



**Auburn Tourism Board Meeting  
July 18, 2019 – 10:00 AM  
Council Chambers  
MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 am by Chairman Roberts.

Board Members present: Chair Ron Roberts; Vice Chair Rachael McAlister; Edgar Vidal; Julie Kruger; Lacey Katz.

Board Members Excused Absence: Kacie Bray; Malia Dale

Staff Present: Doug Lein, Economic Development Manager; Lorraine Chachere, Tourism Coordinator; Tanya Carter, Economic Development Coordinator.

**II. APPROVE JUNE MEETING MINUTES**

Board Member Krueger motioned to approve the June meeting minutes. Vice Chair McAlister seconded the motion.  
MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY 5-0.

**III. GUEST SPEAKER - Ralph Morton, Executive Director, Seattle Sports Commission**

Mr. Morton explained that the Seattle Sports Commission is a regional organization in the Sports market in the Puget Sound Region focused on the regional approach of sports on area residents and the local economy. Mr. Morton emphasized that large sports events that the organization bids to host can have regional impacts in terms of development. Also that sports venues have economic impact and with the pending arrival of Fieldhouse USA, will have a robust presence in the area. Mr. Morton discussed possible roles for entering a partnership with the Commission. Chair Roberts thanked Mr. Morton, indicated the Board would discuss further and invite him back to ask questions.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

**Tourism Updates**

**Membership Updates-** Coordinator Chachere welcomed Board Member Katz. The confirmation vote by City Council took place the Monday before the meeting and Coordinator Chachere thanked her for attending

the meeting. Coordinator Chachere introduced Phil Hernandez to the Board who had submitted his interest and application in serving on the Tourism Board. Mr. Hernandez is a new resident in Auburn and works at Green River College.

**Hotel Updates** – The Holiday Inn Express is now taking reservations on and after August 18<sup>th</sup>, so their Grand Opening is just around the corner. Coordinator Chachere reported that the previously planned Wyndham hotel property will no longer take place due to costs of construction. That site will become a gas station. Coordinator Chachere indicated that City has requested an hotel absorption study and the results should be available by the next Board meeting.

**1. 2019 Tourism Marketing Initiatives**

- a. **Emerald Downs Partnership Update** – Board Member Vidal provides the updates to ensure terms are being met. He offered that the page directing to the Explore Auburn website can be updated with pictures to the Board’s liking.
- b. **Auburn Adventure Film Festival Update** – The job descriptions are nearly completed. Coordinator Chachere applied for a Port of Seattle Spotlight grant for Q4 that if selected, would generate awareness of the AAFF with locals traveling for work or leisure, as well as out of town guests.
- c. **White River Amphitheatre Concert Season Update** – While Harlow’s is now offering bus service from Emerald Downs to White River Amphitheatre yet ridership numbered at two concertgoers. Harlow’s is working to develop an online booking page to assist with getting the word out about this service.
- d. **Fortune Cookie Promotion** – They have arrived and are ready to be distributed at summer events at the Tourism table.
- e. **Coast into Summer Promotion – ACTION ITEM**  
Being that the 2500 coasters have been distributed in just ten days in what was hoped to be a two month promotion, Coordinator Chachere is requesting from the Board more funds for a summer coaster reprint, as outlined by the proposal.

Board Member Krueger motioned to fund a second round of the summer coaster promotion reprint not exceed \$5,000 which would be funded from the 2019 Marketing budgeted line item. Board Member Vidal seconded the motion.

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY 5-0.

- f. **Tradeshow and Travel Trade Collaboration Report Tracker** – Will be provided at next meeting or before then.
- a. **May Financial Report** - The financials were presented by Coordinator Chachere.

**V. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION ITEM)**

**1) Dog Patch – Doug Lein**

Manager Lein shared that at an Economic Development recent trip to Dublin that there is an Irish government initiative to encourage businesses to expand overseas operations by providing stipends for the businesses to travel and research possibilities. Manager Lein sees this as an opportunity to securing extended hotel stays at Auburn hotels. Chair Roberts encouraged Manager Lein to inform the hotels.

**2) Q4 Football Fan Promotion – DISCUSSION**

While Coordinator Chachere was researching Sounder train schedules for service during Seahawks football home games, she learned of a local business who is organizing several huge events for the Seahawks vs. Saints game. Being that all Sunday games will offer Sounder transit service, the idea is to hone in on the visiting team's fan base to encourage them to stay at an Auburn hotel, take the train to Seattle for the game, visit local restaurants and businesses during their time here. Coordinator Chachere floated the idea with other business groups, the Auburn Downtown Association (ADA), the Business Improvement Area Board (BIA) who enthusiastic about the prospect of bringing visitors to Auburn during this time, and even offered suggestions of how their business might participate. Coordinator Chachere has already alerted the City's Creative Committee for a possible ad buy and development of the creative. Manager Lein is in support of such a tourism marketing initiative. Coordinator Chachere will research more details and come up with a proposal for the next meeting.

**3) SAVE THE DATE: 2019 Tourism Summit**

On October 29<sup>th</sup> from 12:30pm – 4pm Auburn Tourism will be hosting the 2nd Annual Auburn Tourism Summit at the Auburn Community and Event Center.

The Auburn Tourism Summit is designed for the Tourism Board to share highlights of 2019 tourism initiatives, give a preview of 2020 tourism goals. Additionally, there is a business training component, learning labs, designed to inspire and connect tourism stakeholders and business partners. In addition to a presentation from the Washington Tourism Alliance (the state tourism marketing agency), there will be a panel of Auburn businesses that excel in community collaborations to engage and attract new customers, and that succeed in cross-promotion collaborations with other Auburn tourism assets. These Auburn businesses and business support entities will serve as a

panel of stakeholders to provide attendees with valuable industry knowledge, practical skills they can use to strengthen local partnerships with Auburn businesses while generating new customers, and retaining existing ones.

2) **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is on **Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM in Council Chambers**. City Attorney Gross has been invited to speak to the Board to advise Board members of their responsibilities on an advisory committee. He might have to attend a conference that day, and if he is unable to make it, City Attorney Gross will be at the September meeting, reported Coordinator Chachere.

3) **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35AM.



RON ROBERTS, CHAIR



TANYA CARTER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST