

Council Members Present

J.J. Jaeger, Region I
Frances Conklin, Region II
James Manion, Region III
Diane Newman, Region IV
B Courtney Ferguson, Region VI
Bill Code, Region V
Dick Anderson, Region VII
Paul Norton, Member at-Large

Guests Present

Bill Drake, Drake Cooper
Kate McAlister, Sandpoint CC
Tom Chasse, Schweitzer Mt.
Steve Meyer, Pend d'Oreille Winery

Council Members Absent**Staff Members Present**

Karen Ballard, Tourism Administrator
ReNea Nelson, Tourism
Laurie Zuckerman, Tourism

Guests Present

Tom and Karen Stebbins, ISAA
Ken Barrett, Selkirk Powder Co,
All About Adventures
Dave Kulis, Schweitzer Mountain Resort
Chip Kamin, Selkirk Powder
Sean Mirus, Sandpoint CC
Stephanie Sims, Int'l Selkirk Loop

Presentation handouts are available at <http://commerce.idaho.gov/business/idaho-travel-council.aspx>. Presentation audios are available through Laurie Zuckerman. Comments on the presentations listed below.

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Welcome and Introductions, JJ Jaeger, ITC Chair, Audio File "ITC Mar 2013 (1) Thu Introduction"

Meeting called to order by Chair JJ Jaeger. Jaeger thanked those involved with coordinating the dinner at Trinity at City Beach and lodging at Schweitzer Mountain resort. (00:00)

Members and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes – It was moved (Code) and seconded (Newman) that the January 2013 minutes be approved. Motion passed. (02:30)

Tom Chasse, Schweitzer CEO, welcomed the group. (03:00)

Budget and Collections Update – Karen Ballard, Tourism Administrator, Audio File "ITC Mar 2013 (2) Budget, ICORT, and Turkey and Waterfowl Rule Making with Karen Ballard"

Collections increased 13.78% in February and 5.3% year to date. Ballard requested extra funds be used for a conversion study as it has not been done in many years and the director is very interested in tourism's ROI. She estimated that tourism may have a couple hundred thousand dollars extra (budgeted for 3% but having 5% growth). She reminded the council that those funds would carry into FY14. (00:00)

At Manion's request Ballard described RUF's work. She also described EMSI's work. Ballard confirmed Conklin's comment that EMSI's work could continue through FY14. (03:30)

Norton asked about expenditure's in film. Ballard said that they had two workshops that did not pay for themselves: however, she is researching to see if the fees collected were put into a different fund. (06:45)

Ballard noted that what appeared to be an overrun in the Gateway Visitor Center budget was due to ITD not yet paying its portion and that this situation has been remedied. (07:45)

She believes there may be overruns in Fulfillment due to increase in requests for travel information and need to hire extra person to answer phones. (08:30)

Ballard explained that Worksite CRM Subscriptions include Reel Scout (Media Room), Salesforce (CRM), and other customer relations management systems. (09:00)

Ballard detailed other advertising and marketing expenditures. (11:00)

Public Relations activities have been farmed out to different firms. Ballard described recent opportunities and ideas including the Seattle Ski Show, talk shows, Sun Valley Film Festival, Tree Fort Music Festival, jet boat races, indie car races, equestrian events, river rafting, and cycling events. (12:45)

In the international category, Boise is hosting the RMI Roundup. Due to tour operators staying to tour Idaho, there will more expenses than originally budgeted. (18:45)

Manion asked for clarity about articles saying European travelers are not coming to the US due to long entry lines. Ballard explained that some of those articles are alarmist due to sequestration. She explained the situation in more detail including what Brand USA is doing. She also explained the growth in other international markets and actions US Travel Association is taking. (20:00)

The Trade Shows category had more expenditures that originally budgeted due to attendance at the Portland and Seattle Bicycle shows. (24:00)

Film Grants have been spent. *Idaho the Movie* was one of the film grant recipients. (24:30)

Administration includes salaries and regular overhead. (25:30)

IDAHO CONFERENCE ON TOURISM

Sixty people have already registered. Ballard believes this may be one of the biggest conferences. (26:30)

Ballard described ICORT speaker Kenny Chaplin's film work and how his presentations and work dovetails with workforce development in the hospitality industry. (27:15)

