process for determining which organizations would be eligible for lodging tax support and puts more responsibility on receiving organizations for predicting and reporting on the number of overnight stays generated by the event. Congress is expected to take action during the upcoming session, so an update will be given at the next LTAC meeting on the final legislation.

**Downtown Streetscaping** – Barbara will be presenting a proposal to the City Council on Monday, March 25 and asking for their input on the streetscaping and signage plan.

#### **Event Updates –**

- **Independence Day Weekend** – the Sequim Centennial Celebration is focusing on the Independence Day weekend as one of the featured event. July 4 there will be an old-fashioned town picnic at the Water Reuse Demonstration Park with music, food, games and contests. July 5 KSQM will hold their Bob-eque during the day and that evening there will be “The Street Dance of the Century” on Washington Street in Downtown Sequim in conjunction with the First Friday Art Walk. On July 6 the Cedars at Dungeness is holding a Golf Scramble.
- **Air Affair** is scheduled for Labor Day Weekend August 31 – September 2. The event celebrates the Sequim Valley Airport 30 year anniversary with an air show and hot air balloons.
- **Outdoor Adventure Expo** – this is a joint venture between the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee and the City. A public meeting is scheduled for March 28 at 5:00 p.m. at the Chamber to inform the community and recruit volunteers to help with specific projects.

**City Merchandise** – Last year the City purchased merchandise featuring the Sequim, Washington logo to be sold as souvenirs at City Hall and the VIC. First year sales were reviewed. T-shirts and baseball hats were very successful. Barbara asked for suggestions for additional merchandise items. Easy-fit hats, travel mug with a handle, long-sleeved purple t-shirts, hoodies and windbreakers were suggested. Barbara will research and order merchandise for the summer season.

#### **Advertising and Promotional Materials**

- **Print Ads** – we are running an ad in both Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau (now Visit Seattle) visitors guides. We will also be participating in the Seattle Met and Portland Monthly Destination Washington pages in May, June, August and October.
- **Articles** – Barbara shared an article “Hiking in the Rainshadow” which featured the Dungeness Spit in the January issue of NW Travel Magazine. She also had the chance to meet with Leslie Forsberg, editor of Coho Magazine to discuss the Sequim section in this year’s publication.

- **Visitors Guide** – Barbara met with the Sequim Gazette about the 2013 guide. They are excited to work on the project again and think they can sell more ad space now that they have a sample. That will give more room for editorial content.
- **A Week of Fun Brochure** – was just reprinted with 60,000 copies. They have been distributed to the ferry system, OPVB and the VIC.
- **Pad Map**- updates have begun. Barbara has spoken with Bron Smith about updating the fun map and will work with the chamber on other updates.
- **Video** – After reviewing several production companies and many tourism videos, Barbara has met with John Gussman and is hoping to work with him on developing one or several small videos to be used on the website, a YouTube channel and at the VIC. She showed an example of a video style she liked from Seattle.

### **2013 Meeting Schedule-**

All meetings will be held in the Transit Center Conference Room at 10:00 a.m.

Friday, June 14

Friday, September 13

Friday, December 13

**Information Sharing** – Diane, Barbara and Toni will all be attending the Washington State Tourism Alliance Summit in Olympia next Tuesday. The event will provide an update on the alliance, a chance to meet with legislators and a reception at the Governor's Mansion.

**Meeting Adjourned** – Shelli moved and Diane second that the meeting be adjourned, the motion passed unanimously.