

Tourism Coordinating Council – Jefferson County
Minutes of the Meeting of the Coordinating Council
February 14, 2023 (DRAFT)

The February 14, 2023 meeting of the Tourism Coordinating Council (TCC) for Jefferson County, convening a hybrid meeting In person from the Anderson Suite – The Inn at Port Ludow, and via Zoom, was called to order at 2:02 PM by past TCC Chair Bill Roney. A quorum was in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

Council members present: Bill Roney, Aaron Terada, Crystie Kisler, Marsha Massey, Dan Ventura

Valued Partners: Commissioner Kate Dean, Jessie Short

TCC Marketing Coordinator: Steve Shively

No Public Comments received.

PUBLIC
COMMENTS

Approval of Agenda was moved for acceptance by Dan and seconded by Marsha. Approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda The TCC January 10, 2023 minutes as well as the current TCC budget, JeffCo. and Olympic Peninsula Hotel Room Tax reports were reviewed, and approved by consent.

CONSENT
AGENDA

Commissioner's Update – Commissioner Dean, sitting in for Commissioner Eisenhour, shared the following:

- TCC response was the lone submittal for operations of Olympic Peninsula Gateway VIC.
- Submitted RFP's for ARPA funding requests exceeded remaining funds availability. BoCC will score and attempt to best prioritize awarding limited funds.
- WSDOT and especially Hood Canal Bridge construction is a concern, noting that JCCC was surprised by the currently planned closure dates. BoCC has requested a transportation planning meeting with WSDOT.

COMMISSIONER
REPORT

OPTC Highlights – Marsha shared the following:

OPTC REPORT

- Steve Roark with WSDOT briefed the February OPTC meeting, delivering construction updates, which resulted in local news articles regarding upcoming construction. HCB (Hood Canal Bridge) is "Just the tip of the iceberg" related to the 40+ WSDOT bridge, roundabout and fish barrier construction projects planned throughout Olympic Region in coming years.
- 2023 TP (Travel Planner) "lite" is now being distributed through Certified Folder on ferries and along I-5, including SEA + PDX airports. Initial 100k print run will be supported by full digital and reduced printing of traditional Travel Planner.
- Olympic NP will be closing Hurricane Ridge Visitors Center for an anticipated 12-month renovation.
- Early fall/winter joint marketing campaign figures show 18M total campaign impression, with web traffic up 12%.

Marketing Report - Steve – reviewed with TCC the following:

TCC MARKETING
COORDINATORS
REPORT

- TCC facilitated a successful booth marketing Olympic Peninsula Wedding venues. We were appreciative for sales teams from Resort at Port Ludlow, Old Alcohol Plant Inn and Worthington Park who helped out during the weekend attended by 2023 5,051 paid participants. 2024 dates are January 27th and 28th.
- Winter weather related marketing and Kingtide impacts to Kalaloch bluff cabins was reviewed.
- Ongoing highlights from TCC's winter campaign with North America TALK, and prep for a spring E Jefferson dive into lesser-known camping spots is underway.
- Marsha and Steve recapped the WSDOT construction briefing delivered at OPTC. Main takeaways included:

- This isn't new news. Since August 2022, communications, regular TCC briefings, industry-wide polling, and cc'ing all government and civic stakeholders has been on-going. Granted WSDOT's planned HCB dates have shifted, but the scope of proposed 4-weekend HCB closures and roundabouts have not changed.
- WSDOT's data-driven policy to lessen construction impact on community's mid-week goods and commerce vs. the more subjective weekend traveler, guides their planning.
- The extensive roundabout and specifically the fish barrier construct is restricted to fishery seasons, and each will result in a 10-24 day long construction disruption. Many will be managed by reduced lanes, others by complete closures requiring detours.
- Messaging is one of our best mitigation tools. For HCB consider encouraging visitors to travel above/North via PT-Coupeville ferry, or below/South via Hwy's 106/3 to Hood Canal's 101. Or campaign that visitors "Bypass the Bridge – Extended Weekend Stay" - Encouraging lodging to package "island life" themed promotions pushing for arriving before 11PM Friday, and staying over Sunday night so as to - *relax* - and avoid the Hood Canal bridge closures all together, as local lodging and hospitality profit from the truly captured visitors for four Sundays between July 31 and August 20.
- The ongoing 2023 Legislative Session was reviewed, along with status of House Bill 1258 and other legislation important to statewide tourism and hospitably work. Everyone is encouraged to save the date for March 14, Tourism Advocacy Day in Olympia.

