

**White Pass Scenic Byway
Minutes
April 18, 2007
Packwood Fire Hall**

Attendance and Introductions:

John Mullenix, Roxy Theater in Morton (FMAC)
Rosemary Siipola, SWRTPO
Larry Burnett, Tacoma Power
Ellie Worsham, Morton
Maree Lerchen, Packwood
Robin Rose, Gifford Pinchot NF
Randy Juetta, Naches Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Ranger, Town of Naches
Curt Warber, Parametrix
Bryan Bowden, Mt. Rainier National Park
David Olson, Gifford Pinchot NF
Clark McAbee, Morton
Mary Kay Nelson, MK Marketing

Distribution of the Corridor Management Plan- Each person present received a color copy of the Final Corridor Management Plan (CMP). It was noted that it was very exciting to finally be able to offer this document which completes the first phase of the 5 year project. Maree thanked all those involved and noted that it is wonderful to begin the implementation phase now.

Update on working committee activities:

- RFP for Marketing Consultant

Maree announced that the selection of the marketing consultant was done following the advertising period for the RFP. MK Marketing (Mary Kay Nelson) was selected to do the implementation phase of the current grant. This includes website development, brochures, rack cards and maps. Maree introduced Mary Kay who has been active on the WP Scenic Byway committee since its inception. Mary Kay is also the executive director of Visit Rainier.

- The contract with Curt Warber of Parametrix was extended into the next phase from the original grant. There is funding set aside for the map panels to be located at existing information centers along the byway. These maps will also be used in the brochures. Curt will also work on the submittal process for the next round of enhancement grants.

Curt explained that the map panels will be located in places like the KOA Campground near I-5, Morton, Randle Ranger Station, Morton Visitor Center etc, They will provide improved visitor orientation along the byway with key features, themed messages and a consistent map.

- Maree held a briefing session with the Lewis County Commissioners on April 17. Dave Olson, Rosemary Siipola, Carrie Sunstrom, from the WSDOT Scenic Byway program, Betsy Gabel and Michelle Campbell, from Washington State Tourism and Mary

Kay Nelson were invited to join Maree and visit with the commissioners to bring them up to date with the new Corridor Management Plan and the next phase of the byway project. The commissioners mentioned their concern regarding safety issues on the byway and hoped the byway project would keep this in mind. Rosemary noted that the Scenic Byway efforts have little to do with adding turn pockets or passing lanes, although it would be good to include safety issues as an area of interest in the letter of support drafted for the LC Commissioners. They invited the byway group to send a delegate to the monthly Lewis County Transportation Committee meetings. The commissioners also wanted to be sure the WP Scenic Byway group understood that there are limited lodging tax dollars and they encouraged partnering and cooperative efforts in the use of these funds. Mary Kay offered to work with Lee Grose to study the availability of funds. Maree will be setting up a meeting with the Yakima County Commissioners to debrief them on the Corridor Management Plan and projects.

- Grant for 2008 Marketing Program. Maree submitted a grant in Feb. 2007 to the National Scenic Byway Org. for \$60,000 for marketing. It will be awarded in July of 2007 for the 2008 year. There appears to be a chance that we will receive this grant.
- Lewis County Trails Committee. Maree asked for volunteers to represent the WP byway group at a new partnership being created to look at trails in the Lewis County area. Anyone interested is asked to contact Maree.
- Maree announced that an invoice has been submitted to the Lewis County CVB for \$5,000 which was an initial in-kind contribution promised on the initial Byway Grant. Since the changes that have occurred at the LCCVB, Maree asked for cash in lieu of the in-kind contribution.

Articles of Incorporation

A draft of the Articles of Incorporation was distributed. There was discussion about the option of being a 501c3 or 501c6. It was the consensus of the group that it would be most appropriate to be a 501c3 under the educational provision. The group also decided by consensus that they want to be their own stand alone group and file for the individual status. The name of the organization was decided to be called the White Pass Scenic Byway Coalition and to serve the corridor from I-5 at Exit 68 to the town of Naches. The registered agent will be Maree Lerchen and the office will be located at the Destination Packwood office address.

The initial directors are: Randy Juette, Ellie Worsham, Larry Burnett, Maree Lerchen, Bryan Bowden, and Jeff Ranger. The incorporators are Maree Lerchen, Randy Juette, and Ellie Worsham.

