

TOURISM TAX ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 25, 2024

Commissioner Victor Iverson called the meeting of the Tourism Tax Advisory Board of Washington County to order at 9:30 AM on Thursday, January 25, 2024, in Conference Room #182 of the Washington County Administration Building, 111 East Tabernacle, St. George, UT. Those in attendance: Tourism Tax Advisory Board: Dorothy Heers, Brett Burgess, Kevin Smith, Rich Stehmeier, Tracey Welsh and Ken Neilson. Other attendees include Deputy County Attorney Steven Scott, Commissioner Victor Iverson, Tourism Director Brittany McMichael, and Tourism staff members Sara Otto, Joyce Kelly, Jamie Allen, Leslie Fonger, Chad McWilliams and Heath Hansen.

WELCOME

Commissioner Victor Iverson welcomed all in attendance and determined that a quorum existed for voting on action items.

CONSIDERATION OF DECEMBER 7, 2023 MINUTES

MOTION: Motion by Tracey Welsh to approve the December 7, 2023 Minutes.
Motion seconded by Dorothy Heers and carried by a unanimous vote.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. McMichael reported that 2023 TRT, January through October was down three percent (-3%) from 2022. 2023 hotel occupancy was up point 3 percent (0.3%) from 2022, ADR was up one point two percent (1.2%) over 2022 and RevPar was up one percent (1%) from 2022. Zion National Park visitation was down two percent (-2%) and visitation to St. George Regional Airport (SGU) was up nine percent (9%) from 2022.

Brittany spoke about the Greater Zion 2024 Key Initiatives which serve as the 2024 goals of the Greater Zion team. (See attached)

Brittany also spoke about proposed legislative bills that would affect the State of Utah's tourism budget.

APPROVED 2024 BUDGET

Jamie Allen presented the finalized 2024 budget.

ZION NATIONAL PARK UPDATE

Heath Hansen reported on the status of a collaborative effort from Washington County, Kane County and UDOT (Utah Department of Transportation) to fund a transportation study of Zion National Park. The study is set to begin soon and will determine the best methods for transporting visitors throughout the park. He also spoke about Zion National Park's plan to prohibit oversized vehicles in the park. He stated that the park will progressively continue to

limit the number of allowed oversized vehicles within the park.

SALES TEAM REPORT

Joyce Kelly spoke about the sales team's latest sales missions, convention and meeting requests and trade show attendance.

TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

Rich Stehmeier reported that the St. George Regional Airport is expected to see heavy traffic during the Super Bowl and PGA events this year. He stated that the demand for rental car reservations will also increase during these events. Rich also spoke on the progress of a new airport tower, terminal upgrades, land acquisition and construction of a new road connecting the airport to Washington City.

Tracey Welsh spoke about the future of Red Mountain Resort and its preparations for the LPGA and PGA Tournaments. She also stated that the resort is changing its marketing strategies to better suit current travelers.

Dorothy Heers reported that the Cliffside Restaurant and Inn On The Cliff are undergoing construction updates this year.

Kevin Smith stated that Tuacahn will finish construction on a new patio awning, additional seating and parking improvements this year. He also reported that the Tuacahn Saturday Market is doing very well, hosting over eighty vendors each weekend.

Brett Burgess reported on the progress of the new film studio project and the current climate of residential construction.

MARKETING PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT REQUEST

The PPA (Professional Pickleball Association) is seeking one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for a marketing sponsorship package and assistance in offsetting court rental fees during its 2024 Red Rock Open Championship.

The funding recommendation is up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) between the marketing package and court rentals.

MOTION: Motion by Ken Neilson to Recommend Funding as Presented.
Motion seconded by Brett Burgess and carried by a unanimous vote.

NON-PROFIT MARKETING SPONSORSHIP REQUESTS

St. George City is seeking five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for marketing and promotion of the St. George Art Festival.

The funding recommendation is five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

St. George City is seeking fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for marketing and promotion of the St. George Art Festival Concert.

The funding recommendation is up to fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000).

MOTION: Motion by Kevin Smith to recommend Funding as Presented.
Motion seconded by Ken Neilson and carried by a unanimous vote.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION PREVIEW

Leslie Fonger introduced a preview of St. George City's application for improvements to the Dixie Sunbowl and Hurricane City's application for construction of a Hurricane Four Plex Gymnasium. Both of these items will be presented to the TAB board at the March 28, 2024 meeting.

MOTION: Motion by Kevin Smith to adjourn.
Motion seconded by Ken Neilson and carried by a unanimous vote.

The next meeting will be held on March 28, 2024.

Minutes prepared by Jamie Allen
Adjourned at 11:51 AM

2024 Key Initiatives

1. Engage Locals
 - a. Fill Community Partner Relations position
 - b. Build tourism ambassador program
 - c. Continue the GZ Groundbreakers story
 - d. Increase Visitor Center visibility
 - e. Connect Greater Zion and Washington County when applicable
2. Zion National Park
 - a. Launch ZNP.com
 - b. Actively promote measurable ways to improve the visitor experience
 - c. Initiate SR9 transportation study
3. Year of Golf
 - a. Host PGA event October 2024
 - b. Complete Golf Documentary
 - c. Create marketing strategy for documentary and all major golf events in GZ including: Epson, LPGA Senior Classic, PGA
4. Conference/Event Hosting
 - a. Small Market Meetings Conference September 23-27, 2024
 - b. IRONMAN 70.3 North American Pro Championship May, 4, 2024
5. Trail Development
 - a. Zion Corridor – Complete EA and Initial Design
 - b. Spring Hollow – Phase 1 Construction
 - c. SR-18 Central to Veyo multi-use trail – Complete Construction
6. Dixie Center
 - a. Build Dixie Center leadership team
 - b. Complete building expansion feasibility study
7. Film
 - a. Promote increasing state incentive
 - b. Celebrate 100 Years of Film in Utah
 - c. Promote new film studio
 - d. Facilitate filming of Horizon An American Saga
8. Leadership
 - a. Build and foster a strong leadership team
9. Event/Marketing Sponsorship Program
 - a. Identify and support signature events
 - b. Revamp funding application process for a more streamlined system
 - c. Develop, Learn, Live

10. Update PR Services

- a. Complete RFP process
- b. Onboard new PR Firm or redirect efforts with existing firm