



TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

January 18, 2024

3:30 p.m.

Hybrid

Approved: September 26, 2024

Call to Order

Chair Pam Silbernagel called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Sharon Konopa, Pam Silbernagel, Peggy Burris, Bob Moore, Steve Reynolds

Members absent: None

Election of Officers

3:32 p.m.

Chair Silbernagel called for a motion nominating a chair and vice chair of the committee. Member Konopa nominated Member Silbernagel to remain as chair and Member Reynolds to remain in the vice chair positions. Member Burris seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Approval of Minutes

3:33 p.m.

Motion: Member Burris moved to approve the minutes from September 21, 2023, as presented. Member Moore seconded the motion to approve but wanted an answer to the question from the September 21, 2023, meeting regarding the request from the committee to receive the minutes sooner. Sophie Adams, Economic Development Manager responded that staff are not able to provide the drafted minutes prior to the packet being posted online for the meeting but noted that the recordings of the meeting are available online almost immediately. Members voted to approve the motion 5-0.

Motion: Member Moore motioned to approve the minutes from September 26, 2023, as presented. Member Konopa seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Business from the Public

3:38 p.m.

Chair Silbernagel opened the floor to public comment.

Adams announced that there was one funding request that didn't meet the deadline, but copies of the application were provided, and the applicant was present to speak.

Brittany Paulson on the West Albany Junior Baseball League Board spoke to the commission about their funding request.

Member Silbernagel suggested that they may keep the funding request on the list, but the late application makes it difficult for the committee to consider it.

Business from Staff

3:42 p.m.

Sophie Adams, Staff Liaison provided the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) Revenue Report in the packet and noted she will provide updates when available.

She then reported on the Albany Visitors Association (AVA) Contract from the Tourism and Marketing Services Request for Proposal (RFP) that was awarded and approved by the City Council. Member Silbernagel requested staff send committee members the amount of the reserve line item in the economic development budget.

Collection of TLT from short term rentals (STRs): The procurement process has begun for a third-party contract to implement and administer that program. It is a multi-year contract. Staff will be bringing an update to the city council.

Adams shared that they will be advertising the next round of Collaborative Tourism and Promotion (CTP) Grants soon. Awards are scheduled for the September meeting.

Scheduled Business

3:50 p.m.

- Tourism Reports

Chair Silbernagel noted that Tourism Agency Reports are provided in the packet. Connor McLain, Board of Directors of the AVA was present and commented on the move of the Albany Visitor Association offices to a better space downtown. Member Burriss wanted to note for the record her appreciation for the work of the Albany Visitor Association.

Executive Director of the Albany Downtown Association, Lise Grato provided their bi-annual report and latest newsletter*.

The Monteith Society also provided their Bi-Annual Report, Amanda Pool from Monteith Historical Society was online to answer any questions..

- Collaborative Tourism and Promotion Grant (CTP)

3:56 p.m.

Chair Silbernagel opened the floor for discussion and review of the new CTP applications, giving applicants an opportunity to speak on their events and program needs.

Albany Downtown Association requested \$4,875 for a new marketing program. Lise Grato explained that the funds they are requesting are to update the website for better use by visitors and residents. They are also asking for funding for two highway banners to commemorate and advertise First Fridays and Holiday activities.

Giving A Hoot is requesting funds for a beautification planting project of the city's gateways asking for \$2000. Member Burriss announced she had a non-financial conflict and may need to abstain from voting.

Oregon Valley Futbol Alliance is organizing a three-on-three soccer tournament and applied for funds to cover the cost of goals necessary for the all-day tournament for youth ages 5-18.

FIRST Force Robotics is an organization that groups together high school robotics teams and is requesting \$3000 to support a High School Robotics Team Scrimmage Event for Oregon and SW Washington high school teams. The grant would cover the cost of the new venue at the Linn County Expo Center. Tom Thompson from FIRST Force was available to provide details of the event and answer questions.

Vintage Window Restoration Workshop application was for \$10,000 in funds for overhead to provide a workshop to engage the community in learning conservation techniques for restoring historic buildings. This workshop would be led by Christopher Gustafson and involve hands-on restoration of the windows on the Cumberland Church. He is requesting funds to keep the registration costs minimal or free of charge for participants, who would be using local lodging and meals. He has scheduled it to occur during the May Historic Preservation Month. He is currently looking for sponsorship.

Committee Discussion

4:10 p.m.

Chair Silbernagel asked the staff for a summary of the funding available and the alternatives. Adams shared that there was \$11,000 currently available which could be divided between the applicants. She didn't provide specific recommendations but instructed the members to consider their priorities in making decisions.

Silbernagel asked about the possibility of additional funding from the City reserve fund to extend how much they are able to fund. Adams shared that the City Council budget has been set and any reserves may be needed elsewhere.

The members continued to discuss and share how they would prioritize the applicant requests and why. A major consideration was the ability of the events to bring in heads and beds to the economy. Deliberation of the factors resulted in distribution of the grant funds as follows:

Member Konopa suggested that the Giving A Hoot application to fund street beautification efforts would more appropriately be funded by the Public Works Street Fund, and not CTP. She noted that the Committee supports the effort, but it is part of street maintenance.

Motion: Member Konopa offered a motion strongly recommending that the City use the Street Maintenance Fund out of Public Works to provide the \$2000 needed for the Giving a Hoot street beautification project. Member Burris seconded the motion. All members voted in favor 5-0.

During the discussion on how the funds should be divided, Chris Gustafson withdrew his application for funding to ensure that the youth programs applying would receive their needed funds.

Motion: Member Burris made a motion that staff write Chris Gustafson a Letter of Endorsement and support to provide to potential sponsors for the workshop based on the importance of the historic preservation of the community. And recommends that he re-apply for the next go-round of grant funding. Member Konopa seconded the motion. All voted in favor 5-0.

Motion: Member Konopa moved to provide the Albany Downtown Association (ADA) Award of \$3,000 of CTP Funding for any items out of their proposal. Member Burris seconded the motion, which passed 4-0, with Member Moore abstaining.

Motion: Member Konopa moved to allocate the remaining CTP Funding as follows: Oregon Valley Futbol Alliance awarded \$2,500, West Albany Youth Baseball Tournament award \$2,500, FIRST Force Robotics Event award \$3,000. Motion seconded by Member Burris, which passed with a 5-0 vote.

- CTP Grant Post-Event Reports

4:55 p.m.

Chair Silbernagel noted they received reports from the West Albany High School Wrestling and their West Tyler Troyer Memorial Tournament. Also, the Albany Civic Theater reported on the success of city-wide events and promotions they received CTP Funds for. The Gallery Calapooia Marketing Committee reported

on the efforts funded by their CTP grant in 2022-23. Efforts focused on on-air and printed advertising and promotions through Travel Oregon to attract people downtown.

Business from the Committee

5:01 p.m.

None.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for September 2024, exact date to be confirmed.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Silbernagel adjourned the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Signature on file

Susan Muniz
Recorder

Sophie Adams
Economics Development Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cityclerk@cityofalbany.net*