A final copy of the articles of incorporation will be emailed to everyone present and the initial board of directors will approve prior to filing for the 501c3 application.

Bylaws

A draft version of the bylaws was presented. Discussion followed concerning the number and term of board members and advisory members. It was determined that members would be selected to represent the following entities:

Mayor of Morton

Mayor of Naches

Mayor of Mossyrock

Superintendent of Tacoma Power

Director of LC PUD

Superintendent of Mt. Rainier National Park

4 positions among the following:

- Destination Packwood
- Visit Rainier
- Yakima CVB
- Morton Chamber of Commerce
- East Lewis County Chamber
- Naches Chamber of Commerce
- Lewis County Chamber of Commerce

2 positions from Business

2 positions from unincorporated communities:

- Mayfield
- Rimrock
- Packwood
- Randle
- Glenoma
- Salkum

1 position representing educational, cultural or heritage

1 at large position

Total 16 positions

The following will have an advisory (non voting) position:

Gifford Pinchot NF

Wenatchee NF

SWRTPO

Yakima Council of Governments

SW Regional Transportation

South Central Regional Transportation

Lewis County Commissioner

Yakima County Commissioner

It was agreed that we would ask the Yakama and Cowlitz Tribal leaders, the Dept of Fish and Wildlife and Washington State Parks, if they preferred to have a seat on the board or have an advisory position.

For the initial start up of the organization officers needed to be elected for the new organization. Jeff moved and Randy seconded to elect Maree Lerchen as the board chairman. The motion was unanimously approved.

Jeff nominated Ellie Worsham to be the secretary, Larry seconded. The motion carried unanimously. M Kay will work with Ellie on the board minutes and announcements until the new board is in place.

There was discussion about Mary Kay's ability to serve on the board of directors. Due to a conflict since she is being contracted with to do the work, it was agreed that it would be best to not have her serve as a board member.

A new draft of the Bylaws will be presented to the initial board of directors and formally adopted by the new board of directors.

2007 Marketing Program

Mary Kay distributed a written copy of the Marketing Plan that was initiated at the October 2006 byway committee meeting. The marketing plan includes interpretive panels, website development, rack cards, brochures and tear sheet maps. There is also an element dealing with the partnership with the Washington State Website, and the RAC signage project that has yet to be completed. There is money in the current grant, plus the RAC funds and Lewis County Lodging Tax dollars, as well as those mentioned from the Lewis County CVB.

Next Round of Grants

Curt discussed the call for enhancements which will be coming up in May. Curt asked the group for input on whether to submit the same as we did last time, which was for the corridor gateway signs and the major gateway signs, or to add the “dinner plate” logo signs (50-100) and also whether or not to add the minor community signs. Together that would add another \$50-60,000 to the grant. It was decided that Curt and Maree would have a conference call with Rosemary to discuss the pros and cons of adding these items. The highest priority was to add the dinner plate signs and if it did not jeopardize the chance of getting the grant, it would be okay to add the minor community signs too. Other projects: Curt suggested the next two projects that could also be submitted in May. He explained that the Mossyrock overlook would be about \$650,000 with a match needed (Tacoma Power possible) of \$100K. The Oak Creek Gateway sign project would cost about \$200K and Fish and Wildlife might be a good partner there. It was the consensus of the group to not jeopardize the sign project by submitting other projects. After that project is done, it would perhaps increase our chances of getting future grants.

Curt strongly suggested that the byway group needs to be thinking ahead to figure out criteria for ranking future projects that come along. This can be competitive and hard to reach consensus in a group sometimes.

National Scenic Byway Designation

Curt explained that this is not done on a regular schedule. He has heard that they might be calling for nominations this fall for 2008. Now that the Corridor Management Plan is done, our chances of achieving this status are improved. It will be judged on the quality of resources on the byway and the visitor experiences.

May 7/8 Scenic Byway Workshop in Packwood-

Maree announced that a statewide workshop is being held in Packwood on May 7 and 8th. She encouraged everyone present to attend. The state department of Tourism and WSDOT are hosting the workshop and bringing in Judy Walden who is the key speaker. The White Pass Byway marketing plan is being used as a model and example of what other byways can do. The state was very complimentary to the WP Byway group for the great effort and excellent plans they have. For more information contact Maree.

