

ATTACHMENT: Minutes of Sept. 22, 2023 LTAC Retreat



**LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LTAC)
MINUTES**

Friday, September 22, 2023
Council Chambers (and via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mayor Jason Whalen called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

ROLL CALL (Committee members announced their presence)

Members present: **In person:** Lakewood Mayor Jason Whalen, Chair; Linda Smith, Lakewood Chamber of Commerce; Dean Burke, President - Travel Tacoma.

Members Absent: DJ Wilkins, Comfort Inn and Suites; Jarnail Singh, President - Comfort Inn and Suites joined after roll call for a short duration.

City staff present: Heidi Wachter, City Attorney; Dana Kapla, Assistant Finance Director; Jennifer Posalski, CED Office Assistant.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL - The motion to approve the 2023 LTAC meeting minutes from September 22, 2022 passed unanimously.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT and Public Records

City Attorney Heidi Ann Wachter provided an annual update/training on the Open Public Meetings Act. She discussed the requirement of the training and then provided the information and training to the members. Ms. Wachter concluded her training and asked the members to contact the Legal Department if they have any additional questions in the future.

2022 GRANTS STATUS & FUND BALANCE – Dana Kapla, Assistant Finance Director.

Ms. Kapla gave an overview of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee process and described the breakdown of the Washington State's lodging taxes paid by lodging businesses. She stated \$3,138,975 was available this year. Of that, \$1,440,104 was available for 4%, which is the unrestricted portion that can also be used for capital, and \$1,698,871 is from the 3% that is restricted for capital purposes only. Member Dean Burke confirmed that the \$3.1M included carryforward, and one-year collection was \$1.13M. Ms. Kapla confirmed.

2023 GRANT PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS

Grave Concerns Association – Laurel Lemke, Chair Person

Ms. Lemke stated the association was established in 2020 as a non-profit organization restoring the cemetery in Fort Steilacoom Park where graves were marked with numbers instead of grave markers. There are approximately 3200 burials of which 2000 have been replaced with name plates by Graves Concerns Association. Ms. Lemke stated Grave Concerns mainly does fundraisers, puts in markers, and does grooming in summer months. She also mentioned their three major events in 2023 and hopes to do another one in October. Their plan is to have a video produced by Nitty Gritty and publish another brochure. Ms. Lemke also

noted that some of the money they have requested for next year is to create a website for the public. She described their contact with the public, detailed who they are, and who they would be working with.

Chair Whalen asked what the money is primarily used for and Ms. Lemke stated it is used more for publicity, website, and marketing. Chair Whalen inquired about attendance. Ms. Lemke responded with attendance on various events. Chair Whalen commented that the City may receive the cemetery on Washington Boulevard, so he asked if her organization might be involved with the maintenance or historical work. Ms. Lemke stated they would be likely to consult on ideas. The group discussed location and size of the cemetery in FSP and other historical information.

Historic Fort Steilacoom Association (HFSA) – Joseph Lewis, Secretary

Mr. Lewis began by bringing greetings from President Walter Neary and stated that 2024 is a big year for them as it's the 175th anniversary of the US Army arriving in the Puget Sound and establishing Fort Steilacoom. Mr. Lewis described how they intend to commemorate this event in various ways. He provided historical information on when they first arrived in 1849 in both Lakewood and Vancouver. They are establishing a planning committee to come up with a series of events to mark the occasion, such as requesting proclamations and scheduling guest speakers. He explained how technology has increased, what type of revenue has dropped, why they had decent recruitment issues, listed various ways they have raised money, and provided historical information of that period. Mr. Lewis concluded by asking a historical question and presenting historical voting information.

Chair Mayor Whalen inquired that if the City owned the buildings would they come back in a few years with a capital request. Mr. Lewis confirmed they would hope so, and how they need to make things ADA compliant.

