

Travel Information Council
Quarterly Meeting
Lithia Springs Resort - Ashland, Oregon
Friday, February 29, 2008

Council Participating:

David Porter, Public Member	Drew Roslund, Hospitality Industry
George Forbes, Lodging Industry	John Brenne, Public Member
Ed Fischer, ODOT	Mike Drennan, Public Member
Rod Miles, Outdoor Advertising Industry	Tom Loun, Electrical Sign Industry
Sandra Flicker, Public Member	

Absent:

Maria Ponzi, Public Member	Tom Koehler, Vehicular Services
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TIC Staff Participating:

Cheryl Gribskov, Executive Director	Annie VonDomitz, Executive Communications Coordinator.
Jim Renner, Sign Operation Officer	Sharyl Parker, Industry Dev. Manager
Craig Tutor, Dev. & Marketing Manager	Angie Picha, Business Manager

Guest:

Nancy Appling, Heritage Tree Committee Chair

David Porter convened the meeting at 9:00 AM

INTRODUCTIONS

MINUTES - FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Approval of December 11, 2007 minutes

One correction in the minutes was noted. Under Presentation; first sentence: "of", should be omitted.

George Forbes moved the minutes be approved. John Brenne seconded the motion. The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

B. Financial Report

Angie reported that TIC is showing healthy financial stability. Cash picture shows sufficient income to cover sign installations and upcoming budgeted expenses. Program income is slightly below budget due to time of year; income decreases during winter months and will increase in spring and summer. Expenses are all below budget with the exception of administration and New Tech programs; they are currently above budget due the fact that it is still early in the biennium and will average out as we are farther into the time period.

Cheryl asked Council if they would be comfortable with expanding the financial summary to two pages instead of one to allow more detail. The Council agreed that a two page summary would be acceptable.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Next Step in Branding of TIC

Cheryl told Council that she, Jim and Annie have been working with Marcia Martin on the branding of TIC. TIC has a family of programs that have come into existence at different times over the years. They all fall under the same umbrella, but sometimes are not identified and directly connected with the TIC identity. The possibility of creating similar logos for the Heritage programs to tie them into the TIC family more closely is being considered. The possibility of adopting a DBA to better identify TIC and who we are is also being looked at. Mary Pat Parker, the new Chief of Staff will spearhead this research.

Jim Renner told of frustrations in working with the media; they frequently have trouble correctly identifying TIC, often misnaming us. Our name is very confusing to people and they misunderstand what it is that we do.

Annie VonDomitz shared that some committees have worked independently for so long they don't realize they are part of the TIC team. She has been working to bring them into the fold so they realize that they are part of this bigger organization.

1. New Brochure Design for Markers and Trees

Annie presented a draft of the final layout of the new Heritage programs brochure. The brochure has been completely redesigned; the TIC logo is a much more prominent part of this design than it has been in past versions; this is part of the goal to tie the programs together. The plan is to have the brochure printed and available by the end of this March.

B. Heritage Tree Network

Jim introduced Nancy Appling, current chair of the Heritage Tree Committee. Nancy's bio is provided in the Council packet.

Part of the desire to have TIC's Heritage programs closer to the Council is to invite the chairs of the Heritage programs to attend more of the quarterly Council meetings so there is a stronger presence and a good understanding going both directions.

Jim directed the Council's attention to the Local Heritage Tree and Significant Tree Programs handout. He acknowledged Nancy for her contribution on the list; it has been on the list of goals of the Heritage Tree Committee to promote local Heritage Tree programs, either City or County based programs. Nancy took information Jim had collected and compiled the start of the list, Jim then has updated it with several additions and there are now 15 local heritage programs around the state on the list.

Cheryl had posed the question as to whether there was an association of local Heritage Tree programs. Jim found after research there was no such program. In talking with the Urban and Community Forestry program with Oregon Dept of Forestry, Jim found that they were very supportive of us starting such a program. With this positive feedback TIC will be looking into development of a Heritage Tree Association to support local programs throughout the state.

C. National Highway Sign Changes

Jim Renner gave background information on the upcoming changes to the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Some of the proposed changes could potentially affect TIC. The Sign Policy Committee is in the process of reviewing the proposed amendments and will present their conclusions to the Council.