Old Business – As noted by Commissioner Dean, the TCC Gateway VIC RFP response for management was the lone application received. As part of the plan, an application for remaining ARPA funding related to relocating the Gateway VIC across SR19 was also submitted. The special committee working on these efforts was thanked.

OLD BUSINESS

New Business – TCC reviewed a letter of support for Federal RAISE funds on behalf of Puget Sound to Pacific trails from Kitsap to the ODT across the HCB. Bill moved for support and sending letter, Dan seconded. Jessie noted that Diana will be on travel beyond the deadline for submitting letter. TCC agreed to have Steve send letter under his signature before due date. Approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Area Updates:

Marrowstone – Aaron shared these updates:

AREA UPDATES

- Fort Flagler reported that capital projects are in limbo awaiting Geotech findings related to upper campground and a needed electrical variance.
- Good news that Group facility – Camp Wilson - remains closed, but Parks is working toward opening it this year. The park website will be updated when it opens and comes on-line for reservations.

Brinnon & Hood Canal – Dan shared updates including:

- Four area ARPA requests have been submitted for the Brinnon/Quilcene communities.
- Pleased that Twana Restaurant and 101 Brewery is now Quilbilly's Restaurant and Taproom
- Planning continues on the former Shrimpfest - rebranded as "Fjord Fest"
- Interested in possible public-private partnerships to explore addressing hazard trees and reopening Falls View Campground,
- As well as exploring foot-ferry (i.e. PS Express) and/or DASH air service as means to help mitigate summer's HCB closure

Port Ludlow – Jessie Short reporting for Diana shared these highlights:

- Chef Dan is excited for 90+ covers on the reservations for today's Valentine's meal service.
- The Fireside will continue with weekly Wednesday Pasta night thru this month featuring Chimacum Valley Grainery flour in many of their pastas. Next month is "Fresh Catch" themed

- End of February the Fireside will be hosting Italian themed Cellar Masters dinner
- Plenty of sales team follow-up from recent wedding shows in both Seattle and Kitsap.
- Seattle Golf focus underway with independent golfers, including Seattle Seaplane packages.
- Working with TikTok media influencers on focused campaigns.

AREA UPDATES

(Cont.)

Gateway VIC – Bill reported:

- Announced that Shelly Leavens, Executive Director Jefferson County Historic Society will be moving on end of June.
- Gateway VIC continues with 2023 operations and transitions.
- Pleased with newly installed digital kiosk with real-time Hood Canal Bridge and local ferry details along with public WiFi service for visitors and addition of a WiFi enabled tablet for visitor use.

SWT – Marsha reported that HB1258, funding State of WA Tourism, has sought \$26M per biennium – an increase from current \$3M per biennium. It passed out of house committee with a recommended “haircut” of \$9M per biennium. It still has the other chamber, and the Governor to pass through as part of current legislative session. All the more reason to encourage legislators for full \$26M biennial funding as part of March 14 Tourism Advocacy Day in Olympia. State of WA Tourism is arranging FAM tours, attending Go West in Alaska, and partnering with Visit Seattle, and Port of Seattle for a number of international FAM events, many which will visit the Olympic Peninsula.

Additional Opportunity for Public Comment - no public comments received.

PUBLIC
COMMENTS

Adjournment – moved by Dan, Seconded by Bill. TCC meeting **adjourned** at 3:53PM

ADJORN

Next meeting of TCC is Tuesday March 14, 2023 – 2:00 PM hybrid – in-person from Olympia’s Tourism Advocacy Day or access via Zoom.

NEXT MEETING

Respectively Submitted – Steve Shively