Asia Pacific Cultural Center (APCC) - Faaluaina Pritchard, Executive Director

Ms. Pritchard started by stating that 2024 is their 14th Annual Event. She explained APCC teaches, showcases, and represents the 47 nations that make up Asia and the South Pacific. She explained how they were unable to have the events in Lakewood at Clover Park Technical College this year due to construction and lack of power, but plan to bring it back to Lakewood in 2024. Via a slide show, Ms. Pritchard presented statistical information and showcased events such as prayer service, youth events that teach historical information, fashion shows, community dinners, and their final food fest with games. Ms. Pritchard listed some famous people that attended and then thanked the committee for their continued support.

Travel Tacoma Mt. Rainier Tourism & Sports - Dean Burke, President/CEO

Mr. Burke stated that they are a county wide destination marketing organization and sports commission for Pierce County. Through a visual presentation, Mr. Burke described that their origination number one job is to generate night stays through meetings, sports, and leisure travel. Mr. Burke provided statistical information on hotel revenue and described their economic impact. He listed their Lakewood specific priorities and provided information on golf, cyclocross, cross county, and baseball. He also described their partnership with Summerfest, Lakewold Gardens, and the Colonial Plaza and spoke of their plans for the future and shared some future events. He closed by briefly explaining how homelessness, drug addictions, crime/vandalism affects tourism and our communities.

City of Lakewood PRCS – SummerFest – Mary Dodsworth, Parks and Recreation Director.

Via a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Dodsworth started by stating this is a free festival that attracts 25,000 people and explained how this participation number is a good for the location and staffing. She described their approach obtaining partnerships/sponsors. Due to the success of the event, she noted that sponsors are now coming to them! Partnerships such as

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health and Amazon advertise for Summerfest and also presented examples of magazines containing SummerFest advertisements. Ms. Dodsworth explained that because they receive an estimated 40% of new attendees each year, they must keep telling their story, adding new activities/events. This year a new activity was added "A Passport for Life." It focused on health, wellness, and art. She also described many of the activities at the event (car show, face painting, kids' activities, live music, circus, balloons, etc.). She presented a video of the new drone show and described how that show came about. She noted that all vendors had to present a free activity to visitors to make this a true-free-event. Ms. Dodsworth then explained why the request is higher this year.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked if the drone show will be included next year. Ms. Dodsworth confirmed and stated this was not part of the request as it is contained in the City's budget.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked how much for the \$193,000 request is staff and administration costs. Ms. Dodsworth explained the labor part is for part time staff only and the remaining is for contract services that support the operation of the event and for paying the entertainers. Additional discussion was had on how the event is free to all.

Member Burke asked if 25,000 people is the ceiling. Ms. Dodsworth stated although Fort Steilacoom Park (FSP) could handle more people, it is the right amount for this site considering the impact it could have on the site. Member Burke asked if there was possibility to ticket programming to generate revenue. Ms. Dodsworth explained that vendors pay fees, and described how they could do ticketed fee with the new baseball stadium. Member Smith added that the free aspect is what makes this event unique and Member Burke agreed and discussed potential events.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Farmers Market - Mary Dodsworth, Parks and Recreation Director
Ms. Dodsworth described the evolution of this event which started with 25 vendors and now has 100 vendors. The location and timing have also changed. While Ms. Dodsworth presented a PowerPoint, she also emphasized the strong partnership they have with the vendors and continued to provide stats on the growth of the market. She discussed the economic impact the market has on the Lakewood community, and briefly discussed the increased sales, the SNAP program, Market Match Program, Healthy Bucks, and the Senior Support WIC. She presented photos of vendors/farmers, showcased the locations in which the vendors came from, and showed some of the activities they offer. She stated that their marketing and branding is the same as SummerFest, and discussed how the program has grown.

