



Blaine Tourism Advisory Committee

MINUTES

City Hall Council Chambers, 435 Martin Street, Suite 4000 www.ci.blaine.wa.us (360) 332-8311

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Called to order at 8:01 AM

Roll Call: Eric Davidson, Bob Boule, Debby Farmer, Louise Mugar, Sukhwant Singh Gill (absent), and Micah Mullin (absent), Danielle Gaughen (non-voting).

Staff Present: Alex Wenger, Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator; Stacie Pratschner, Community Development Services Director.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY BOARD MEMBER MUGAR TO APPROVE THE MARCH 9, 2021 & APRIL 13, 2021 MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER FARMER. MOTION PASSED.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

No audience comments

LODGING TAX REPORT

- Community Development Services (CDS) reported on current lodging tax budget and revenue. Current revenue is not far from pre-pandemic levels. 2021 spending is currently exceeding budgeted amount and is being supplemented by the lodging tax reserves. Staff introduced budget policy for 2022. Board members asked questions and had a discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

- CDS gave an update on the formation of the Ad-Hoc Arts Commission. Applications for commission members have been received and the City is preparing for interviews. The City has begun coordinating with building owners in the Central Business District on potential mural locations.
- CDS staff gave an update on efforts to promote tourism:

- CDS staff will not be integrating proposed gift certificate program into the 2021 work program. Staff has begun coordinating with Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism on a gift certificate program that will launch in 2022. The program will award gift certificates to guests who stay two nights in the area.
- Staff introduced the Marine Tourism Passport Program, which allows local boaters and sailors to check-in to local ports. Event organizers are coordinating with local vendors to provide prizes for incentives for visitors who check-in.
- Advertising for Fourth of July Celebration. Staff requested direction on the level of advertising needed to get the word out. Board members were agreeable to limiting advertising to the Northern Light.
- CDS staff proposed that the centennial street banners be installed over the summer to commemorate the Peace Arch Centennial despite the events surrounding the centennial being cancelled. Board members were agreeable. Staff will follow up with board members on final approval of the banner design.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Next meeting June 8, 2021

Adjourned 9:08 AM.