



TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

March 20, 2025

3:30 p.m.

Hybrid – Willamette Room

Approved: September 18, 2025

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, Jonni Hudgens, Oscar Hult (in at 4:18 p.m.)

Members absent: Nick Andrews (excused)

Approval of Minutes

3:32 p.m.

Motion: Member Konopa moved to approve the minutes from January 16, 2025. Commissioner Moore noted a misspelling of Commissioner Hult's name on page 5 and then seconded the motion with correction. Motion passed 5-0. (Commissioner Hult wasn't present at this vote)

Public Comment

The Chair noted two members of the public attending at invitation to add to the discussion.

Scheduled Business

3:34 p.m.

- CTP Grant Process and Application Review

Economic Development Coordinator, Jennifer Wehr, explained that staff wanted to work with members to make the application process and evaluations easier. In addition, she reported about the city council's interest in expanding the eligibility for placing and public art such as murals, statues. Member Moore asked how the Arts Commission was funded and Member Konopa and Chair Silbernagel responded. Wehr explained that there isn't a line item in the budget for public art.

Wehr reported that as part of these changes she did reach out to recipients over the last two years to solicit feedback on the application process. She only received two responses, one from Albany Visitors Association (AVA) and the other from an organization. She then provided some suggested changes and clarifications that staff put together to preface the discussion.

In the beginning of the edited application Member Silbernagel wanted to include the word "present" to describe the quorum requirements as some members are absent during motions. Chair Silbernagel began by tying in the last discussion point regarding the criteria of 'heads and beds' as the original purpose of the grant. Members felt it is an indicator of tourism dollars but not a necessary purpose of the grant.

Member Moore agreed that there are people that attend events without staying overnight and it seems restrictive to emphasize as a condition of the funds.

Member Konopa wanted to return to the discussion of how tourism should be defined so applicants would know whether their event matches the intent of the grant.

Member Silbernagel suggested defining promotion of tourism is attracting new dollars to the community.

Member Konopa suggested "attracting out of area dollars that supports our economic base". Redefining the purpose in a broader sense than merely heads and beds.

Chair Silbernagel affirmed adding on language: "attract out of city funding that supports our economy". But including some simple examples of tourism such as dining, overnight stays and shopping and promotions.

Member Burris recommended from a grant writer's experience having the grant amount available helps in developing the ask. Member Silbernagel suggested saying 'funds are limited' as to keep the longevity of the document if fund amounts change. Members agreed on saying "around/approximately \$50,000" to accommodate some small changes. Further in the paragraph regarding what funds should not be used for, Member Konopa asked others what they considered the appropriate way to describe those restrictions "are not to be used for wages, benefits or alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, etc." Wehr reiterated that the funds can be restricted for specific activities, but the event as a whole may be awarded.

Regarding public art Member Konopa had concerns about including "murals" as they are too temporary or easily damaged. Her suggestion was "not limited to publicly owned art, gateway beautification projects" ... that bring people in to see the art. Member Moore shared his concern with maintenance funds for art installations. Staff was asked to ensure that the council member specifically interested in murals know that removing the language didn't mean that mural projects wouldn't be considered.

Members discussed how often and under what criteria an organization can apply for grant monies. Moore reiterated that his understanding is that if someone comes in and requests over \$10,000 for any one item, they must provide 3 bids for that item. But the odds of having a request for \$10,000 is slim.

Member Silbernagel wanted to include "additional information such as photo documentation of the event" in final reports. With the caveat of not using photos of children and getting appropriate permissions.

There was discussion on adding organization type such as non-profit or corporation. And whether to include proof of event insurance. Member Hult thought insurance was a given in these circumstances. Member Burris didn't know if identifying corporate or non-profit status is necessary or even their event insurance. Member Silbernagel stated her intention is to ensure applicants are aware of their responsibilities in holding an event. Member Konopa suggested contacting the city attorney to ask what would put the city liable. But all agreed to providing a sample application with budget information that would suggest what the Committee looks for.

Multi-year funding requests, The Committee doesn't want to seem they are committing to multi-year funding requests. Applicants need to be aware that if they apply again after receiving funds the previous year, they need to show new activities or substantial changes to the event to be eligible again.

Member Konopa wanted to specify that means it is the first time they applied even if the event isn't a startup. Member Moore suggested just asking if they have applied before but preferred it be a onetime award. Member Silbernagel suggested it should say, have you "received" funding, not just applied. If applying for a different activity the applicant should know they can only receive a percentage the next time around. Rebecca Bond suggested wording: "CTP funds are not intended to provide funding for the same project year after year. Subsequent requests may receive less funding and be subject to the competitive grant process." Member Silbernagel suggested that language go up into the introduction describing that it is intended for startup events. All agreed on dropping the language on tiered percentages for additional requests. Member Moore addressed what makes something 'new'. Additional days added don't necessarily make it a new activity. Wehr emphasized that they should be promoting new events as applicants should be working towards self-funding.

The Chair thanked the staff for preparing the edits ahead of the discussion and making it easier for the members to consider changes.

Business from Staff

4:46 p.m.

Jennifer Wehr announced that the final changes will go to the Council on April 7, 2025, on the consent agenda.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is TBD. Chair requested time spent on the budget. She stressed that individuals are always free to comment, but to make recommendations as a committee they need to have a meeting prior to the council meeting that finalizes the budget, probably in April or May at the latest. She asked to be notified when the budget draft is published so they can set up a meeting date. They did set up a September meeting date to go through the next round of applications after deadline of September 1, 2025. The members agreed on September 18, 2025 starting earlier at 2:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Silbernagel adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Signature on file

Susan Muniz
Recorder

Jennifer Wehr
Economics Development Coordinator

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