

White Pass Scenic Byway
January 20, 2010
Mossyrock Fire Hall
Minutes

Attendance: Board Members: Maree Lerchen, Debbie Angwood, Ellie Worsham, Randy Juette, Marilly Morton, Clark McAbee, Ellen Berdan and Jeff Ranger. Visitors: Tom Meade, Suzanne Weise, and Betty Hutchinson. Consultants: Mary Kay Nelson and Annalee Tobey.

The meeting was called to order by president Maree Lerchen at 10:15am. Clark moved, Randy seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

End of the Year Report. Mary Kay distributed a draft of the end of the year report and reviewed it with the board. Several changes were suggested. MK will revise and provide copies to the board, the county commissioners, and post the final report on the website. Maree asked to have the report complete by Feb 1st in time for the photo to be taken with Congressman Brian Baird of the interpretive panels in Packwood.

Election of Officers and Board Members - Randy, Ellie, and Ellen's positions are up for re-election. They all agreed to serve again. Maree asked for nominations from the floor. No nominations were received. The slate of board members was approved by consensus.

Officers: President, Maree Lerchen; Vice President, Randy Juette; Treasurer, Debbie Angwood; Secretary, Ellie Worsham. These positions were approved by consensus. The board approved by consensus to add the treasurer as a signatory for checks. The process for check writing procedure was determined. The president will receive the bills, approve them and send them to Annalee who is authorized to print the checks and send them to the treasurer for signatures. A confirmation including check number will be submitted back to the president. Financial reports will be submitted to the board each quarter.

Financial Report - Annalee presented a detailed Profit and Loss statement. The board agreed that a P&L Year to Date and Balance Sheet is needed for future board meetings. Annalee will bring other reports to the meeting for perusal if needed.

Marketing Report - Mary Kay presented the 2010 budget for marketing options. The board reviewed options and identified which publications WPSB will advertise in for 2010 for a total of approximately \$6300. MK will update the plan and send out to the board.

Since national designation, two articles have been published on the National Byway website, www.Byways.org.

It was suggested communities provide information to MKMarketing on where the Byway can contribute information to newsletters, such as Tacoma Power, White Pass Ski Resort and local newspapers.

Gateway signage - Curt Warber provided logo options for the gateway signs and asked the communities to report the dates their communities were settled for the signs (not incorporation dates).

Curt expects that engineering will be done in January and they will advertise for construction in March. Expected completion is this summer.

Website update - Annalee provided an update on the website improvements including the new Google map, enhanced listings, wider page format and added content. Some board members feel we should be moving towards a program for “Friends of the Byway” to solicit links and collect monetary contributions. After further discussion the board decided it is not cost effective to begin an online advertising program. Chambers will continue handling business listings.

RAC project - Annalee displayed the signs that have been produced to be placed on itinerary routes on forest service roads at pre-determined locations. The forest service has offered to install the signs this summer.

Hospitality Training update. All communities received hospitality training except White Pass due to the early season opening. Trainer Laura Sample is not able to continue, so the Byway will need to post the position or an RFP for applications by March 1st. Maree asked the board to think of who might be able to fill this position. \$5,000 is budgeted for six workshops at \$750, each plus travel expenses. Morton/Mossyrock, Chehalis, Naches/WP, Packwood/Randle, White Pass Ski resort and South Lewis County/Salkum.

- **Budget Discussion** – Maree reported the Board of County Commissioners originally awarded 2010 lodging tax dollars for the same amount as last year of \$17,500; however they reconsidered after that decision was questioned. They increased the allocation to \$25,000 in a one time emergency allocation. They indicated the same criteria would be used to judge applications next year. The board expressed frustration at the lack of acknowledgment for the projects and grants that have been completed to date and felt the return on investment was greater than what was recognized by the commissioners. It was decided that a communications plan needs to be created and shared in order to have better communication about what the byway has accomplished. Randy offered to speak to the commissioners about the benefits of the byway efforts. It was suggested that Kevin McCarthy, from White Pass Ski Area be the spokesperson at the lodging tax presentations next year. Letters of support and monthly reports will be sent to the county commissioners. It was also suggested we track volunteer hours and report them in the lodging tax application. It was suggested we keep operations, grant administration, website and marketing separate in the budget.

Geotourism Map Project – Mary Kay announced the map will be available on January 21st, 2010, one year to the day from when the nominations started. The map features several locations along the byway including the city of Morton, Woods Creek Watchable Wildlife area, Goat Rocks Wilderness, Oak Creek Feeding Station, and other features along the byway. The White Pass Scenic Byway is labeled on US Hwy 12 on the map.

Washington Byway Alliance – Maree reported there is good response and a growing relationship between the byways. It is an opportunity to leverage co-op ads with other byways. They are considering whether to organize formally into a 501 (c) 6 organization.

Morton Depot Project - Clark reported the site development is complete with curbs, parking, storm drainage and ADA parking. Interior restoration plans will start soon. They are still securing funds to

complete the project. They hope to have occupancy on July 1st with a centennial celebration slated for July 24th. They are still interested in bidding on the LC PUD building as a visitor information center.

Yakima CVB- Our membership allows us to receive a proprietary list of all conferences to be held in the coming year in Yakima. It was decided to select 10-12 conferences and send a letter to them to see if they would be interested in maps for their attendees.

Ellen reminded us she can make deliveries to Yakima, as she goes there regularly.

Community Liaison and Merchandising Project - Ellen, Marilly and Randy volunteered to create a plan for community outreach for selling souvenirs and for communication about byway programs that benefit their communities. Annalee will work with them to develop guidelines and a format for reporting activities.

Wayfinding Grant Project was approved in 2009 for design and installation. Clark offered assistance with the scope of work for this project, which will begin in 2010.

2011 Grant Projects - Maree announced the board needs to be preparing for the next round of projects. A call for projects will be in April and there is a need to prioritize what is ready for submittal or what the areas of interest are. Those mentioned were: stewardship projects such as the Oak Creek trail, Warnke Wildlife Area, Morton Visitor Center, Mossyrock overlook/safety rest area. Debbie has offered to spearhead the Mossyrock overlook project with Tacoma Power and Ellen is looking into the potential of establishing a visitor center/cultural center at Mary's Corner. Maree will talk to Curt about these and any other projects that the board can think of.

Annalee will be preparing the paperwork for the 501(c)3. This needs to be in place when the grants are submitted in April.

Area Updates - Debbie reported the Mt. Adams overlook has reached a roadblock due to the possibility of birds nesting in the trees. Jeff and Maree will discuss this with the DOT biologist and see if we can alleviate this concern.

Ellie reported Morton will be adding new sidewalks this summer. Betty announced the purchase of the Tiller building as a new event center in Morton.

Next Meetings:

2010 Meeting Schedule

April 8, 2010 White Pass Ski Resort

July 8, 2010 Morton

October 13-14 Packwood – overnight retreat