

LODGING TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MEETING #3 MINUTES
OCTOBER 27, 2022

Members present: Joe Deets, Ella Magal, Shannon Fitzgerald, Maureen Daniels, Dominique Cantwell; Brenda Fantroy-Johnson arrived at 1:45 PM.

Staff present: Roz Lassoff and Ellyze Francisco

Called to order by Joe Deets at 1:00 PM

Motion to accept the amended agenda for today's meeting (including time for public comments) by Dominique Cantwell, seconded by Ella Magal.

Motion to accept minutes of October 27, 2022, meeting by Ella Magal and seconded by Dominique, approved, and signed by Joe Deets.

Joe asked if anyone has any conflicts to disclose – no new conflicts noted.

Joe Deets explained that he will facilitate and be the timekeeper for presentations by all applicants (10 minutes, including questions and answers with a 2 minute reminder).

For these meeting minutes: all applications and slide presentations are available to all for review on the COBI website.

What follows is a brief notation of each request, and where applicable, answers to questions raised by LTAC members during the 10/20/2022 meeting. Additional questions asked and answered during the 10/27/22 meeting are included.

Summarized answers are in *italics*.

1. BI Chamber of Commerce: Multi-Platform Visitor Engagement Network; kiosk staffing, maps, Celebrate Bainbridge/GO4 event support

Presenter: Stefan Goldby

RE question raised by Dominique on 10/20/22 re the appearance of a budget shortfall *with the PPP loan forgiveness, expanded grant revenues, and completion of capital project, the previous budget reflects short term disparities, it is a break even budget.*

2. Bainbridge Arts and Crafts: Off Island Advertising and Marketing

Presenter: Debra Ruzinsky

Re question by Joe Deets on 10/20/22 (project numbers don't add up, and what are they asking for, where does LTAC come into the budget?): *Didn't spend as much during COVID as in person visiting was not safe; also, the organization typically spends more than what is requested; LTAC funds have helped greatly to expand their reach to off island visitors.*

10/27 question about where artists are from – *island, this region, many indigenous and diverse artists.*

3. Bloedel Reserve – Increase Off Season Visitors with Seattle Bus Advertising

Presenter: Becky Walliman

Re Ella's question re if you don't get funded, what is the reduced scaling opportunity?

They would scale back to Colman dock and ferry ads and would not be able to run the bus ads, as it is a new separate line item.

4. Bainbridge Downtown Association – Downtown Walkabout Map \$ Kiosk, Consolidated Holiday Marketing

Presenter: Natalie Rodriguez

Re Joe's and Dominique's questions about the Project 4 (shoulder season engagement) budget:
40-50 % funding by LTAC and the rest by BDA members.

Re Dominique's question about the timing of the 7:30 pm Holiday Shuttle initiative: *Marshall Suites in full support of pilot holiday shuttle and they are in active discussion with stakeholders re details like the timing.*

Re Dominique's question about social media engagement – what platform?

Decision is the innovative engagement platform and data will be shared with VBI, BILA, Chamber partners.

Re Dominique's question about the presumed hyper-local street dance and how it might or might not attract out of town tourists: *They anticipate out of town visitors will stay the night to be there for the parade; there are other activities and food vendors in addition to dance.*

10/27 question from Joe – are there too many maps, with the downtown one and the one at the welcome kiosk? *BIDA Walkabout map is the most requested item by visitors; the other map serves a different purpose (downtown with the merchants and services, island map for navigation).*

5. Bainbridge Island Historical Museum – Comprehensive and Strategic Marketing Plan

Presenter: Amber Buell

Re Dominique's question re revenue projections: does the BIHM intend to more than double paid admissions because of this marketing research proposal?

Yes, they think that the consultation will expand attendees and they will recoup investment by increased admission fees for years to come.

10/27 Joe asked what stories have not been told at this museum? *Any story that is not that of a pioneer; 13 communities have told their stories, and more are needed.*

Do you work with the Suquamish? Yes, we partner with and ask for their input.

6. Winery Alliance – Wine on the Rock Events

Presenter: Brooke Huffman

No questions were asked during the 10/20 meeting.

10/27: Questions about transportation around the island during wine events: *yes, it is a big challenge. Tour Bainbridge and BI Ride are partners, and they are working to expand. Another issue that it is hard for the small wineries to deal with a full busload of people at one time.*

7. Bainbridge Island Museum of Art – 2023 Cultural Programs and Festivals

Presenter: Peter Raffa

No questions were asked during the 10/20 meeting.

