



## **CURRY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

### **TOURISM AND PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE**

Thursday, September 23, 2020– 4:00 P.M. Blue Room Annex  
94235 Moore Street, Gold Beach, Oregon [www.co.curry.or.us](http://www.co.curry.or.us)

### **Minutes**

**September 23rd, 2020**

#### **A. CALL TO ORDER at 4:05pm**

Chair: Erin Johnson, Nic McNair, Dianne Schofield, Terri Domanick, Leslie Wilkinson.

Absent: Vice Chair: Julie Brown

Lyndsey Dixon: Public attendee

#### **1. APPROVE MINUTES**

Approved with clarification of quote from Terri Domanick, amending not needed, she just wanted to be sure it wasn't taken out of context.

#### **B. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **1. Logo Design Presentation (Erin Johnson)**

Chair Erin Johnson asks to table the first item until another meeting; she has had a busy month and would like to spend more time on the logos that are in the process of creation.

*Discussion ensues:*

Leslie Wilkinson asks how we got to a logo without finalizing the report. Fairly new to the group still, so the conversation is in regards to the decision processes up to this point. It is decided to table item until further clarification in the reporting is done to be sure everything is in line.

## **2. Update on Rare Student/Intern/webmaster**

Item is tabled until further notice; Julie Brown said in an email to Secretary Plagge that she was still looking into the possibilities, but hadn't heard anything back just yet. Dianne Schofield didn't get a chance to reach out to her network just yet either. It is agreed we can come back to this when the time is right.

## **3. Introduction of Strategic Plan and Marketing Plan (to be workshopped at a later date)**

Secretary Plagge talks about the work put forth in both reports, and how they are just a starting point and would like input from the committee because at this point, it is more of a reflection of her research and not the committees overall desire. She asks the committee to go over both documents to become familiar with them, and to make notes on the reports so they can be workshopped at a later date.

## **4. Grant Program Details**

Secretary Plagge begins by stating that with the decisions that will be made in regards to the details of the Grant Program-- they should reflect the committees intention to not only help out unincorporated but also to help the incorporated areas of the County. Plagge goes on to say that there may be some pushback or concern with the Commissioners and how the money is given out, so we want to be sure it is iron clad.

*Discussion ensues:*

Leslie Wilkinson goes on to say "I want to step away from this committee and do this as Nature's Coastal Holiday. If Nature's coastal holiday was coming to ask for a grant. One of the things that we would say to the commissioners or this group is that nature's coastal holiday attracts, you know-- 120,000 plus visitors to our communities. And you know, whether they stay at a motel in Harbor, or eat at a restaurant in Harbor, or have breakfast in Brookings, or drive up to gold beach to stay, that's all irrelevant to us. We just know that we bring it in. So if that argument was to come up, that would be the way I would present a grant request to you as nature's coastal holiday."

Plagge agrees that is a great rebuttal to any concern on helping those within the incorporated towns. Wilkinson states it should be in the first paragraph of the Grant Packet and the language of the committee stays consistent.

*Plagge opens up the discussion on the details:*

Nic McNair starts off by suggesting a match program for City's. Wilkinson states there is no TPAC in Brookings, so there is no one to go to for Grants there. Lyndsey Dixon echoes the same difficulties with seeking assistance for money in Gold Beach. Wilkinson suggested that the application should show that the event is solvent. Erin Johnson says that she like what Tillamook has done with their point system and feels we should mirror a similar system. Wilkinson suggested that we don't become the first "ask" in funding needs, and suggest that we also make it a standard question on an application, as in: what are the other funders an applicant is working with? The sentiment is shared by the members to be sure applicants are proving that the event, coordinator, or organization has a successful track record. The committee strongly supports using Tillamook's rubric in building our own. Committee agrees there should be final reports included and any left-over Grant money be rolled over to the next fiscal year.

*Plagge continues discussion:*

She states that there was a discussion in an earlier committee meeting that there was grants that included an "ask," for grants that were seeking funding for beautification projects. But the project needed to show it was for beautification and not maintenance. Johnson suggested that maybe a project just needs to show it benefits tourism in general. Wilkinson and McNair don't feel comfortable with granting money to for-profit businesses. Plagge says she will look into it further whether TLT money could be used for beautification purposes or if it's only promotion, but feels it may only be promotion purposes. McNair suggested maybe the first year should be just for event promotion. Lyndsey Dixon suggested maybe it can be co-sponsored by a non-profit for something like a mural.

*Discussion continues:*

Johnson suggested that a presentation should be part of the application process. Wilkinson suggested also identification of key players in the event. Johnson adds that co-branding needs to be part of the packet. Whether a table or booth, we should be represented at events. Wilkinson than goes on to say, that the marketing and contracts should be included in the application as well, and Johnson adds that we don't want to stick to just mileage because it would then be in obscure places, ie: 50 miles. She goes on to explain that it should be specific regions and those should be included as a requirement.

