

Tourism Advisory Board Meeting Agenda / Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 27 – 9:30 am (Assembly Chambers)

Meeting Call to Order: Ross Silkman – President – 9:36 am

Roll Call: **Present** Jason Gaffney (phone), Barb Mulford, Rhonda Hinson, Judy Heinmiller

Absent Karen Hess, Jeff Butcher

Also Present Tanya Carlson, Bart Henderson, Carol Tuynman, Jamie

Approval of excused / unexcused absences: Hess has an excused absence. Mulford motioned for an unexcused absence for Butcher, Heinmiller seconded; all in favor.

Approval of Agenda: Heinmiller motioned to approve agenda, Hinson seconded; all in favor.

***Approval of Minutes:** February 20, 2013.

Public Comments: Bart Henderson – Tour Permits

Henderson would like to look at information, background and costs involved with issuing tour permits and see if this is something that is still needed. Henderson's points include:

- Does the borough have an estimate of costs
- What about liability (cost involved defending ourselves)
- Benefit vs. cost
- Borough / Assembly lacks expertise to manage
- Majority of tours operate on state & federal lands
- Permit is / has become a way to put restrictions on businesses that don't apply to everyone – ex. noise of helicopters should be covered in a noise ordinance and apply to everyone not in tour permit
- Fraudulent activity can be covered under a business license
- No other businesses come under public comment to operate a business (exception of liquor licenses), if we're going to control one business why not all
- Fishing charters are exempt from tour permits
- A heli-skiier can charter a helicopter and go anywhere they want but if they want to hire a guide they become restricted to a certain area. This actually impacts safety for heli-skiiers; if they want to ski in an area that is not on the heli-ski map a heli-skiier could choose to do it alone without the benefit and safety of a knowledgeable guide.

Silkman asked when / where / how tour permits started were. Henderson replied that when we had more cruise ships and more tours popping up, the tour permits were the quickest way to stop shotty practices. Mulford questions state law about Alaskan's being able to utilize resources. Silkman asked if there was any security where if the borough / assembly pulled one

tours permit from a company that they wouldn't lose others. Mulford also questioned the congestion issue that recently came up. Henderson replied that Chilkoot is a State Park and should be addressed by the State Park and that we should find ways to mitigate impact before limiting business.

Gaffney agrees that there's cost & liability but believes there are other avenues to control some of the issues.

Henderson would like to start a discussion and he felt TAB could bring the issue to the Manager / Mayor / Assembly. Heinmiller volunteered to speak with Jila regarding financials of tour permits and Julie regarding time spent and history of tour permits. Mulford volunteered to look at borough code and charter regarding tour permits. Carlson will look into other municipalities for operations. Silkman will speak with the Manager, Mayor and Assistant to the Manager. Hinson suggests we organize data and meet back to discuss in late summer to early fall; get everything in place before taking anything to the Assembly.

Carol Tuynman – Alaska Arts Confluence

Tuynman is the President of Alaska Arts Confluence. She thanked the tourism department for their support of recent media training for artists. They will be starting art displays in downtown windows to help liven the appearance of downtown.

Tuynman also recommended a book called "Citizenville".

Chair Report:

Governor's Picnic

Silkman has been in contact with Carlson and Mulford (as President of the Chamber) regarding a submission to host a Governor's Picnic. Silkman will be submitting a proposal on behalf of the community to host one.

New Business:

Summer Road Work Schedule

Carlson gave an update regarding summer road construction which includes the closing of Front St from Lookout Park to the junction at the Highway from the end of April to the end of June. Pedestrian's traffic will be detoured through Tlingit Park. Sidewalks will also be under construction along the Haines Highway from Front St to just past the school. No timeline has been distributed for this project yet.

Old Business:

Dock Music

Carlson met with the Manager regarding dock music in the tourism budget for the upcoming season. Carlson felt that with the large budget cuts coming up in the next FY that she should shoot for half of what had been previously discussed. She will be requesting funds to cover the Jilkaat Kwaan Dancers for each of the large ships. She is also looking to have speakers installed with the new dock to play KHNS for cruise ship guests instead of paying for musicians. This will be far cheaper in the long run. The plan is to still request the Jilkaat Kwaan dancers in the future for the cultural aspect of our community.

AMHS 50th Anniversary

Carlson is planning festivities for this celebration scheduled for May 5. The Malaspina will dock at the PC Dock from 10 am – 1 pm. The Mayor will give a short presentation, the Jilkaat Kwaan Dancers will be there and Carlson is working on getting a couple raptors from the ABEF and possible have Kroschel as well. She is still working on more items for the event. The Women's Acappella Chorus will also be singing that day.

Hinson recommended kite flying during the event.

TIA Yukon Spring Conference

Carlson is getting everything prepared for the TIA Yukon Conference. The Welcome Reception is pretty well scheduled. She is now trying to get everything confirmed for the Community Fun Night which will incorporate Dalton City, Fort Seward and Downtown Main Street. The event will be a mixture of activities, find an item (scavenger hunt) and trivia all focused around TV & Film from Alaska and the Yukon.

Directors Update: Canadian Welcome Banner

Carlson has designed a Canadian Welcome Banner which will be hung over 2nd Ave (where the Salmon Derby Banner hangs). The plan is to have it up for any of the Canadian Long Weekends. It should be ready and in place for the TIA Conference.

Haines Coupon Book

The 2013 Coupon book is complete and off to the printers. The book is shorter this year as the Tour Package section was taken out. This was so the books could be distributed on board Princess ships prior to arrival in Haines. The plan is to still have tour packages as an insert for the ferry and Yukon distribution.

Tourism Economic Impact Study

Carlson has received a proposal from McDowell group to perform economic impact studies for tourism in Haines for both the summer and winter seasons. Currently Carlson is discussing the financials with the Manager to decide what will be done for this upcoming FY.

Tourism Community Night

Carlson has tentatively scheduled Tourism Community Night for Thursday, May 16 at the ABEF. Aside from going through tourism stats she is thinking of the main subject being around digital marketing and its importance. 60-second business spotlights will again take place.

Tour Information Booth – PC Dock

Carlson has been working with the Facilities Director to create a new Visitor Information Booth for the PC Dock this year. The current booth is slowly falling apart and moldy on the inside. The

location of the current booth is not ideal either but it cannot be moved or starts falling apart. The new booth will be located on the land side of the dock and not out by the security gate. This will create better visibility and communication between Shorex staff, tour operators, visitor center staff and visitors.

Schedule

Carlson will be out of the office the week of April 15th for the WACVB Tech Summit which she received a scholarship to attend.

Board Comments:

Mulford – non-profit funding, Mayor has put together a group to look at how community non-profits should be funded in FY14. Silkman mentioned it has been a painful process.

Butcher mentioned that he was able to join Carlson at the LA Travel & Adventure Show and was impressed with how Carlson represented our community.

Set Next Meeting Date: *Wednesday, April 24, 2013 – 9:30 am*

Assembly Chambers, Safety Building

Heinmiller motioned to adjourn, Hinson seconded; all in favor. Meeting ended at 11:52 am.