10/27: Questions about off island visitors: *92% are from off the island; only 10% of islanders have been to BIMA.*

8. Kids Discovery Museum – FamJam

Presenter: Kaitlin Chester

Re Joe's question re Part B budget: Is it \$10,000 or \$12,000? *It is \$12,000 (total budget for the event).*

Re Dominique's question about how this request ties into last year's strategic marketing objective that was funded by LTAC? How many attendees in 2022 were likely tourists? *Estimate 49% of museum visitors are from out of the area.* How does this proposition justify LTAC funding 100% of the expense for FamJam?: *shoulder season event and families will spend money while here – they guess \$20,000 spent by tourists to the event at local restaurants and venues when they come for FamJam.*

9. Parks and Trails Foundation – Trails Map and Trillium Trail Run

Presenter: Mary Meier

Re Dominique's question that it appears that the Trillium Run will net \$3,500 without LTAC funding. Why is an additional \$8,000 in funding necessary for this event? At your estimate of 150 visiting participants, \$8,000 amounts to \$53.33 per runner – more than the cost of their registration. What is the benefit of this expenditure? *Visitors will spend money while here for the event and this will be the kickoff and publicity for the major capital campaign.*

10. Visit Bainbridge Island – Destination Marketing Campaign

Presenters: Christine Mueller and Chantelle Lusebrink

Re questions from Dominique about the strategic partnership/merger with VBI – how does VBI plan to leverage this partnership? What will be accomplished in 2023 that was not possible in 2022? To what does VBI attribute the staggering increase in this year's funding request?

The \$133K request is the same as last year, and they are very grateful for the \$94K that was awarded. They are the main engine to get people here and costs for marketing and expanding to larger and farther away target customers is a large, key investment.

VBI adheres to the stipulations in the revised code of WA for spending lodging tax dollars to marketing to visitors more than 50 miles away; funding for trade visits is higher and so are media costs; national publications like Sunset and USA Today intended to reach further than the local markets.

10/27 questions- no time

11. Arts and Humanities Bainbridge – 2023 Bridge Festival

Presenter: Inez Maubane Jones

Re question from Joe re more complete (balanced) budget for Bridge Festival? *Ms. Jones reviewed the total budget and explained that there is another grant from the Bainbridge Community Foundation to help with the costs of the festival.*

12. Visit Kitsap Peninsula- Tourism Marketing

Presenter: Beth Javens

Re Joe's and Brenda's question re the email received re an allegation of unlicensed use of photography: *They are working on this and can't comment on this evolving situation. They operate using best practices for social media and marketing.*

Re Joe's question about why are there no letters of support for their application?

Re Dominique's question about how does VKP collaborate with BI partners as outlined in the application? Who are the partners? BILA coordinates itineraries – is there an opportunity to reduce duplication? It appears that LTAC is being asked to fund 30% of all social media and web expense; to what is this proportion of funding attributed? What, specifically, is included in the "advertising campaign package"? *Larger scope advertising, different and more advanced tracking and heat maps, digital maps, tourism calendars, focusing on international visitors who stay longer and spend more; support for hospitality partners, funded is helped by county and municipal entities.*

13. Bainbridge Island Lodging Association – Destination Bainbridge

Presenters: Kelly Shannon Garza, Christine Cochran, and Andrea Addington

Re Ella's question re how does the proposed merger with VBI reduce costs?

Re Dominique's question- BILA's anticipated VBI alliance is \$13K and VBI's is \$2500. What accounts for this disparity and how does the alliance create immediate cost savings or efficiencies?

Not possible to merge because the combined budgets exceed the ceiling set by Bainbridge Island LTAC, he two organizations whose work it is to bring tourists here are natural partners, but a formal merger is not possible due to the cap. They have worked to each take ownership of some of the administrative and marketing efforts to incrementally conserve efforts and honing processes to reduce redundancy. One example is that they are merging the website and that will save hosting dollars and BILA can use the VBI discount for AirDNA data.

10/27 question from Joe – it is a state law or a local rule? *Christine Cochran answered that this is a local Bainbridge LTAC clause.*

Meeting adjourned by Joe Deets at 3:20 PM.

Minutes drafted by Shannon Fitzgerald, committee member


Joe Deets, Mayor/LTAC Chair Nov 7, 2022
Date