



LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LTAC)
September 13, 2019 - Friday – 8:30 A.M.
Lakewood City Hall, 6000 Main Street SW
Mt. Rainier Conference Room, 3rd Floor

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Don Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Present: Lakewood Mayor Don Anderson, Chair; Asuka Ludden - Best Western Lakewood Motor Inn; Chelene Potvin-Bird, Travel Tacoma; Phillip Raschke - Lakewood Playhouse; and Linda Smith - Lakewood Chamber of Commerce

Members Absent: Jackeline Juy – Best Western Lakewood Motor; Brandi Lynn Hesson-Bullard, Candlewood

Staff Present: Tho Kraus, Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial Officer; Dana Kapla, Finance Supervisor; Heidi Wachter, City Attorney.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT

Heidi Wachter, City Attorney, provided attendees with overview of the Open Public Meetings Act and stressed the importance. She reminded members of this state law and explained how each officials must understand their role in all City business. Ms. Wachter then distributed a sign off sheet for the committee members to indicate that they had been trained and understand this act.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

The motion passed unanimously.

2019 GRANTS STATUS & FUND BALANCE

Ms. Kraus provided a packet that includes historical awards, breakdown of available funds, JLARC, and other various reports. Ms. Kraus provided the breakdown of available funds available for 2020 and briefly discussed the reports. The 2019 hotel/motel lodging tax revenue was estimated at \$924,137 available for allocation, and is after the allocation of \$101,850 for the Clover Park Technical College McGavick Center.

2019 GRANT PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS

Lakewood Historical Society

Sue Scott, Becky Hubert, James Schell, Darrell Owens, Phil Raschke and Glen Speack, members of the Lakewood Historical Society started off by giving their appreciation for the past LTAC support.

Phil Raschke, then provided a slide show of their relocation efforts and financial report. He explained restoration will continue to other areas of the building and noted this is all being done with only 9 volunteers. Mr. Raschke described recent achievements and then detailed their projected revenue and expenses for 2020, indicated a \$26,500 shortfall. He emphasized the importance of the LTAC funds and would help fill cover shortfall.

Lakewold Gardens

Carla Pelster, Board President, accompanied by Cassandra de Kanter, began thanking the committee for their support and the opportunity to present their new proposal. Ms. Pelster updated the committee on their changing personnel and described their personnel strategy.

Ms. Pelster announced that Lakewold Gardens recently celebrated their 30th birthday and presented a slide show of Lakewold Gardens hosting different events throughout the four seasons and shared highlights of the major events. She went on to explain that the gardens can accommodate a wedding for 120 people, and how they would like to market to those interested in micro weddings. She described the weddings they have hosted along with other events at the gardens. She reported they had raised \$320,000 via generous donors and went on to describe their financial and marketing strategies.

Committee sought clarification that the garden is back to hosting wedding. Ms. Pelster confirmed this then went on to explain how they would like to emphasis micro weddings and a short discuss pursued.

Historic Fort Steilacoom Association

Secretary, Joseph Lewis noted that Historic Fort Steilacoom Association (HFSA) is the oldest attraction soliciting from LTAC. He noted that they have been on the National Historic Register for 170 years and became a museum in 1983. He described how HFSA has three historic markers from the Historic Society and described their location.

Mr. Lewis described how they revamped their website after they hired a professional photographer/web artist. He explained how they can now get people's email via the website and how one can join the association using PayPal. He continued to describe how their marketing strategy has changed, reviewed highlights, and announced that their gift shop now takes credit cards, which has allowed for better sales.

He goes on to explain how the most frequent question they get is, "Why is HFSA not in Steilacoom?" Mr. Lewis explained how Lakewood was not established yet therefore Lakewood is not in the name, however there marketing strategy is to include "Lakewood, WA" on their marketing items to answer that question.

Committee member Potvin-Bird commented on how the new credit card system may be able to track the location of the consumers and how Trip Advisor may be a good tool to track people as well.

Asia Pacific Cultural Center (APCC)

Faaluaina Pritchard, Executive Director, handed out a marketing publication that provided highlights from this year's Samoa Cultural Day. She thanked the committee for all the years of support and indicated they could not put on this event without LTAC support. She noted that 2020 is the 10th anniversary for the event. She explained how they were forced to move the full day event to the Tacoma Dome because the

performers' feet became uncomfortable/painful because of tough, hot turf was during their presentation. Tacoma Dome provides covered, cool stage for their performers.

Ms. Pritchard noted that Tacoma Dome is expensive and they need financial assistance with it along with equipment costs. She noted that although this main event was held outside of Lakewood all other events for the week were hosted in Lakewood. She mentioned that many of their members and family members stay or live in Lakewood during the event.