Member Smith commented that the Summer Concert Series follows the Farmers Market perfectly to this event and how they ramped up the activities.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Summer Concert Series - Mary Dodsworth, Parks and Recreation Director

Ms. Dodsworth stated the concert series moved to Tuesdays to follow the Farmer's Market so it is growing. They have expanded the number of concerts, quality of performers, which in turn has increased participation. Because bands are coming from near and far, they too are bringing their fans to the event, increasing number and economic impact. She shared their marketing strategy through a PowerPoint and said their food vendors at the event do well.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked if they had more money could they have a headliner band for the Summerfest. Ms. Dodsworth said they could pull it off but it would cost much more. Discussion ensued on future growth of Fort Steilacoom Park and what it could be used for and when they could hold them.

Lakewold Gardens - Tourism – Susan Warner, Executive Director, Helen Donahue, Contract Grant Writer.

Ms. Warner started by stating their attendance has been increasing by 5,000 year after year and continue to expand their program by producing an abridged version of “A Midsummer Night Dream” which sold out. Ms. Warner had a PowerPoint presentation stat on attendance, how they spend the LTAC funds, and information on where their audience is coming from. She described their partnership with KAKX and King FM, then described how their social media stats have been growing. Ms. Warner presented information on Mayfest, FairyFest, All Hollows’ Eve, Winter Solstice, Rockin’ the Rhodies, Music from Home, Poetry in the Garden, Wagner House Art Series, and their weddings. Ms. Warner state their vision is to be the center for art, music, and nature, which she believes is a quality program for Lakewood. Both Ms. Warner and Ms. Donahue discussed how they have increased their grants through the quality of their programs, and how they strive to be a garden for all seasons.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked, due to the larger ask, if they could provide more about their grants and how they generate revenue. Ms. Warner stated that all the programs were supported by grants one way or another. Ms. Donahue described that the nature of their business is operations which is the hardest to fund. The grants do not fully fund the programs, therefore LTAC funding provides support for operations and support where grants cannot. They described how they are continuing to grow their programs and sustain attendance. The group discussed how they could raise additional revenue.

Lakes Cross Country Booster Club - Peter Johnson, President.

Mr. Johnson presented a PowerPoint and mentioned they are inspired by Joe Clark, who coaches Lakes Highschool cross country team and who has grown the program to what it is today. The Fort Steilacoom Park XC Invitational program started in 1998 and featured 15 teams with 350 participates. Mr. Johnson explained how the program has grown over the years. In 2023 they saw 3478 runners cross the finish line, representing 111 teams (made up of 95 high schools and the rest being middle school and club teams). Mr. Johnson explained the effect the pandemic had on the program and how it impacted running. He provided program stats on where the participants and spectators were from, how they get their estimates, and the economic impact it has on the community. Mr. Johnson stated they worked with Brynn Grimley to create a website, and then described what it takes to put on the program (parking, sponsors, vendors, food court, chip timing). The group discussed how they started and how they might grow.

Lakewood Historical Society (LHS) – Ed William, President; Phil Raschke, Vis President; Sue Scott.

Mr. William introduced Sue Scott and Phi Raschke. Mr. Raschke started by providing a brief history of the museum and provided photos of their history, location, restoration, and changes via a PowerPoint presentation. He briefly spoke about Ben and Willard, the historical cabin and diary, various films, and the media room. He emphasized they have 9 volunteers, no paid staff, and 1 part-time consultant which creates exhibits. He displayed and briefly described yearly key expenses, their collections project, the collections proposal, projected estimated income, listed current goals, and provided projected shortfalls. He went over his current goals, such as hosting historical events, placing historical markers, publications, exhibits, operating hours, and expanding membership, board members, and traffic building programs. Mr. Raschke described Titan and Titanic, Library exhibits, Motor Ave street activities, Ivan, markers, historic programs, Christmas program, and collections.

Member Burke asked for the total number of people who come through their door. Mr. Raschke said it averages 800 and elaborated on facilities and location.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked where they were on their lease, rate and term on the operating side. Mr. Raschke said they had 18 to 20 months on the lease.

