

VISITORS AND CONVENTION COMMISSION

February 20, 2007

Vice-Chair Georgia Stiles called the meeting of the Visitors and Convention Commission to order at 4:00 p.m. on February 20, 2007, in the City Hall Conference Rom.

Present: Commission members Paul Zegers, Georgia Stiles, Ellen Whitaker and Richard Sommer. Chair Verna Ward arrived at 4:10 p.m.

Absent: Co-Chair Mayor Larry Rich and Commissioner Dotty Randall-Stapleton.

Others Present: Human Resources Director Barbara Gershon, Visitors Bureau Director Jean Kurtz, Civil Engineer Nikki Messenger, Management Assistant Debi Davidson, Guest Gary Leif, Salmon Project Sponsors Shawn Ramsey, Gabriel Moore, Ellis Poole, Marie Rasmussen and Heidi Lapham; Museum Director Gardner Chappell.

FINANCIAL REPORT

For the benefit of the audience, Gershon explained that the Commission has two types of funds.

- Funds collected prior to 2003 which were retained by the City for tourism interests for supporting local events, marketing etc. Use of those funds are unrestricted but must relate to tourism. At present the balance is approximately \$128,000. This fund does not get replenished unless organizations reimburse the Commission for some of the funds granted to them.
- Funds collected after the 2003 Legislature are restricted in nature and cannot be used for supporting local events. In general, they may only be used for out-of-area marketing and capital expenditures. These amount to approximately \$30-\$40,000 per year.

GRANT APPLICATION – SALMON RUN PUBLIC ART BANNER PROJECT

Rasmussen explained the overall Salmon Run project which is designed as a series of public art events to help build community support and funding momentum for permanent public art installations throughout Roseburg. Three events are part of that overall project: 1) Chalk Walk held in conjunction with the Harvest Festival; 2) Salmon Banner Project (subject of this grant application) featuring public display of up to 70 handcrafted banners from northwest artists which are to be hung on downtown lampposts during July. Thereafter, they would be auctioned to financially assist the third phase; 3) Salmon on the Sidewalk which would include large fiberglass salmon, decorated individually by artists and can become permanent or ephemeral works of art that repeat the existing Salmon theme as a symbol for Roseburg. (Ward arrived at 4:10 p.m.)

The artists will purchase the banners. Cost for marketing and hanging are estimated to be \$6900. Rasmussen estimated 80 points in meeting the Commission criteria for grant award. Discussion was held on potential payback of any grant funds. While hoping to sell the banners for at least \$350 each, the applicants were unable to estimate potential returns.

Whitaker made a motion to award the grant as requested with Staff to clarify City cost for banner installation. Motion was seconded by Sommer and carried unanimously. Zegers declared he was a member of the Salmon Project Committee but receives no financial gain from that membership.

GRANT APPLICATION – WINE EXHIBIT

Chappell discussed a wine exhibit to be displayed through two fall harvests (September 2007 to November 2008). This will focus on the importance of wine in history and a more contemporary local standpoint. Advertising and content stories will be included in the “Wine Press Northwest” and “Northwest Wine Country”. Kurtz is assisting with other recommended advertising venues. Local wineries are being contacted to financially support the exhibit.

Stiles noted concern of providing financial support for a Douglas County operation. Other commissioners pointed out the importance of the wine industry as a tourism draw. Zegers stressed the need to look at the bigger picture of getting people to stay in Roseburg regardless of what entity is sponsoring an event or project. It was suggested that the Harvest Festival be coordinated into the exhibit advertising.

Chappell pointed out that given the uncertainty of county revenues, the future will require him to go outside for funds for anything beyond keeping the museum clean and open for the public. The exhibit is being designed to be leasable by other museums which could potentially create a revenue stream.

Zegers moved to award the grant as submitted. Motion was seconded by Whitaker and carried with Sommer and Stiles voting nay.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Whitaker moved to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2006 meeting. Motion was seconded by Zegers and carried unanimously.

TV/DVD EQUIPMENT FOR MOTELS

Whitaker reported she could obtain DVD/TV players for a total of \$1407.60. All motels along the I-5 corridor were interesting in participating in the pilot program except the Windmill and one “no response.” A couple are interested in running the CD through their lobby computers versus a separate unit. Whitaker moved to purchase 10 TV/DVD players. Motion was seconded by Zegers and carried unanimously.

BUDGETARY ISSUES

Unanimous consensus was to not consider any financial requests outside of the March and September grant opportunities. Staff will advertise the March grant period.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Kurtz reported the Museum hosted 19 international tour operators from Austria, France, Germany, Indian and Australia. Those operators will write up tour plans for their catalogues. Travel Oregon arranged the convention which traveled from the Portland area.

Consensus for Stiles to continue service as Vice-Chair and to encourage Gary Leif's appointment to the current vacancy.

Sommer reported he is a member of the Native Plant Society of Oregon which hosted their 2005 annual meeting in Roseburg with 100 attendees. The Oregon Lakes and Rivers 2007 annual conference will be held in Diamond Lake. He supported efforts to get similar organizations to meet in this area. Kurtz reported that the Bureau has hired Chris Van Dyke to fill the convention sales position.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Debi Davidson
Management Assistant