

MOSES LAKE TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES

JANUARY 16, 2013

Members Present: Mary Perry, Bev Shuford, Marianne Kirwan, Debbie Doran-Martinez and Lisa Garmon
 Members Absent: Brenda Teals and Ashlee Holten
 Staff Present: Spencer Grigg, Lori Moholt-Phillips and Kerri Fenner
 Guests Present: None

2013													
Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Garmon	X												
Doran-Martinez	X												
Perry	X												
Teals	E												
Shuford	X												
Kirwan	X												
Holten	E												

E=Excused Absence C=Meeting Canceled V=Vacant R=Resigned N=Not Reappointed

Call Meeting to Order

The regular meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Mary Perry at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Ms. Teals and Ms. Holten excused.

Introduction of Guests/Visitors

None.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting

Ms. Doran-Martinez had a minor correction to the draft minutes of October 17, 2012 – the Chamber of Commerce is not funding the full costs of the new phone app, there may be a three-way partnership between the Chamber of Commerce, the Grant County Tourism Commission and the Moses Lake Tourism Commission. Ms. Shuford moved the corrected minutes of October 17, 2012, be approved as submitted. Seconded by Ms. Doran-Martinez and passed unanimously.

Correspondence/Communications

None.

Transient Rental Income/Sales Tax Revenue – Report

Commissioners received copies of the Transient Rental Income and Sales Tax Revenue reports for review and discussion.

Transient rental income posted in December for October sales was \$34,675.70, a decrease of 14% from the same period of time last year.

Sales tax revenue posted in December for October sales was \$424,167.87, a decrease of 2% from the same period of time last year.

Marketing Update – Bill Burke, Burke Marketing

Mr. Burke passed out samples of various items which will be distributed at the Washington Sportsmen’s Exposition trade show next week. He also distributed and discussed the 2013 Moses Lake Working Budget and the Eastern Washington Travel Planner, which has a full-page back cover ad for the Surf ‘n Slide Water Park.

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Director's Report

Washington Sportsmen's Exposition – Mr. Grigg went over the trade show being held next Wednesday through Sunday at the Puyallup fairgrounds. We will be taking a mobile booth as we have for years. There are three booths from our region at the trade show. Brief discussion held regarding trade show events, booths and the items we will be exhibiting and handing out.

Surf 'n Slide Zip Code Survey – Mr. Grigg gave a brief summary of the Zip Code Survey findings. Traditionally, we have seen a trend of about 80% of visitors to the water park coming from outside the 98837 zip code. Last year (2012), it came back at around 75%, with approximately 100,000 patrons visiting the water park.

Surf n' Slide Potential Fee Increases – Our net return with our operating expenses last year was about \$18,000. This year we are projecting about \$150,000 in non-routine maintenance expenses. The water park will be 20 years old next year, so it is starting to cost more to keep the facility up and repair and replace the equipment and features that are beginning to wear out due to age. There is a potential for the expenses to be even higher due to a few repair issues that may or may not have to be dealt with this year. Because we cannot run the water park at a deficit, the recommendation to raise fees this year went to the Park Commission last Wednesday and they forwarded a recommendation to City Council asking that they support the price increase. The general admission fees, which are currently \$7.00, \$8.00 and \$9.00, would go up \$1.00 and there will be a \$10.00 increase on season pass fees. In addition, private rental rates will increase 10%. With these increases, it is projected that it will take two seasons to repay the non-routine maintenance expenses that are coming up this year. The state minimum wage also increased 15 cents on January 1, 2013, so we will be paying more in employee wage costs now for the 150+ seasonal employees we have during the summer season.

2013 Election of Officers – We will need to hold an election of officers in February.

Robert Heale Museum Show – The opening of the Robert Heale show on Friday was very interesting. Mr. Heale is a local tattoo artist who has also done some illustration work and other things. The exhibit will still be up in the museum for a period of time, if anyone wants to go check it out. A lot of Mr. Heale's work is based on video game and superhero characters, so there is an original Nintendo model set up and plugged into a TV set. There is also a full-size video game console, like you would see in an arcade. Mr. Heale did all of the illustration work on the console.

Commission Questions and Comments

Ms. Perry asked if Mr. Grigg needed help with staffing for the trade show next week. Mr. Grigg responded that he has enough staff this year.

Brief discussion held regarding the Ag Parade in December. Ms. Garmon gave highlights of the event.

Ms. Doran-Martinez discussed the proposed smart phone application. She would like to have a map that people could layer on, such as hotels, restaurants, points of interest, historical sites, etc. Mr. Grigg asked about the costs of the phone app. Ms. Doran-Martinez reported that initially they had a local who ball-parked it at \$6,000, but the top bid has been about \$3,500. The app will be free to users. Ms. Doran-Martinez will go to the local cell phone vendors to see if they want to pre-load the app on the phones they are selling. The Chamber of Commerce, the Grant County Tourism Commission and the Moses Lake Tourism Commission may do a three-way split of the \$3,500 cost to create the app. There will be some minimal annual fees and maintenance fees that the Chamber will absorb on an annual basis. They are also exploring the possibility of a feed to the app directly from the Chamber's calendar of events.

Brief discussion held regarding the success of the expo held yesterday and how the ice rink is doing this year.

Adjournment

Ms. Doran-Martinez moved to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Garmon. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.