

White Pass Byway Board Meeting
Thursday, October 14, 2010
River House at Tatoosh Meadows - Packwood
9:30am – 3:30pm
Minutes – See additional notes from PowerPoint presentation

Attendance: Jack Thorne, Ellie Worsham, Ellen Berdan, Bryan Bowden, Maree Lerchen, Rosemary Siipola, Robert West, and Debbie Angwood. Annalee Tobey and Mary Kay Nelson, marketing consultants, and guests, Pam Painter, Hospitality Coordinator, and Betty Hutchinson, Morton

Minutes from July meeting were reviewed. Debbie made a motion to accept the minutes as read. Ellie seconded the motion. Motion was carried.

Financial Reports were provided by Annalee Tobey. The financial reports were accepted as presented.

Program Review and Marketing Reports:

Mary Kay presented a detailed PowerPoint presentation with the idea that a portion of this would be used to create a presentation for the Lewis County Lodging Tax Advisory Committee in requesting funds for 2011. The board reviewed the annual summary and made several changes and additions to the presentation. The presentation was approved for use at the Lewis County Lodging Tax allocation meeting, noting it will need to be condensed to target the request for funds for the specific time allowed. (The specific changes have now been added to the PPT presentation, see attachment)

Some noteworthy comments were:

- 1) The Board feels we need an official MOU between organizations requesting money from Lewis County recognizing the value and support between the county and these three groups.
- 2) It was noted that many folks from Tri Cities, Montana, and Idaho travel Hwy 12 heading to the beaches during the summer months.
- 3) What is the ROI of local visitor centers? Other Mt. Rainier visitor centers have seen a decrease in traffic, due in part to having more internet information available online.
- 4) The Gifford Pinchot is conducting a Visitor survey next year that will tell where their traffic is coming from. Chris Strebis is the best resource for this info. WPSB can access that information once it is collected.
- 5) Impress upon the LC Commissioners that the byway brings \$\$ through Federal Hwys to support LC enhancement projects.

Grant Reports:

Annalee provided an update on the RAC signage project. Signs and posts are being delivered to the FS who will install them along the routes as weather and access allows.

No engineering for the Gateway Signs has yet been done.. Tim Elsea is the new LC Public Works person who we will be working with on this project. Once the engineering is done, the hope is to have the sign project completed in spring of 2011. LC will provide onsite quality assurance on the project as the certifying agency.

The money has been obligated, but not yet released on the wayfinding sign project. It is hoped we can initiate the project in 2011.

Hospitality Training

Pam Painter was introduced as the Community Outreach Specialist. It will be her responsibility to handle Hospitality Training to front line employees at businesses located along the byway. The initial project will be to talk to White Pass future employees at the White Pass Job Fair coming up this month. Then Pam will work on collecting names and addresses of all businesses located on the byway for a database that we can use to communicate to them on a regular basis.

The second project will be to put together a workshop/seminar for front line employees. The format will be a panel presentation with representatives from Tacoma Power, WA. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service and Cowlitz Valley and Naches Ranger Districts. The goal is to hold one this fall and again in the spring.

It was suggested we might contact Tacoma Power as a potential funding source relative to their FERC license renewal. Cindy Swanberg would be our initial contact.

2011 Budget Review

Mary Kay presented the marketing plan and corresponding budget for 2011. Debbie moved and Bryan seconded the approval of the budget. The budget is subject to allocations from 2011 Lewis County Lodging Tax and pay to play investments from lodging properties for the website lodging page enhancements.

Special Project Reports

- Mt. Adams Viewpoint - Debbie is working with the property owners and reported the trees should be coming down anytime now.
- Riffe Lake Viewpoint - Debbie and Maree met with the property owners and they will present the byway with some options for clearing, removal or trimming the trees. They are amenable to working with the byway on the viewshed issue.

Projects for 2011 and beyond

Prioritize, next steps:

- Mossyrock Dam Overlook - Debbie reported that Ken Hash, Cindy Swanberg, Maree and herself had met for the purpose of getting “buy in” from Tacoma Power. There is another meeting set up on October 20th to discuss what Tacoma Power might be able to do. The project appears to be progressing. It was noted that some geo-tech work was done years ago, and scoping for NEPA would need to be done before much else could happen. Rosemary and Mike Kroll will attend the meeting and discuss next steps. The Board agreed this is the top priority project for future funding by the byway if it is determined to be feasible and agreeable to all parties involved. If we proceed with this project, Tacoma Power will help prepare the grant application. Robert West offered to assist with interpretive information for this or any other projects.

- Morton Hwy 7 and Hwy 12 intersection - Ellie reported she has an Oct. 22nd meeting regarding the resurfacing and re-engineering of the intersection. According to Paula Reeves, this project is eligible for SB Grant in the upcoming rounds. This project will take multiple funding sources and will likely not be ready until the 2013 funding package for increasing the gas tax.
- Paul Lindeman House - Ellen reported this project is eligible for grants if the property is owned by a non-profit agency. Her recommendation is to offer this to another non-profit to take the lead and perhaps support it in some way at a later date. The board agreed to this decision.

Community Liaison Reports

Maree noted she would talk to Kathy Lund and Judy Rothmier from Mayfield Lake Resort to consider becoming the liaison for their communities. Ellen asked for new tear sheet maps and mentioned that Harmony RV Park has a place to distribute maps as well.

Community Impact Toolkit - Annalee and Mary Kay noted the new Economic Impact toolkit will take a great deal of time and resources to input the necessary data. The board agreed to pursue a work session in 2011. Annalee and MK will research what is needed and what we can do collectively as well as what info needs to be gathered. Depending on funding levels and budget, this project will be done as time allows.

2011 Board meeting schedule and locations

February 9, Morton (Election of officers will be held- Clark, Maree and Jeff's position are up for election)

May 11 - Naches

August 17 - White Pass

November 9 - Packwood

Good of the order

Mary Kay asked Robert West and Jack Thorne for permission to post the tear sheet map on the bulletin boards in key locations in the forest area. Robert stated he would use about a dozen sets (front and back) for the bulletin boards next season.

Adjourn ☺