The six changes that would impact TIC logo signs are:

The addition of a sixth service category to Oregon's current five; which are gas, food, lodging, camping and attractions. The proposed addition to these five is 24-hour pharmacies.

Increase of up to 12 logos per one type of service, the 12 logos residing on two sign boards. There would still only be up to four logo boards available per exit.

Any supplemental messages would be displayed within the border of a logo plaque instead of as a rider beneath it as we currently do. This would mean phasing out TIC's current rider program.

Allow dual logos plaques that have two logos on the same plaque. TIC already allows this.

New standard for minimum letter sizes for logo plaques that display word legend only. The new standards would be required of new plaques. Current plaques would be upgraded as they wear out and need to be replaced.

A new standard for trailblazer signs requiring that they be duplicates of the businesses ramp logo plaques.

Currently TIC follows this standard with exception when space is limited; in those situations we use a word legend in place of the logo plaque.

D. Chrissey Field

Craig told the Council that currently TIC has an InfoCenter in Brookings at Harris Beach State Wayside; this site also includes a State Welcome Center. Two years ago State Parks proposed building a new Welcome Center at an alternative site located near the California-Oregon border out of Brookings off Highway 101. State Parks did not budget funds to move or rebuild our InfoCenter at this new location. They did designate a location in the plans for us to rebuild the center. State Parks current goal is to have the new Welcome Center location opened by this coming fall.

Cheryl had requested the sales committee to review the feasibility of building an InfoCenter at this new location. They reported that at an estimated cost of \$80,000-\$90,000 to construct and after reviewing the sites income potential, it was decided to wait on construction of a new InfoCenter. This location will only be open during dawn to dusk hours which factored into waiting on development of this site; this limited access works against the concept of the 24 hour availability of travel materials to the motoring public, which is what the InfoCenters were developed for.

E. Cultural/Arts District Proposal

Cheryl informed the Council that TIC received a request through TravelOregon, the Convention and Visitors Association of Lane County and Senator Walker to provide Tourist Attraction Logo signing for a Cultural/Arts District in the Eugene. There is a core area of downtown Eugene that has considerable cultural and art opportunities.

Cheryl met with several representatives from those entities, Mayor Kitty Piercy and Meg Trendler from CVALCO. They are interested in I-5 signing and want to pursue that possibility. They have agreed to assist in the development of a Cultural/Arts district criteria to amend to TIC's current rules. The final criteria will come before Council for final review and recommendation.

Ed moved to accept staff recommendation to review the concept of a cultural/arts district sign category, including the recommendation of inclusion in a visitor information capacity in other TIC programs. Drew seconded the motion. The motion passed with no dissenting votes

F. Next Meeting

The next Council meeting will be in Bend, Friday, June 13th, 2008. The Council Retreat & third quarter Council meeting will be Thursday and Friday, September 4th and 5th and is tentatively planned for the Warm Springs area.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Strategic Rest Area Plan

Cheryl Gribskov shared with Council a sub-committee that was created from the Transportation Tourism Task Force met on January 23rd at a facilitated meeting. The goal of the meeting was to set the vision for rest areas, creating a template as to what a rest area should have to serve the motoring public and from there set some strategic action plans as to how to have that happen.

During the beginning of March two groups will meet to set clear standards for criteria. One group will work on location of the rest areas and how many are needed. The second group will look at what visitor services should be available in the rest areas. Once that information is developed, it will be then taken "on the road" and presented to the different regions and the local visitor bureaus, truck stop operators and local ODOT personnel to get their input and feedback on the plan. The goal is to have a solid budget amount by the end of summer to give to the lobby groups to develop for the 2009 session for a dedicated funding source.

B. Oregon 150 Markers

Jim reviewed that Oregon 150, the states sesquicentennial, occurs next year, in 2009, kicking off on February 14, Oregon Statehood Day. Every state agency is directed by the governor's office to participate in a number of activities.

Jim reported that TIC feels that our Heritage programs are the area that gives us the best platform for doing some things that are meaningful to participate in Oregon 150. The Historical Marker program is developing a series of historical markers to showcase each of Oregon's seven tourism regions. The Heritage Tree program is planning for its statewide heritage tree dedication event to occur on February 14, 2009 at the Champoeg monument in Champoeg State Park. The Salem Area Geocaching Association (SAGA) is proposing a cosponsored project with TIC to create caches at accessible Oregon Heritage Tree sites. Individual histories of Heritage Trees and Historical Markers are being submitted to the Oregon Stories project. Both TIC's newsletter and heritage newsletter will promote Oregon 150 activities. A link from TIC's website to the Oregon 150 site has already been created.

