

MOSES LAKE TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2014

Members Present: Bev Shuford, Brenda Teals, Lisa Garmon and Mary Perry
 Members Absent: Debbie Doran-Martinez
 Staff Present: Spencer Grigg, Lori Moholt-Phillips and Kerri Smoot
 Guests Present: Mayor Dick Deane

2014

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

X=Present E=Excused Absence C=Meeting Cancelled V=Vacant R=Resigned N=Not Reappointed

Call Meeting to Order

The regular meeting was called to order by Chair Brenda Teals at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Ms. Doran-Martinez is out of the country this week.

Introduction of Guests/Visitors

Mayor Dick Deane present.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting

Ms. Perry moved the minutes of August 20, 2014, be approved as submitted. Seconded by Ms. Shuford and passed unanimously.

Correspondence/Communications

City Manager's Letter to City Council –

Mr. Grigg gave a summary of the City Manager's letter to the City Council which lists the potential cuts the City may have to make due to the ongoing REC/Grant County tax issues. Some of the potential cuts which will affect the Parks and Recreation Department include: 1) Shutting down the Larson Recreation Center (which includes the Ice Rink/Roller Rink) and the BMX track this Fall and continuing the shut down into 2015 and beyond; 2) Eliminating the Summer Concert and Movie Series and all tourism marketing in 2015 and beyond; and 3) Possibly closing some of the City's parks, reducing the maintenance budget and eliminating recreation programs. There are other cuts that may have to be made to other departments as well, including possibly discontinuing the City's ambulance service. Ms. Teals suggested the Tourism Commission write a letter to REC informing them of the impact their actions are having on the City and the community.

Also discussed was the recent finding by the Washington State Board of Tax Appeals which determined that the 2012 valuation of the market value of REC's property should be substantially higher than the amount REC claimed. REC will thus be required to pay back to Grant County the taxes now due. This means that the City and all of the other agencies suffering from REC's habitual challenging of their tax assessments may receive some much needed revenue back. REC has challenged their tax valuation every year since 2009. We cannot yet ascertain the significance of the Board's finding on the City because REC has a right to request a reconsideration of the Board's findings, and given REC's history of always challenging their tax assessments, they may appeal the Board's findings. Significant discussion held regarding the lawsuit and how all of the budget cuts could impact the community, including the lodging industry. Moses Lake attracts a lot of visitors each year as a result of the tourism marketing we do, the tournaments held at the Rink, and the various community events we put on. Discontinuing all of these may very well have a negative impact on the community. Ms. Teals is going to attend the next City Council meeting on behalf of the Tourism Commission.

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Grant County Tourism Commission – Report

The Grant County Tourism Commission did not meet this month.

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 August for June sales was \$70,246.58, an increase of 6% from the same period of time last year.

Sales tax revenue posted in August for June sales was \$512,038.78, an increase of 7% from the same period of time last year.

Marketing Update – Bill Burke, Burke Marketing

Mr. Burke shared his thoughts on the proposed marketing budget cuts. He also discussed the great success of this year's summer events. The next event will be the Museum and Art Center's Holiday Show in November.

Director's Report

Budget Situation –

Monday, September 22nd, is the next meeting between the Parks and Recreation Department and the Finance Manager regarding the 2015 budget.

Commission Questions and Comments

Ms. Teals showed the Commission the letter she composed to Alaska Airlines on behalf of the Tourism Commission requesting that they add Moses Lake and the Grand Coulee Dam to the Washington map in their magazine.

Ms. Perry asked about the Blue Heron Bluff Trail project. The next meeting is the pre-construction meeting set for next Monday.

Mr. Deane expressed how important he feels it is for the Tourism Commission to address the City Council regarding the 2015 budget cuts. He also reported on the recent Moses Lake School District meeting and the plans to build new school buildings in the future. He encouraged the Commission that even with the budget crisis the City is now in because of the REC issues, the City is still growing.

Adjournment

Ms. Shuford moved to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Perry. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.