As in the past, ICORT provides a venue for other tourism related industries to meet including: Idaho Bed and Breakfast Association, Scenic By Ways, Idaho Restaurant Association, Idaho Ski Areas Association, Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative, and others. (30:00)

The Lieutenant Governor will attend, and Ballard will meet with his speech makers. (31:00)

TURKEY AND WATER FOWL

Jake Howard from Idaho Outfitters and Guide's Licensing Board came to Ballard explaining there would be a public hearing to allow guided turkey hunting. (34:00)

There is some controversy. Howard would like to have links shared with public even if people have no opinion. (35:00)

Ferguson said that in Hagerman area there is concern that guides' would purchase land so that hunters could not have access farmers' fields. (37:30)

Ballard said that the landowners have full right to their own property. This could be an interesting opportunity for tourists to hire licensed outfitters to go on a turkey hunt. (39:00)

Tourism Grant Program Updates, ReNea Nelson Commerce Staff, Audio File "ITC Mar 2013 (3) Grant Program with ReNea Nelson"

Nelson recapped the Grant Summit which took place January 30 and focused on social media. Twenty eight grantees in attended; every region was represented. Participant's survey ranked this year's Summit 4.4 out of 5 which was higher than last year's 4.1 ranking. (00:00)

Nelson included Summit packets to ITC. All statewide co-ops can be found on the grant website. A list of proposed participants will be gleaned from applications and provided to ITC at May meeting. (01:00)

The online RFF improvements are complete. They were well received and will go into effect with the 2013 grant cycle. (1:45)

Nelson predicts there will be minor glitches to fix when the system is actually used and there will need to be minor guideline changes to facilitate correct verbiage due to changes. A list of pending enhancements is on file for August for the next development phase. Nelson commended Bob Cooper's work. (02:30)

Nelson outlined the status of the 2011 grants. There are nine open grants. All are either waiting for audit or pending paperwork to close. The reasons are reflected on 2011 grant paperwork document which she provided in ITC packets. Grangeville Chamber of Commerce has had no requests to date. She received an email that their one and final RFF will be submitted shortly. Reversions can be viewed on paperwork. (04:30)

Grantees are proceeding with 2013 grant applications. (05:45)

Manion asked for clarity on one of the participant's comments regarding the summit. Discussion ensued. Nelson also explained the correlation between participant comfort with social media and their comments. (06:30)

Nelson outlined guideline changes that would align with Administrative Rules. (12:30)

Grantees have found inconsistencies in the Audit requirement guidelines which have caused confusion. In Grant Guideline **12.3**, Paragraph 2 the verbiage states "The audit will be performed by a Certified Public Accountant and submitted to the Idaho Dept. of Commerce, Tourism Division Grant Analyst **within sixty (60) days following the authorization of the last request for funds dispersal.**

In **12.5** states "Should an extension to the grant year be approved, **the grant is expected to be closed 60 days after the final date of the extension**". Yet, **Administrative Rule 223** states "**60 days following the close of the grant cycle**" The **Grant Contract** states "The Grantee shall be responsible for providing the DEPARTMENT with a compliance audit completed by a Certified Public Accountant **within 60 days of the completion date of the grant...**"

Nelson will be changing 12.3 to coincide with the Admin. Rules and Grant Contract to state "... **within sixty (60) days of the completion of the grant.**" A vote was not needed since only cleaning up verbiage. All agreed to the verbiage. (14:00)

4.4 Website Content Updating states "Work done to update Chamber calendars or other web pages dealing strictly with the organization's membership cannot be reimbursed or used as cash match." (14:30)

Nelson will be remove reference "or used as cash match". With no reimbursement, the cash match will be allowed. A vote is not needed since only cleaning up verbiage. All agreed to correcting the verbiage. (15:30)

Council Choice and Lifetime Achievement Awards, Diane Newman and Laurie Zuckerman, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (4) Council Choice and Lifetime Achievement Award"

Newman gave status of Council Choice Award selection. Nelson answered Conklin's question about online "hover" function and classifications. Zuckerman reminded those present that deadline for Lifetime Achievement Award applications is Monday 1 April. (0:00)

Second Home Tax Collection, Karen Ballard, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (5) Second Home Tax Collection with Karen Ballard"