Lastly, Ms. Prichard mentioned their memorandum of understanding with Clover Park School District and continued to describe how they work together to work-with and teach Asian children.

South Sound Sports Commission and Tacoma Regional Convention + Visitor Bureau (TRCVB)

Dean Burke, President and CEO, discussed how Tacoma South Sound Sports Commission and Travel Tacoma + Pierce County plan to officially merge January 2020. The rolling out of this new brand will be announced at the October 22 meeting, which is open to the public. Their first order of business is joining their resources and expenses to improve efficiencies and shift to drive up room nights, while being able to confidently calculate and report statistics (i.e., stays, types of people, health etc.) to stakeholders. They plan to adjust their marketing strategy to include more business/activity based events and less leisure.

Mr. Burke reviewed highlights of some of their events and listed the coming events, such as cycle cross national event and grass volleyball. He explained how stake holders are pushing for more data and increased hotel stays. This newly merged group plans to dive deep into the 2020 inventory study (feasible study) by reviewing over 170 events throughout our area and identify new strategies and opportunities for Lakewood and the surrounding areas. Mr. Burke noted that economic development in Lakewood, such as Motor Avenue and Fort Steilacoom Park create great potential packages for Lakewood.

Lastly, Mr. Burke provided the two current marketing brochures from the two companies. He demonstrated how, if you put the two brochures together they show the two groups coming together.

City of Lakewood Communications – Imaging Promotions 2020

Brynn Grimley, Communications Manager, thanked the committee for their support in last year's new branding effort. She asked for continued support to continue their effort to change the perception of the city. "Build your better here" is the new tagline and brand anthem. Brynn presented slides describing their marketing plan and read the new anthem to promote the city. This is targeted to "starters, builders, long termers, and warriors (military)".

Through the presentation, Ms. Grimley presented data, goals, and highlighted events. She described how a powerful image can have more impact than words, and asked for continued support for a professional photographer. She mentioned that they can reach more with more money. If awarded, the proposed funds would go to imaging campaign advertising, online advertising, and professional photography videography.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Gateways

Mary Dodsworth, Director, thanked the committee for this opportunity. She mentioned that there are great opportunities next years and presented a slide show. This presentation showed the difference between historic gateways to newly designed ones. Ms. Dodsworth noted that first impressions matter and these new gateways do not have taglines, as they are to promote a feeling that you are somewhere special. Ms. Dodsworth presented a map of current and potential gateway locations. The two proposed are located at Berkley/1-5 and Murray Road/15 and will be done in coordination with road construction. This allows for a lower cost. She indicated there are currently 8 new gateways with a total of 14, as a follow-up to a question.

Sister Cities Association

Connie Coleman-Lacadie, President, noted they had a great event this last year since they joined SummerFest. She indicated they had 9 visitors instead of 5 which stressed their budget a lot. She thanked Tho Kraus for her assistance during this time and also thanked the Police Department. She noted that everyone provided a warm welcome to Lakewood, along with Candlewood Suites and Enterprise Rental Car.

Ms. Coleman-Lacadie requested that her proposal be reviewed in two portions; one for International Festival need (costs for marketing, tradeshows, and entertainers \$8,300); and one for Sister/Friendship City needs (costs for media, travel, and rentals \$15,600). She explained they are requesting additional money this year to bring in more visitors for more events. She reported that they brought in entertainers from Cambodia to Russian, not just Asian entertainment and paid stipends. She noted this was another record year.

Ms. Coleman-Lacadie discussed how they depleted their bank account due to the increased visitors and kindly asked they be more generous than last year.

Lakewood Arts Festival Association

Robert Lawrence, Chairman, announced this is the 7th Artsfest, which is part of the Lakewood Film, Arts and Book Festival (FAB) and were setting up as he speaks. Mr. Lawrence provided a visual presentation of the package they proposed. He reported that FAB fest is a one of a kind festival as it is combined with the international film fest and has many visiting authors.

Mr. Lawrence presented current flyers and displayed a slide show with many photos of before, during and after the festival. He also announced their special author Dorothy Wilhelm who wrote "True Tales of Puget Sound" and watercolor artist Ron Snowden, who will judge the work. Additional acts include a bonsai display and a flute performance.

Mr. Lawrence ended by stating that their goal is to create an artistic festival and because Lakewood is an ideal location (easy access etc.) for cultural events.

Lakewood Playhouse

John Munn, Managing artistic Associate Artistic Director, announced this is opening week for Biloxi Blues. He reported that Lakewood Playhouse has been here for 81 years and this year they are focusing on legacy. He thanked the committee for their support and said that their success would not be possible with LTAC support, and that they depended on it. They provide programming 365 days a year plus offer a variety of theatrical education and performance opportunities (Lakewood Institute of Theatre). He mentioned that they are renting space next to the Dress Barn to stay within the city.

