

LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE & AUBURN TOURISM BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 8, 2016 @ 3:00PM

25 West Main Street City Hall, **Conference Room #3** – 2nd Floor

LTAC BOARD MEMBERS:

Nancy Backus, Andy Cho, Bob Fraser, Julie Krueger, Ronnie Roberts, Satpal Sohal

ATB BOARD MEMBERS:

Nancy Backus, Andy Cho, Bob Fraser, Dana Hinman, Julie Krueger, Ronnie Roberts, Satpal Sohal, Jennifer Corona, Rebecca Frisch, Chantelle Herburger, Jamelle Garcia, Tonia Jones, Gary Longley, Reggie Matto, Ashley Mohoric, Laci Qualls, Chris Wehmeyer

STAFF:

Dana Hinman, Doug Lein, Lorraine Chachere

AGENDA:

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Roll Call**
- III. **Approve November 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes**
Satpal motioned to approve the November Meeting Minutes. Andy seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.
- IV. **Website Design Comps and Site Flowchart** – Jenn Tate, Cevado Technologies (remotely)
Jenn and Chris offered a glimpse of the wire frames for the new Tourism website that they are working on, despite their contract not being officially signed. Doug indicated that the contract was on the Mayor's desk and would be signed the following day. Stock photos will be used until the photo library is developed. Placement of signature images and special events on the Home page was discussed. The mobile capabilities populates vertically and was shown to Board members. The placement of Events was discussed, as well as how to provide special assistance to the business traveler. The website will have mapping capabilities provided by Map Box that will allow users to see what is nearby. Cevado will need Lorraine to provide in Excel format a listing of such to do the information addition to the website in one day. They are on a tight timeline to meet the City's requested completion date.
- V. **Marketing Update– Jill Boltmann and Eric Christenson, APEX Marketing**
Please see addendums 2017 Marketing Strategy and 2017 Timeline. Feedback was given from several Board members on some of the analytics. A new tourism logo was revealed and feedback was requested.
After the presentation, it was questioned when the deliverables in the scope of services in the contract signed with the city would be delivered as the contract outlined a completion date on or before December 31, 2016. Before consideration of a 2017 Marketing plan, the City of Auburn

needs a branding strategy to be completed as was promised in the contract signed with Apex Media back in July 2016. The scope of services in question is the:

Branding & Media Strategy:

- Create Auburn Tourism's brand image (avoid use of current tag lines) through imagery, messaging, and a story about Auburn based on what is "real" using current and historical imagery to showcase the city's assets and amenities.
- Generate awareness and visibility by telling our story, showcasing the experiences of Auburn to invite overnight stays.
- Differentiate Auburn from other Cities by highlighting unique characteristics through positioning Auburn as a destination among potential visitors.
- Once established, typeface, illustration and photography will support both brand identity and core messaging.

The logo presented was created by the City's Multimedia Department as a catalyst to inspire the creation of the aforementioned strategy, yet being the last scheduled board meeting the concern is that this part of the Scope of Services has been overlooked.

VI. Review of Budget through October 31, 2016

Expenses incurred for the month of October include Tourism Coordinator salary, the binders and sheet protectors for the Hotel Concierge Directories, consulting fees for APEX Marketing, and the 4th Quarter Media Buy. There was a request for the budget to have a side by side of the previous year on the Hotel Motel Fund Performance of Revenues and Expenditures from now on. Please see addendums Budget Snapshot and Hotel Motel Fund Financial Report 3Q.

VII. Update on 2016 Grant Activity

September 9 – Auburn Art Walk – Reimbursed, \$1,400.
All grant recipients have now been awarded.

VIII. Call for 2017 Lodging Tax Grant Applications

An invitation to submit applications for events to lure overnight visitors has been posted:

- On the Auburn Tourism Website
- In the form of two ads to be published in the Auburn Reporter on December 2nd and December 16th.
- Directly in an email to all 2016 recipients that were sent the 2017 application, as well as Spartan.

IX. Hotel Support

- Hotel Service Training Workshop was held at Tuesday, November 29th. Only one person showed up, with a second one arriving shortly before the session ended. This program is designed to increase confidence of hotel staff, receive fewer complaints from guests, and raise standards of performance which ultimately increases guest satisfaction. Creating the notion of *Auburn Hospitality* hotel staff play a crucial role in being ambassadors for Auburn as they are on the frontline of the overnight guest experience. We want excellent guest reviews and experiences while in Auburn whether it is shared on TripAdvisor (and

other online platforms) or via word of mouth. Future trainings will occur every few months.

- **Hotel Concierge Newsletter** - A monthly newsletter has been launched, with the first edition for November/December having been distributed to all seven local hotels. A comprehensive listing of holiday events, new restaurant and business openings. The next edition will be the January edition.

X. **LTAC & ATB Membership**

- **Ordinance Revision for Restructuring LTAC & ATB and Procedures** – To ensure both the LTAC and the ATB are operating efficiently, a draft of an ordinance revision has been made so that the two groups meet separately. The LTAC will meet twice a year—the second week in June and December, while the ATB will meet monthly. To be in compliance with local and state legislation, the number of members on each board, a requirement in which membership on one board prevents membership on the other, and a clearer definition of the roles of each have been listed on the two handouts given to members in attendance. Please refer to the Addendums Lodging Tax Advisory Committee and Auburn Tourism Board.
- **Continued Participation and Suggestions of New Members** – Being that several LTAC members have their terms expiring at the end of the month, as well as the requirement prohibiting serving on both boards concurrently in the ordinance revision, it was asked of attendees of their preference to serve in the New Year. Additionally, with the ordinance revision, we need at least three members on each board to have a staggered term of one, two, and three years respectively. A Board Participation form was passed around and asked to return before the end of the month.
- **Meeting Dates and Times** – The LTAC will meet twice a year (and additionally as they deem fit) the second Tuesday in June and December from 10am – Noon. The ATB will meet monthly, days and times TBA.

XI. **Adjournment**

Ronnie motions to adjourn the meeting. The motion is seconded by Bob. Motion passes unanimously.