Many second homes are being rented as vacation homes without proper taxes being collected. The city of Ketchum understands and is addressing the issue. Ballard gave examples from other cities and states for addressing the leakage as it is a national problem. (00:00)

Ballard would not like to be punitive and would like to work with the Tax Commission. Director Sayer is not comfortable with Commerce taking the lead on this issue but prefers to have the tourism industry work on awareness. He might be comfortable with the Council spearheading the issue because they represent private industry. (02:30)

Code said that Lava Hot Springs has approached this issue and met opposition. (05:30)

Sean Mirus told the council that the Sandpoint City Council discussed this issue the previous night. Discussion on how to educate vacation home owners and make it easier to pay the 2% ensued. McAlister said the city planners are working on an ordinance that would be modeled on Canyon Beach. (06:00)

Conklin, Ballard, and Newman would like this issue to be discussed at ICORT and possibly be added to the next Idaho Restaurant and Lodging Association meeting. They want to include discussion on the possibility of a state wide task force. Ballard will forward the Ketchum article. (10:00)

Scenic Byways, Karen Ballard, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (6) Scenic Byways with Karen Ballard"

IDPTV Show Update

IPTV aired Idaho Scenic Byway show which included footage from the Great Idaho Getaway and many of Idaho's 30 scenic byways. They were pleased with results and discussed creating a second show. Ron Gardner is working on cutting it into smaller pieces for marketing. (00:00)

ITD no longer has a dedicated person for scenic byways and would like Tourism to take over the marketing. Ballard would like ITD to vet this with the Governor. Reid Rodgers, Chairman of the Scenic Byway Committee, would like ITD to fund the Tourism Division for management of the byways. Ballard summarized various views. (02:00)

New Geotourism Map Guide Proposal

National Geographic has created map guides. Both of the previous maps included top ten scenic byways of the northwest. They would like to create a new map, *Byways and Rivers*: BLM wants to find money to help find nominations for what should be in that map. (06:00)

Ballard said the new map could be presented as part of the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The map could include Idaho guides, Idaho as a whitewater state, and include Idaho byways. Because it is a censuses building project, ICORT 2014 could be used as a venue for voting. This would fit into the FY14 budget. (08:30)

Several council members thought it would be a good idea to pursue an MOU (15:00)

Buses to Byways Project

This is a federal grant run by Jan Brown who is continuing to do an excellent job. (16:00)

Wayfinding

As result of conference with Roger Books, Ballard has become aware of the importance wayfinding and need for it to be done professionally. She listed examples of this being done in Idaho. Ballard would like the council to discuss how they could support wayfinding. Although the council has not supported signage, Brooks explained the importance of helping visitors find places to park, eat, and things to do. (17:30)

Director Sayer has created a Main Street Program at Commerce. This could be the person who helps wayfinding projects. Typically, communities have several well developed stages that include wayfinding signage through the Main Street program. Ballard suggested that Tourism could help support wayfinding signage which would also improve tourism. (20:00)

Drake Cooper Agency Updates, Bill Drake, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (7) Drake Cooper"

Drake explained current print work, online marketing, and research. (00:00)

Ballard asked the council to note the color palette and clean format which will also be used by the Department of Commerce. Conklin confirmed the quality of the newsletter. Ballard added that number of people who sign-up for the newsletter consistently outnumber those who drop. (4:00)

Drake gave a winter update including February collections report, web traffic, sweep entries, and 2013/2014 season planning. Those who win a winter sweepstakes tend to come. Summer winners have a higher rejection rate sometimes due to location preference or time constraints. Winter is more of an affinity market. (6:00)

Drake summarized highpoints of the Canada campaign. Karen and Tom Stebbins suggested that Tourism marketing address how Canadians enter the border into Idaho. Many come through Montana; Stebbins would like to see them come through Bonner's Ferry on their way to Seattle. Ballard and Stebbins discussed routes, attractions, mileage, and expenses. Ballard suggested marketing to Saskatchewan. (12:30)

Drake showed an overview of the prime season campaign including The Adventurers, You Know You're in Idaho If, Gem State Style, and The Extremes. He gave an overview of the sweepstakes, advertising, and website. Drake pointed out that almost all of the work including animation, music, and photos are Idaho based. (19:30)

