

TOURISM TAX ADVISORY BOARD
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES MAY 23, 2024

Commissioner Victor Iverson called the meeting of the Tourism Tax Advisory Board of Washington County to order at 9:30 AM on Thursday, May 23, 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, Nate Wells 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, 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 MARCH 28, 2024 MINUTES

MOTION: Motion by Ken Neilson to approve the March 28, 2024 Minutes.
Motion seconded by Dorothy Heers and carried by a unanimous vote.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Brittany McMichael, Greater Zion Tourism Office Director, reported on current tourism statistics. TRT through March is up 2% over 2023. TRT is up 10% over 2022 and up 21% over 2021. Hotel occupancy through March is down -1% from 2023, -4% from 2022 and -5% from 2021. RevPar is down -2% from 2023, down -4% from 2022 and up 8% from 2021. ADR through April is down -1% from 2023. Zion National Park visitation through February is up 8.4% from 2023, down -14% from 2022 and -20% from 2021. St George Regional Airport visitation is up 8% from 2023 and up 25% from 2022.

ZION NATIONAL PARK UPDATE

Heath Hansen, Greater Zion Regional Tourism Regulatory Affairs Director, provided an update on Zion National Park. The park is proceeding with oversized vehicle restrictions and has distributed information packets, which give advance notice of the upcoming changes. The restrictions will take effect two years after a public announcement is made, which is scheduled for after Memorial Day. Vehicles exceeding the specified size limits will not be allowed through the tunnel, but alternate routes have been mapped out and included in the packets.

TOURISM UPDATES

Sara Otto, Greater Zion Marketing Manager, presented the Greater Zion annual report. The report provides an overview of everything Greater Zion has been working on in 2023 and includes a look ahead to future initiatives. The report will be shared with stakeholders to demonstrate ongoing activities and progress. Greater Zion's new PR firm, Fahlgren Mortine, is also working on a release to accompany the annual report, documenting tourism office successes and upcoming plans and highlighting the five-year Greater Zion brand anniversary.

Chad McWilliams, Greater Zion Sports and Adventure Sales Manager, reported on the 2024 IRONMAN 70.3 North American Championship Race, marking the 10th anniversary of the 70.3 in St. George. A video recap of the event was shown. Sam Long won the male professional category, and Paula Finlay won the female professional category. A total of 1,885 athletes participated, including 160 athletes from Washington County. The top states represented were Utah, Nevada, and Colorado. The event also had over 2,000 local volunteers. Overall, it was a successful event. The next IRONMAN event is scheduled for May 10th, 2025.

Joyce Kelly, Greater Zion Sales Manager, provided an update on film-related events. Utah is celebrating 100 years of film, and Greater Zion will be hosting several events as part of the celebration. "The Flyboys" will be shown at Town Square Park on June 28. "Horizon 1" will premiere in theaters in June, and "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" will be screened at the O.C. Tanner Amphitheater on June 29. Filming for Horizon 2 will conclude in a few weeks, with plans to return for additional filming in the coming months.

MOTION: Motion by Tracey Welsh to adjourn.
Motion seconded by Kevin Smith and carried by a unanimous vote.

The next meeting will be held on August 22, 2024.

Minutes prepared by Jamie Allen
Adjourned at 11:04 AM