Annie presented a sample sponsorship packet, including a mock-up of the conceptual design of the markers that will be used to solicit funds to underwrite the cost of the markers for the Oregon 150 event. The goal is to raise \$70,000 to cover the cost of seven markers. Each marker will be similar, yet unique to the region where it is placed.

C. Siskiyou Rest Area

Drew Roslund reported that the Jackson County Staff report was released two weeks ago. The report was in support of the Siskiyou rest area.

The planning commission hearing for the Siskiyou rest area was held February 28. Two designs were presented at the meeting; an inward and outward design. In the afternoon a state police trooper spoke and highly supported the inward design that ODOT had presented. He gave solid detail to support his recommendation. There was concern voiced at the meeting by residents of the Oak Knoll subdivision which is located near the proposed location of the rest area and the possible effects that the rest area will have on their quality of life.

Cheryl praised Drew's presentation on behalf of the Task Force.

The hearing ran longer than was anticipated and will be reconvened on March 27 at 9:00 AM. They will continue with the comment period for both support and opposition of the project. A community forum meeting is planned for March 14 with the neighbors of the proposed rest area.

D. Oasis Program

Ed Fischer reported that he spoke with Doug Tindall after the last meeting and TIC is still very much part of the Oasis program. IGA language has been drafted and is in process. Essentially the draft reflects that TIC is going to oversee the Oasis program. ODOT will retain approval authority, allowing them access to any federal funding that would need to come through ODOT.

Ed moved Council approval of the IGA concept as embodied in this draft. If there are some minor editorial or wording changes that are needed that the agreement can be signed without having to wait until the next Council meeting. George Forbes seconded the motion. The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

A. Heritage Tree Program

Nancy invited Council to the Statewide Heritage Tree dedication on Friday, April 11th at 1:00 PM near Jacksonville at the Hanley Farm. There are two trees being dedicated at this event, the Willow at Hanley Farm and then the Silver Maple at Seven Oaks just a short ways from the Hanley Farm. Nancy gave background on the Trees being dedicated.

Two other trees are being dedicated this year. The Dr Charles Caples House Orchard in Columbia City will be dedicated on April 20 and Valley of the Giants stand of old-growth Douglas-fir and hemlock trees at the BLM Mary's Peak Resource Area in Polk County will be dedicated in June.

B. Historical Marker Program

Annie presented the Council with three mock-ups of markers that are currently in process. Camp Adair is close to being finished. It will be installed in the same location as the current marker. The dedication is planned for this summer.

Vanport, the newest project, was supported very strongly by the committee. It is one of the under told Oregon stories that the committee is working to identify and bring attention to. Kaiser Permanente is sponsoring this new marker. Annie is working with PIR on an installation location for the marker. The goal is to have it installed by Memorial Day weekend which is the 60th anniversary of the flood.

The Westport marker was presented to the committee by a sponsor, Jim and Bryan Aalberg, grandson and great-grandson of "Captain" John West. The Bradley wayside on highway 30 just past Westport is being considered for the installation location. A summer dedication is also the goal for this marker.

C. MISA

Annie reported that the annual Board meeting will be at the end of March and the next annual conference will be in Seattle at the Red Lion Fifth Avenue, September 29- October 1, 2008. Two evening events are planned for the conference; one at the Space Needle and then a joint dinner with National Safety Rest Area Conference. The board is continuing to work on building the membership base.

D. Sales & Marketing Committee

No Report

E. Transportation Tourism Task Force

Sharyl Parker reported that the Task Force met on February 27th. Most of what was covered at the meeting has already been talked about; the main priority projects of the Task Force being Siskiyou and the strategic rest area plan.

Sharyl shared that she continues to be excited and amazed by the energy and awareness of the members of the task force as to what we are doing as a group and can do together. It is really nice to see that partnership.

ADJOURNMENT

David Porter adjourned the meeting at 11:20 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Roslund
Council Secretary – Travel Information Council
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