Ballard would like to do a press release about artists being from Idaho. Ballard and Drake discussed positive aspects of the Vitamin ID campaign. (30:00)

Drake answered Manion's and Conklin's questions regarding Madden Media. (33:30)

Ballard requested the council's help with resources for a German journalist who wants to film the Oregon Trail. She also described the German project completed last summer about German teens who came to Idaho wanting to be a cowboy. (37:00)

Selkirk Powder Company and All About Adventures, Ken Barrett, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (8) Selkirk Powder Co. and All About Adventures with Ken Barrett"

Ken Barrett introduced his partner Chip Kamin and outlined their backgrounds. He next chronicled the history of Selkirk Powder Company and All About Adventures. (0:00, Note: due to technical difficulties, the first part of this presentation was not recorded.)

Barrett and Kamin showed a video of their products. Barrett elaborated on their partnerships and client stories. He compared and contrasted their product with others in the country and state.

At Jaeger's request, Barrett explained that they are a third party accessing the back side of Schweitzer Mountain. They pay five percent plus an hourly rate. This is their tenth year of a 20 year concession agreement. (10:30)

They service 250 to 480 skiers each year and are hoping for 700. The typical skier pays \$425/day or \$3300 for up to ten renting the cat privately. They put 400 snowmobilers up the hill. (15:00)

Ballard has received requests for wolf tours. Ken noted that would be very difficult. (16:30)

Other Business and Chairperson Updates, JJ Jaeger, Audio file Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (8) Selkirk Powder Co. and All About Adventures with Ken Barrett"

Motion. It was moved (Code) and (Conklin) seconded that ITC meeting adjourn for the afternoon. Motion passed. (25:00)

Friday, March 22, 2013

Schweitzer Mountain Resort, Tom Chasse and Dave Kulis, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (9) Schweitzer Mountain Resort with Tom Chasse and Dave Kulis"

Jaeger called the meeting to order and thanked Schweitzer Mountain Resort for the previous evening's dinner. Member and audience introduced themselves. (0:00)

Chasse and Kulis presented statistics about Schweitzer Mountain Resort and its successes. (2:00)

Ballard suggested they look into "Cool Jobs". Chasses and Kullis talked about their retention rate. (7:00.)

Jaeger asked why Schweitzer didn't use an app. Kulis explained reasons they chose to use a mobile website for now. They are researching creation of an app. (41:30)

Conklin asked for average employee age. Chasse believes it is in early 30's. Many professional people work part time at Schweitzer. (44:00)

At Newman's request Chasse elaborated on 24 hour ski fundraiser. (46:00)

Norton asked about the guest survey. Kulis said the survey takes guests five minutes to complete. (47:00)

International Selkirk Loop, Stephanie Sims, Audio file, "ITC Mar 2013 (10) International Selkirk Loop with Stephanie Sims"

McAlister introduced Stephanie Sims. (0:00)

Sims started August 2012 and is the only employee for a 280 mile scenic byway. The loop started in the 1990's to promote tourism. It is the only international scenic byway in

North America and encompasses multiple countries, states, and counties. It is comprised of five sections; each had to apply in their own states/providences and nations. (0:30)

Each section needs to have one of six qualities: scenic, recreational, historic, geologic, cultural, or natural. They have received many awards including *All American Scenic Byway* and the *One of a Kind* award from Canada. (3:30)

Surveys showed people used to stay two to three days. They added 500 miles of side trips so that people would stay longer. This generated publicity and high rating with Rand McNally. (5:00)

Sims outlined ways that the Loop has helped the economy. They are a cycling destination. Wildlife is a popular interest. They print 50,000 maps of the loop. One in three people who receive a map come to visit the loop. Those few who answered their survey after visiting the loop tend to be well-educated, baby-boomers and spent \$2.6 million spent on the loop. (6:00)

Their goals include wayfinding signs, interpretive signs, an interpretive center in Sandpoint, and continuing with marketing campaigns. (12:00)

Conklin requested information on funding. Sims said businesses purchase memberships and advertising. They also receive some grants. (14:00)

At Ballard's request Sims stated that someone else is handling the situation with federal funding of scenic byways. (16:00)

Ballard requested that Sims help Commerce make marketing language be Canadian-friendly. (17:00)

