

# CITY of CASCADE LOCKS — Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING, Monday, June 5, 2023, 6 PM, Council Chambers

## 1. Call Meeting to Order & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Matt Kelly at 6:14 PM. Attending: Vice Chair Debbie Fine, TM Harry Troeger, TM Pam Thweatt, TM Val Stepanchuk and TM Sophie Harbaugh. Also present, Tourism Support Staff, Annie Van Domelen and guest speaker, Jason Waicunas.

## 2. Amendments to the Agenda

## 3. Comments from General Public

### A. Guest Speaker, Jason Waicunas of PCT Days

This will be the sixteenth year for PCT Days. Historically, sponsorship sells out quickly, with a waiting list of about 70 sponsors. This year, the grassy area that was used for parking will be filled with new sponsors (except room for about 50 cars). Instead, people will park up at the school parking area that Jason has rented out. PCT Days has now gone from about 65 to 104 sponsors, and is now the largest event of its kind in the country! The extra sponsors have helped with skyrocketing costs and Jason has been able to double security for the event. Beer and cider will be offered again this year. No hard alcohol. The feel and schedule will be much the same as past years. Still a great place to learn about and purchase gear from sponsors. The pavilion and stage will be used for presentations. There will be no movies at night this year. But there will be a party since Backpacker magazine and Jason both turn 50 this year. The party is Saturday night from 7–10pm, it's free and includes live music, and there are plans for happy hour pricing for drinks. Music is planned to end around 9pm with the party concluding at 10pm. The bands will be Legato Gusto and Scott Pemberton O Theory. Originally, the plan was to have both bands play the same night but Jason is thinking of having one play in the afternoon and the other in the evening. The Hood River Food Bank will be in attendance collecting food. Same hours as last year, with Friday opening planned around noon–1pm. Saturday booth staffing begins between 8–9am. The one big raffle will now be two raffles; one at end of day Friday and the other end of day Saturday.

## 4. Discussion/Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest

## 5. Approval of Minutes Presented: May 1, 2023

At 6:58 PM, Vice Chair Fine motions to approve May 1, 2023 minutes. TM Troeger seconds the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

## 6. Approval of Financials

Vice Chair Fine suggests a member of the committee become a financial officer, as has been done in the past. TM Thweatt expresses interest. Staff will place on the next agenda.

## 7. Approval of Bills

## 8. Staff Report

Travel Oregon grants have not been made available yet; some changes are in the works, but Staff is signed up to receive their newsletter which will provide information when grants come available. Staff will contact Heather Soderberg Greene to see if she'd like to be a guest in July.

## 9. Port Report

## 10. Old Business

### A. Tourism Brochure Reorder

Brochures haven't been ordered yet. Staff requested a new quote from Precision Graphics since the last quote was only good for 30 days. The new quote was only 4,000 brochures for \$2500 since folding is now being sent out. So, Staff found a referral to Patrick Quigley at Brown Printing. She requested a quote and it came back at 10,000 brochures for \$2500. Staff passes around the sample of paper that was provided by Brown Printing on a similar brochure. At 7:18 PM, TM Troeger motions to approve the Tourism brochure reorder at Brown Printing. TM Thweatt seconds the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

### B. Vote :: New Ordinance

TM Harbaugh suggests waiting to talk to CA Bennett about the new Ordinance in case the committee wants to assign a Finance Officer, thinking that might need to be included in the Ordinance. Chair Kelly points out the word Tourism is also misspelled and other things need addressing. The committee questions if it needs to be in the Ordinance. Chair Kelly and TM Thweatt agree to work together on the Ordinance and report next meeting.

### C. Continue Photo Contest Discussion :: Committee members to bring photo ideas in writing

TM Harbaugh suggests one or two people take on the photo contest. She volunteers to take it on and will report progress next meeting. TM Thweatt offers to meet with TM Harbaugh for a brainstorming session if needed.

## 11. New Business

### A. New Tourism Committee Budget Review :: TM Thweatt

TM Thweatt goes through budget graphs, layout and info she's been working on and explains how the Excel live sheet will work. Staff shares Accounts and Balances information and what was actually paid out last year, as well as the suggested budget categories that TM Thweatt has provided.