Lakewood Arts Foundation, Lakewood Community Playhouse dba Lakewood Playhouse and Lakewood Institute of Theatre – Erin Chanfrau, Interim Theatre Administrator; Gail Thomason, Treasurer

Ms. Chanfrau shared their new look, new vibe and new approach, which is to be a theatre for the entire community. Ms. Chanfrau explained they provide a completely unique theatre experience by operating entirely in-the-round, which provides dynamic storytelling, intimate audience experience, and a focus on the best use of resources. Ms. Hansen showed a PowerPoint emphasizing their contemporary season, emphasis on global majority and underserved communities, and outreach. She discussed their mainstage, education program, space for the community, and listed some of their programs. She provided stats on location of visitors, ticket numbers, renewal season ticket holder rate, and how they are moving forward through their rebranding, campaigning, social media content, and building recognition for their space. To build recognition for their space, Ms. Chanfrau described their relationship with the well-known, seasoned mural artist Jeremy Gregory that has provided his work to many walls, outside (and inside) of buildings, apartment and condo areas. She felt a mural from him could make their building more recognizable and showcase the community. She showcased their merchandise, talked about unexpected changes, and described how they had ended their fiscal year in the black which is not common in the theatre world.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked whether they had thought of offering music in the round or stand-up comedy. Ms. Chanfrau said yes and yes. The group discussed how to grow programs.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked about their potential capital ask. Ms. Hansen described future possible capital campaigns and the possibility of a capital ask. They discussed how a mural on the outside would help them become identifiable, provide more recognition, and represent the community. Discussion of the mural continued and the total estimated cost for the mural would be \$7,000.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Saturday Streets Festival – Mary Dodsworth, Parks and Recreation Director

Ms. Dodsworth described the growth of the downtown core for Lakewood and how it helped create the idea of a Saturday Street Festival. Ms. Dodsworth presented a PowerPoint providing a marketing flyer from the event and described some of the vendors, activities, and entertainment they provide to enjoy the area. She also presented clips and photos from their live events, dance demonstrations, entertainment, and described how they encourage participation. She mentioned some of their partners, entertainers, and vendors, such as Clover Park School District, Lakewood Multicultural Coalition, West Pierce Fire and Rescue, Lakewood Police, and car shows. Ms. Dodsworth discussed why they provide this program and how it impacts the community by generating tourism, community engagement, and cultivates community and family traditions. Ms. Dodsworth discussed the difficulties for evening events/markets.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked if there were any winter events. Ms. Dodsworth explained the difficulty with winter weather without indoor space. The group discussed how this event could grow.

Member Smith commented that rental space in this location may be cost prohibited for non-profit and she asked if they had reconsidered fee structure. Ms. Dodsworth said that it is up to the Council, but from a risk management and safety perspective there is a lot that goes into it such as blocking off space, road closure, and hiring police. Ms. Dodsworth stated that they should talk to the Council about this.

City of Lakewood PRCS – Fiesta De La Familia – Mary Dodsworth, Parks and Recreation Director

Ms. Dodsworth described how the event started as a street festival and how it has grown and moved from downtown to Fort Steilacoom Park. She described the event's diversity celebrating Hispanic and Latinx heritage, culture, and traditions, and how it creates tourism, increase an economic impact, and the relationship they have created. She presented photos of some of the bands, music, dances, arts, and described some of the other activities. Ms. Dodsworth mention their community partners (schools, fire department, police department, etc.) and how children proudly showed up to the event in their heritage clothing. They plan on bringing in new people and growing the event. They discussed other potential art activities.

Member Burke asked if this event was City owned. Ms. Dodsworth confirmed that is was. He then followed up by asking what ethnicity gets a festival. Ms. Dodsworth explained that comes from partnerships that approach the City. Mr. Burke asked if the City would eventually step away from this and let the community take over, and then move to a different part of the community. Ms. Dodsworth said in a perfect world this would be correct, but in Lakewood there are not large groups (yet) to do this, but hopefully one day there would be. Chair Mayor Whalen commented that perhaps the Multicultural Coalition could be a conduit to many other cultural events.