Sims said that it is more difficult to cross the US border than the Canadian border (18:30)

Sandpoint Restaurant Association, Steve Meyer, Audio file, "ITC Mar 2013 (11) Sandpoint Restaurant Association with Steve Meyer"

Kate McAlister introduced Steve Meyer who is also the owner of Pond Oreille Winery. (0:00)

Meyer explained various roles the Winery and Restaurant Association play in the community and northwest. He chronicled their history. (1:00)

In 2002 his business moved their winery to downtown Sandpoint. Their presence helped to enhance the foodie culture. They developed into a "place to hang-out". The restaurants and wineries now work together. (3:30)

In 2012 their Small Business Association began program called Sandpoint Forward and hired Mark Rivers who developed BoDo. They started Wheel Barrel Wednesdays. (5:30)

In that process the restaurant owners started the "Taste Trail", Dine around Sandpoint, and Harvest Wine Walk. This led to forming a restaurant association and branding Sandpoint as a "foodie destination". (7:30)

Meyer answered Ballard's request for ways the Division of Tourism can help the community bring more visitors during the shoulder seasons including quality experiences, invitations to next event, and taking a Sandpoint product home. (18:00)

In answer to Jaeger's question, Meyer described the wine making process. He elaborated on its relationship with other town businesses. (20:30)

Sandpoint Chamber and Tourism, Kate McAlister and Sean Mirus, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (12) Sandpoint Chamber and Tourism with Kate McAlister and Sean Mirus"

McAlister introduced Sean Mirus. (0:00)

Mirus elaborated on the importance of tourism as one of Sandpoint's economic drivers. Mirus wants Sandpoint to be known as both a lake and ski town. (1:00)

Mirus became involved in the chamber four years prior. McAlister wanted the town to have a strategic plan that included both business and tourism. (3:00)

Their tourism council, Tourism Sandpoint, includes all tourism related sectors. This is the first year all groups are working together to synergize their efforts. (4:30)

They are working on a marketing plan and an advertising campaign to bring visitors during the shoulder seasons. (7:00)

McAlister gave short history of her involvement with the Chamber. She tells business that when more tourists come to Sandpoint, then those employed in the hospitality industry make more money and can afford to purchase more items in town. It raises the tide in the whole town. Her point is "how will it help those who make minimum wage?" (10:00)

McAlister told more stories about individuals and businesses in the town joining together to make the town successful. (12:30)

McAlister used a metaphor of sisters to describe Sandpoint's relationship with neighboring towns. (15:00)

She showed materials highlighting Sandpoint's attractions and events. (16:30)

Future Meetings and Closing Topics, JJ Jaeger, ITC Chair, Audio file "ITC Mar 2013 (13) Future Meetings and Closing Topics"

Jaeger stated that the University of Idaho is putting together a conference planning department. They would be a resource to help group businesses that focus on professional academics. (0:00)

Ballard said that the state already has staff to do this. The University of Idaho asked Ballard for funding to position themselves as a CVB for the state, which is a duplication of state efforts. The grant program is designed to help CVB's chase convention business. Ballard wonders what the state could do to help different groups like the University. She suggested helping these efforts through co-op marketing. (1:30)

Conklin said the University is talking about convention business in niche markets. If regular CVB's are not reaching the education niche market, then Tourism could partner with U of I. (4:30)

Ballard wondered if they or other groups like the INL could come into the program as a multi-regional grantee. Ballard listed some positive points and concerns. Conklin added insights. Both were concerned that U of I lodge convention participants in hotels that collect 2% bed tax as opposed to on-campus. (5:30)

Jaeger disagrees that these groups pay no more than per diem and meet primarily in summer. In answer to Manion's question, Jaeger said the person who is leading this effort has experience with academic conferences. (8:30)

Ballard reiterated original concerns and working possibilities. Code highlighted challenges enticing groups to come to an area. Discussion ensued. (11:00)

Jaeger would like Ballard to follow-up with U of I. (19:00)

Oct Meeting choices are (1) Shore Lodge, (2) Teton Spring, and (3) Twin Falls.

Council would also like future meetings to begin at 9:00 am as opposed to 8:00 am.

Motion. It was moved (Code) and (Conklin) seconded that ITC meeting adjourn. Motion passed. (12:00)