Mr. Munn handed out movie posters along with business cards that have City of Lakewood's brand saying on the back. He reported the plays they have presented and those that are planned, including details on current cast members. He also stated that they are ambassadors to theatre. He discussed some of their marketing strategies (Facebook, Instagram and community outreach with Clover Park) and described how they teamed up with an art class to create a logo, which was extend to the rotary club.

Mr. Munn described that James Stow was the artist for the 80 anniversary posters, and when the 6 posters are combined they create one large photo. He noted that their success could not have been done without LTAC support. This support allows them to keep costs down. Because of LTAC support they are now being awarded for their productions which provides them grants and because of this, for the first time, actors all now getting stipends, other volunteers are not. He then provided statics on audience/supports and described the success of the trifold pamphlet. Proposed funding would go to marketing.

Committee ask them if they did not get funding from LTAC what would happen. Mr. Munn responded that sponsorship would drop and they would no longer be successful.

Lakewood Chamber of Commerce – Nights of Lights 2020

Linda Smith, President/CEO, thanked the committee to allow her to submit two requests. Although results of the first funding will not be reported until next year (proposed for December 2019) this request is to build upon and grow the tradition in December 2020.

Ms. Smith stresses that she wants to assist and encourage business to participate in hanging up lights to bring back the tradition of blue lights. She continued with a short history of the Lakewood blue light tradition created by Norton Clapp's wife, Mary. She continued by discussing how blue lights took on new meaning in Lakewood November 29, 2009 during the police tragedy, and how the City Council adopted the color blue for the holiday light theme.

She proposes to motivate business to get a jump on this new tradition by sending out a direct mailer to businesses on Gravelly Lake Drive and going door to door. She also mentioned they may be able to assist businesses with the purchase of blue lights, if available. Lastly, Ms. Smith noted that Lakewood Hardware and Paint will be the official light blue store.

Lakewood Chamber of Commerce - Tourism

Linda Smith, President/CEO, thanks the council member to allow her to continue to serve as lead destination marketing organization to encourage visitors and groups.

Ms. Smith reported they have served 2,000 visitors this year and serve the State as well as Lakewood. She provided a presentation of photos of their headquarters and displayed their current flyer. She also mentioned they are the only participants involved with the military newcomer orientations that serves 400 to 700 new military every month.

Ms. Smith reviewed her marketing strategy, described partnerships, website, brochures, and funding history. She displayed the website and show where you can find a comprehensive list of community events, along with other parts of the site. She distributed handouts to the committee and demonstrated how they can customize the brochures binder for individual travelers. She went on to discuss how they assist people of all walks of life and how they can assist them in their travels.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Summer Concert Series

Sally Martinez, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, reported they put on six concerts in 2019. As she presented a slide show she mentioned how the people in Lakewood love to dance and noted that this is where families can dance together. She reminded the committee that these concerts are free to the community; old to younger, all cultures and with all abilities. They partner with Asia Pacific Cultural Center to provide entertainment and brought food trucks this year.

She reported the numbers of attendees per concert and reported the more expensive band drew in higher attendance. Most concerts brought in 200 to 250 attendance, whereas the Beatles Tribute band brought in a lot more. Ms. Martinez believes this is because they have a following allowing for free advertisement from the bands social media. This draws more people to the venue and gets the word out. Her goal is to have approximately 600 people per concert but this will mean more expensive entertainment, therefore the higher proposal.

Lastly, she mentioned that pavilion has been an outstanding venue and that the bands rave how create it is.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Farmers Market

Sally Martinez, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, announced this was the 8th Annual Farmer's Market and it was the best year so far because of the vendor sales and attendance. Ms. Martinez provided a visual presentation which included photos and data. She noted the Army bands started off the celebrations on the same day as the ribbon cutting. She presented us with first bites video created by her interns provide by the University of Puget Sound at no charge to us. She reported these students work 30hrs per week for 3 months and provide invaluable support and energy. This video showed a diverse culture with organic foods within the Farmers Market.

Ms. Martinez listed her sponsors and described how they contribute to the success of the market. She reported the Healthy Bucks was a success again this year providing children free fresh fruits and vegetables. The market hosts and sustains 13 farms. She presented another video about the local vendors, also created by the interns.

Ms. Martinez presented her marketing strategies and reported that signs (similar to political signs) and support swag is very successful and because a great word by mouth. She then reported that, on average, visitors spent \$15 to \$45 per visit, same as last year, but because there were a lot more visitors that vendors (65) did much better than last year. She believes they have now hit their stride.