### B. Vote :: PCT Days Swag

Committee members review swag information and choices for committee to choose from. The committee chooses the grey fanny pack with blue logo; top beanie in dark green with gold logo; charcoal flat bill cap with green or gold logo (Staff will send proofs). Stickers are discussed and a few ideas are shared for a possible second order. At 8:12 PM, Vice Chair Fine motions to spend up to \$2500 in swag of the committee's choosing for PCT Days through Columbia Graphics. TM Troeger seconds the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

### C. Vote :: Lodging Reimbursement for Videographer, Bill Clevlen

At 8:16 PM, TM Thweatt motions to approve lodging reimbursement for videographer, Bill Clevlen, for his stay at Best Western Columbia River Inn for \$106.33. Vice Chair Fine seconds the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

On a side note: Staff brings up disappointment some locals experienced with just a few businesses being highlighted in the Cascade Locks video and the negative comments on social media posts. TM Thweatt said she spoke with one community member and let them know that Bill had full autonomy in the video content and that his focus was solely from a tourism/videographer standpoint. That the committee had no say about the content nor was it talked about with Bill. Still, committee members were disappointed that it happened and felt bad with how it made some business owners feel. Staff reports that she apologized to businesses where disappointment had been expressed on their behalf in social media, and where someone was available to talk to while delivering the Flash Report. Staff suggests the committee converse about new ideas on ways to support *all* local businesses.

D. Vote :: Oregon State Sustainable Tourism Study :: Chair Kelly

Chair Kelly shares how the annual expense for the tourism study was lowered from \$5,000 to \$2,000, with a two year commitment. What he really likes about the study is its focus on locals; what they want, think and need. TM Harbaugh says locals see how tourism is good for business and the city, but they wonder how it benefits them. TM Troeger agrees as prices rise in Cascade Locks and how it's affecting residents who can't afford rent or purchasing a home. TM Harbaugh says we need to find a way to help make things work. TM Stepanchuk adds, this is why the study at Oregon State may be the best way money can be spent at this time by the committee.

12. Upcoming events:

A. Oregon's Free Fishing Weekend, Saturday–Sunday, June 3–4

13. Tourism Committee Member Reports

A. Matt Kelly

Chair Kelly suggests Tourism getting together with City Council, the Port, local businesses and the new business association to work together and better align. He suggests attending a City Council meeting to offer some dates to talk about visions and missions, which will hopefully bring us together and thinks it should be all inclusive, including being open to the public. The important thing would be to walk out with deliverables rather than just having a good discussion. Chair Kelly suggests planning this during a City Council meeting. Chair Kelly will contact Jordon as a first step.

B. Debbie Fine

C. Harry Troeger :: Website updates

TM Troeger has placed Bill on the Road's video on the website. He still needs to converse with Jordon about the website and IT support.

D. Val Stepanchuk

TM Stepanchuk thanks the committee for the support on the Gorge Canoe Club's first race. It was a success. They grilled and gave out over 100 pounds of fresh salmon, had a story night, and the race went well.

E. Pamela Thweatt

F. Sophie Harbaugh :: Share picture and social media plan + more info on local currency

Sophie suggests using Instagram more, not just pictures and tags, but also stories. She suggests using Reels to show videos and thinks Facebook is for locals and tourism, to provide news and encourage discussion. She also suggests using Pinterest and to do more reposting. Most important is staying active. Focus should be on businesses, events, activities and beauty of the area. Sophie will focus on Instagram and Staff will focus on Facebook. Regarding local currency, it doesn't replace the dollar, it's complimentary. Local currency can be used in one area or region, where it stays and profits local businesses as it keeps cycling through businesses. Tips for getting started: Choose the model, talk to locals for expectations, decide on design (physical or electronic), establish issuing authority, exchange dollars for local currency, provide promotion, education and monitoring. Bottom-line: currency is always moving and stays local.

14. Next Meeting Date & Time: Monday, June 26, 2023, 6 PM, Old Library

15. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired, or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities, should be made at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting by contacting the City of Cascade Locks office at 541-374-8484.

Public access to the meeting is available via Zoom. Remember \*6 to mute/unmute your phone, \*9 to raise your hand if you have a question or comment. By smart device on zoom.us, meeting code: 872 129 1324, password: "citymeet" / By phone: 1-253-215-8782, meeting # is 872-129-1324, passcode: 17722174