*Discussion continues:*

Wilkinson suggested maybe there should be a limit for how many times an event could seek a grant, or time in between events. Dianne Schofield suggested that you want the successful events and organizations to seek money every year. Terri Domanick states that the discretion of the money being given out should be left to the committee; meaning just because you apply doesn't mean you would get any money that year. Domanick also suggested that you don't want to discourage applicants from applying. McNair echoes that the issue wouldn't be until later, and agrees he sees both sides.

Lyndsey Dixon asked if it were a refund grant or an upfront grant, Plagge suggested it should be an upfront grant; it's an investment in the community. Terri Domanick also says that there should be three letters of support in the application packet. Johnson and Wilkinson agree and they should not be politically involved references, they should be professional; i.e. vendors, non-profits.

Plagge asks if there is anything else we would want to include in the rubric system. Wilkinson states that she would like to see that the marketing also fall in line with the Committee's marketing plan. Wilkinson then asks does the committee want to ear-mark the funds just for advertising. Plagge states she would like to see that the money be used for things like tables or chairs- investing back into the tourism asset. Johnson suggested that a percentage can be earmarked for advertising. Nic McNair states that the majority of the monies should be used for advertising, as in 80% for advertising, and 20% for other expenditures and report how the money was used towards the event. Wilkinson suggested that there shouldn't be any admin costs, or salary included in the smaller percentage. Johnson includes that it shouldn't be used for securing a venue. Lyndsey Dixon added that including a list that shows what is eligible and then ineligible, which would be sufficient in her experience. Johnson stated that the Tillamook has a list, but we should not include the salaries which are on their list.

*Discussion continued to how much should be earmarked for each grant:*

Wilkinson suggested that the grants, and the requirements require at least a \$5,000 grant, and that anything less wouldn't be worth all the reporting for a grant. Johnson suggested maybe have two \$10,000 grants and four \$5,000 grants. Nic McNair stated maybe a higher tier grant would need more requirements, maybe not earmark a specific grant amount, so if you are going for a certain amount of monies, which should be include more reporting. Plagge says in the first year she would like to see who comes to the committee to seek grants and perhaps that's the direction we should take in the future, on a year by year basis. Wilkinson goes on to ask if the

committee than needs to create a point system next for local event vs. out of town coordination with an event being created in the County. Plagge agreed that localized events should have more weight. Wilkinson than suggested that maybe the committee should stick to just non-profits, this year or from here on out.

Discussion ensued:

Nic McNair echoed the same sentiment, and said that the natural progression for some events is that planners or non-profits struggle each year to put it together and eventually fizzle out because of the struggle to keep it funded. Wilkinson suggested in a weighted system, that perhaps if a for-profit put in an application, than an added benefit could be that the applicant make some sort of contribution to a local non-profit. That would than weight the application heavier versus a for-profit that makes no contribution and would include a partnership as well. Plagge expressed some concern cutting out for-profits altogether but agreed that it should be weighted differently and should come with some stipulations. McNair also suggested that for-profit should still be the hardest application to vet, and perhaps a for-profit applicant could only use a grant for marketing purposes. Wilkinson and Plagge agreed that would be a good use of funds for those applicants. Terri Domanick than asked if we were going to do an 80% up front model, and 20% at the end with reporting due, would this still apply to a for-profit model that is restricted to just marketing dollars. After a bit of discussion, members agreed that there are usually still outstanding invoices after an event.

The conversation, than turned to when should the application process begin and start. Johnson suggested that in her experience January is usually when folks take a stock of their lives and ask themselves if these events and all that comes with them are still worth it. Johnson believes this could give life to folks who are the fence with so much unknown still in the air about large gatherings. Johnson suggested that March would be a good cut off, and Wilkinson stated she would like to see it in April 1<sup>st</sup> because of the uncertainties. Dianne Schofield, than added that the committee will need time to go through all the applications and that process may take up to 60 days. Schofield went on to say that the events also will need a quick turnaround, some needing the money soon after applying if events get a green light this year. Wilkinson went on to say that events are still in limbo and cutting them off may be more work for everyone involved without knowing if events will still happen this year. The sentiment with the committee is than to cut off applications at the end of April and begin them February 1<sup>st</sup>. Lyndsey Dixon suggested that they have a back-up plan for a COVID-19 friendly event if need be, Johnson agreed that should be in

the application. McNair agreed to have those questions on this year's application. The sentiment for applications is that they are submitted online.

Clarification was than requested if the committee wanted to have the payout be 30 to 60 days after an approved event. Terri Domanick suggested that events generally need advertising dollars as soon as a decision is made so they can begin the marketing for the event, referencing the Gold Beach Brew Fest. Wilkinson agreed, 30 days was the suggestion, Domanick includes that it really should be by each event with so much uncertainty. Domanick suggested maybe if they have a publication date we can try to expediate the process. Plagge reminds the committee that the BOC will also need to approve each applicant. Plagge's suggestion is that the committee presents a payout 30 days after the BOC's final decisions on applications. The committee agreed that would be sufficient and if need be, they could come back to any decisions that need more attention.

**C. FUTURE MEETINGS**

October 7, 2020

**D. ADJOURN**

6:00pm