Lakewood Sister Cities Association — International Festival - Connie Coleman-Lacadie, President

Ms. Coleman-Lacadie stated 2024 would be their 9th year with SummerFest so they will be adding and expanding to showcase their diverse community (14 to 16 cultures). She mentioned they will be adding a professional sound system and other equipment for a better entertainment experience. Ms. Coleman-Lacadie presented a dragon performance, fire dance group, and described how these activities are teaching experience. This activity is for one day at SummerFest. She described the activities at the event and projected activities. They plan on increasing marketing with new promotional ads and purchasing additional canopies. They discussed what the funding supports, how activities have changed each year, and the groups included.

City of Lakewood Communications – Foreign Delegation Visit/Lakewood Sister City - Brynn Grimley, Communications Manager

Ms. Grimley presented historical information/timeline on the Sister City organization, and how it promotes peace through people-to-people relationship and provides a cultural exchange program. She presented photos from a recent visit to Gimhae City in May 2023 (attending Mayor Jason Whalen, Deputy Mayor Mary Moss, City Manager John Cauldfield) and how they were very thoughtful in preparing and organizing their visit. Gimhae City hosted the delegation, paying for accommodations and events for four days. In return, the City will be hosting 10 people from Gimhae planned for July 2024. Proposed events would include SummerFest, Lakewood sister Cities International Festival, and visits showcasing Lakewood, Pierce County and the State. This project will serve the people of Lakewood by strengthening ties with Gimhae and sharing interests such as economic development opportunities, support of families, promotion of education and cultural awareness, and student exchange programs.

City of Lakewood Communications – Marketing Promotions –Brynn Grimley, Communications Manager

Ms. Grimley shared their project goals for their “Nearcation” campaign and provided a brief historical timeline of the market campaign for the City. She mentioned they have increased

the ask from 60K to 75K, and explained why it has increased. Ms. Grimley stated they know more now and understand that positive, professional, and consistent marketing benefits the City. It brings more awareness to events, increases economy, and increases tourism. She presented marketing and promotion details for SummerFest and Fort Steilacoom Invitational, and discussed how this strategy can translate to other events in Lakewood. She presented their 2024 goals which include targeted marketing, outreach to event organizers, developing more assets, ads & SWAG.

Member Burke asked who do they use for their microsites. Ms. Grimley stated Hemisphere is their design marketing firm. Marketing strategies, microsites, and other funding were discussed.

Member Smith asked if there were a correlation of shared funding with Summerfest. Ms. Grimly stated the marketing funding was shared between the two groups (SummerFest and Marketing and Promotions), however things may change going forward to where Marketing would take care of all marketing.

Lakewood Chamber of Commerce – Tourism - Linda Smith, President/CEO

Ms. Smith stated the Chamber is proud to serve as the lead destination marketing organization for Lakewood and their objection is to entice visitors as well as provide tourist information and services to visiting public. Ms. Smith explained how their objective is to bring people to extend their stay via their website and location. Ms. Smith provided visitor data, listed the services and products they provide, and future publications. She presented promotional commercials for Summer and Fall which create the mood for the season. She then navigated through their website, showing an autumn publication showcasing many possibilities for a two day stay, listed some activities, accommodations/vendors in Lakewood. She demonstrated how a visitor could find, activities/businesses, calendars, and vendors. She provided visitor and media stats and then shared a video on how to locate information on their map which will be released later this year. She also mentioned they are working on a portable touch-free kiosk.

Member Burke suggested Member Ms. Smith contact him as his organization is getting non-portable kiosks for free and that they should discuss.