City of Lakewood PRCS – SummerFEST

Sally Martinez, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, announced this is a 23 year iconic tradition. As she presented sides she played the SummerFest video. Ms. Martinez said they marketed it as a family tradition and now it is a mothership for the community. She stated that it is a big undertaking to provide a safe environment with a good foundation and due to the growth, costs have increased as well.

Ms. Martinez reported the vendors said it was their best festival in history of festivals. She reported that they believe it is because it is a perfect balance of big crowds and the number of vendors. Ms. Martinez listed and discussed all the sponsorship. She reported Coca Cola approached her for sponsorship due to the success of the event. This sponsorship is part money and donation, where they can pick non-profit to share profits. Coca Cola also provides a huge discount to vendors and provided ice buckets.

Ms. Martinez reported that 40% of the visitors were participating for the first time. She then discussed her advertising strategies and listed them. She mentioned that she has people hand out stickers that "stick around", and how keeping the pulse on younger populations has contributed to better marketing as they provided clever marketing ideas. Free advertising creating "hype" through partners like the Original Donut Shop, Clover Park, and Puget Sound Regional Volleyball. Ms. Martinez reported 600 people attended and along with many other statistics. They had 24 sport events, 14 art activities and presented a video of the very successful 8th annual Triathlon.

Lastly, she explained how the expense is growing due to the growth and popularity of the festival. Some of the proposed funding will go towards professional parking, honey buckets, handwashing stations, more garbage, and additional resources.

GRANT FUNDING DECISIONS

Group discussion ensued on setting their 2020 recommendations. After review all proposals were funded as requested except for the following along with other recommendations:

Lakewold Gardens: reduced funding is due to prior funding support and scope of work. In previous year's Lakewold Gardens has been funded approximately \$35,000. Because their focus is on micro weddings, this allows for fewer hotel nights, therefore request does not support full funding.

Asian Pacific Cultural Center: reduced funding is due APCC's primary event is held outside of Lakewood, WA.

City of Lakewood – Imaging Promotions: reduced funding is due to changed scope of work as this has less emphasis on tourism in the city.

South Sound Sports Commission and Tacoma Regional Convention + Visitor Bureau (TRCVB): committee recommended their annual report include a larger spread for the City of Lakewood.

Historic Fort Steilacoom Association: one-time increased funding was provided to complete relocation endeavor.

LAKWOOD LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

2019 Requests for 2020 LTAC Grant Funds	Total	Funding Request		Recommended Funding	
		Non-Capital	Capital	Non-Capital (4%)	Capital (3%)
Applicant	Project Cost				
		Available Balance		\$ 640,121	\$ 385,865
Lakewood Historical Society	\$ 74,200	\$ 42,000	\$ -	\$ 42,000	\$ -
Lakewold Gardens	\$ 80,900	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -
Historic Fort Steilacoom Association	\$ 14,000	\$ 12,000	\$ -	\$ 12,000	\$ -
Asian Pacific Cultural Center	\$ 37,500	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ -
TSSSC and TC&VB	\$ 2,740,086	\$ 120,000	\$ -	\$ 120,000	\$ -
Lakewood Sister Cities Association	\$ 23,900	\$ 23,900	\$ -	\$ 23,900	\$ -
Lakewood Arts Festival Association	\$ 27,000	\$ 19,500	\$ -	\$ 19,500	\$ -
Lakewood Playhouse	\$ 23,350	\$ 23,000	\$ -	\$ 23,000	\$ -
Lakewood Chamber of Commerce - Nights of Lights	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -
Lakewood Chamber of Commerce - Tourism	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ -	\$ 90,000	\$ -
City of Lakewood PRCS – SummerFEST	\$ 128,000	\$ 80,000	\$ -	\$ 80,000	\$ -
City of Lakewood PRCS – Farmers Market	\$ 45,200	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -
City of Lakewood PRCS – Concert Series	\$ 25,500	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -
City of Lakewood – Imaging Promotions	\$ 153,500	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ -
City of Lakewood PRCS – Gateways	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ 150,000
	\$ 3,633,136	\$ 595,400	\$ 150,000	\$ 560,400	\$ 150,000
		Subtotal	\$ 745,400	Subtotal	\$ 710,400
CPTC McGavic Center (Committee, Annual Payment)	\$ 101,850	\$ -	\$ 101,850	\$ -	\$ 101,850
	\$ 3,734,986	\$ 595,400	\$ 251,850	\$ 560,400	\$ 251,850
		Total	\$ 847,250	Total	\$ 812,250

Committee member made a motion to accept budget and another committee member second the motion. No discussion, motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

None


ADJOURNMENT

Chair Anderson thanked LTAC for their service. Chair Don Anderson adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

Minutes:



Dana Kapla, Finance Supervisor (Preparer)



Mayor Don Anderson, Chair