Chair Mayor Whalen asked if they promote all vendors on their site. Ms. Smith confirmed. Chair Mayor Whalen continued by asking if paid member vendors get a more elaborate site. Ms. Smith said no, as of now they all get a similar site.

GRANT FUNDING DECISIONS

LTAC deliberations commenced.

The motion to approve proposals as presented at \$1,119,800 was passed unanimously, followed by a motion to amend that motion and add \$7,000 to Lakewood Playhouse to cover the cost of the mural for their marketing campaign, for a new total of \$1,126,800. The amended motion was moved and seconded that the final allocation be approved.

With no further discussions, the motion to approve the amended motion was passed unanimously.

Member Burke requested a meeting for a study session in early 2024 with the committee to discuss best practices and ideas from other committees from the State. Committee agreed.

LAKWOOD LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

2023 Requests for 2024 LTAC Grant Funds Applicant	Total Project Cost	Funding Request			Recommended Funding		
		Non-Capital	Capital	Total	Non-Capital (4%)	Capital (3%)	Total
Grave Concerns Association	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	10,000	-	10,000
Historic Fort Steilacoom Association	17,000	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-	15,000
Asia Pacific Cultural Center	42,600	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-	15,000
Travel Tacoma - Mt. Rainier Tourism & Sports	4,016,415	115,000	-	115,000	115,000	-	115,000
Lakewold Gardens	200,000	200,000	-	200,000	200,000	-	200,000
Lakes Cross County Booster Club	6,500	6,500	-	6,500	6,500	-	6,500
Lakewood Chamber of Commerce	112,000	112,000	-	112,000	112,000	-	112,000
Lakewood Historical Society & Museum	58,000	39,500	-	39,500	39,500	-	39,500
Lakewood Playhouse ¹	30,000	28,000	-	28,000	35,000	-	35,000
Lakewood Sister Cities Association	24,500	23,950	-	23,950	23,950	-	23,950
City of Lakewood - Gimhae Delegation Visit	35,000	35,000	-	35,000	35,000	-	35,000
City of Lakewood - Marketing Promotion	75,000	75,000	-	75,000	75,000	-	75,000
City of Lakewood - SummerFEST	250,000	193,000	-	193,000	193,000	-	193,000
City of Lakewood - Farmers Market	93,000	78,000	-	78,000	78,000	-	78,000
City of Lakewood - Pavillion Concert Series	54,000	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	-	30,000
City of Lakewood - Saturday Street Festival	30,000	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-	15,000
City of Lakewood - Fiesta de la Familia	52,000	27,000	-	27,000	27,000	-	27,000
	\$ 5,106,015	\$ 1,017,950	\$ -	\$ 1,017,950	1,024,950	-	1,024,950
CPTC McGavick Center - Committed, Annual Payment	\$ 101,850	\$ -	\$ 101,850	\$ 101,850	-	101,850	101,850
	\$ 5,207,865	\$ 1,017,950	\$ 101,850	\$ 1,119,800	1,024,950	101,850	1,126,800
				2024 Available funds =>	\$ 1,440,104	\$ 1,800,721	\$ 3,240,825
				Ending Balance =>	\$ 415,154	\$ 1,698,871	\$ 2,114,025

¹ Lakewood Playhouse: An additional \$7,000 was added to accommodate for the marketing and promotional painted wall mural by artist Jeremy Gregory.

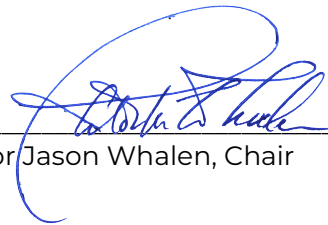
ADJOURNMENT - Chair Mayor Whalen adjourned the meeting at 3:13 p.m.

For the full video of this meeting go to the [City of Lakewood YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6SYKnUtlVM) and visit the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6SYKnUtlVM>

Minutes:



Dana Kapla, Asst. Finance Director (Preparer)



Mayor Jason Whalen, Chair