

**Idaho Travel Council
Web/Telephone Conference
March 15, 2010**

Minutes

Council Members Participating

J.J. Jaeger, Region I
Frances Conklin, Region II
John May, Vice-Chair, Region III
Diane Newman, Region IV
Bill Code, Region V
Tadd Jenkins, Chair, Region VI
Dick Anderson, Region VII
Paul Norton, Member At-Large

Department of Commerce Staff Participating

Don Dietrich, Director
Karen Ballard, Administrator, Tourism Development
Kellie Reed, Tourism
Diane Norton, Tourism
Mitch Knothe, Tourism
Peg Owens, Tourism
ReNea Nelson, Tourism
Greg Corlett, Innovation

Guests Participating

Bill Drake, drake/cooper
Josh Mercaldo, drake/cooper
Ron Gardner, Element 242
Kevin Ryan, Element 242

Monday, March 15, 2010

Meeting called to order by Chairman Tadd Jenkins.

Motion – It was moved (Code) and seconded (Newman) that Vice Chair John May chair the meeting because of the format of the conference call and webcast. Motion passed.

Chair May welcomed the council, staff and participants, called for introductions and any changes to the meeting agenda. No changes to the agenda were brought forward. Karen Ballard explained the format of the meeting stating that council members were on phone lines with the audio capabilities. Other meeting participants were asked to communicate any comments they have using the chat feature. John May asked everyone to provide their comments about the format of the meeting. Ballard told the council that in an effort to minimize expenses, and a minimal amount of pressing business, this format was being tested to determine the feasibility of conducting an occasional future meeting using the conference call/webcast format.

Director's Report – Commerce Director Don Dietrich thanked the council for attempting this format and expressed his enthusiasm for the technology. He reported that the department's budget has not been approved by the Legislature yet, but it is 48% below the original 2009 budget. Dietrich told the council that creative efforts are being used to continue a very aggressive Project 60 plan. One hundred and five companies are in Idaho's economic development pipeline. Of the 105, about 40% of the pipeline is international, which is up from 30%. The good news is, according to Dietrich, is that international market money is moving and not impacted as severely as we are in the United States. He said that our U.S. projects are active, continue to accumulate but he does not anticipate quick movement. Several site visits are scheduled over the next couple of weeks, two large ones this week.

Dietrich told the council that the EB5 program, a federal program that permits Visas to international players for investment, is beginning to gain traction. He said two centers have been approved in Idaho and a third is in the pipeline. This is a great way to get additional capital for markets and the department is working aggressively on that front.

The Air Force is proposing to establish F-35A Joint Strike Fighter training aircraft at one or more existing Air Force installations within the continental U.S. The Boise Air Terminal Air Guard Station (Gowen Field) is one location being considered for training aircraft. A series of public scoping meetings are being held to encourage community input and comment. The project would be a huge economic boost to Idaho's economy and Dietrich encouraged council members to visit the F35.com website to learn more about the project. The site also provides an opportunity for citizens to pledge their support to the project. Acting Chairman May told Director Dietrich to let council members know what they can do to support the program locating in Idaho and encouraged council members to go to the website and get signed on.

Dietrich reported to the council that Governor Otter's 'love letter' to Oregon and Washington businesses has generated a lot of feedback from Washington and Oregon people. The Governor continues to support his actions and Dietrich said it will be interesting to see how it all plays out. He asked council members to let him know if the campaign is creating any problems in their communities, particularly bordering communities and businesses. Acting Chair May asked council members to call or e-mail Dietrich if they see problems related to the Governor's campaign.

Budget Review – Karen Ballard reported to the council that February collections were down 3.22%, which is less than anticipated. She is optimistic and hopes that March's collections will perhaps be down 5%, with overall for the year a little over 8%. Ballard told the council that the bulk of the budget cuts is taken out of on-line marketing because there is a short buy timeline; if we don't need to cut back we can still get into the market. It also appears savings have been realized in travel and other items and Ballard suggests delaying research costs and highly recommends that Longwood's research be interspersed with economic development and postponed for this fiscal year. After discussion by the council, it was agreed upon that a flat trend, at best, is anticipated for the year and that if collections come in higher than anticipated, expenditures can be adjusted accordingly.

Motion – It was moved (Anderson) and seconded (Code) that the budget be approved, as presented. Motion passed.

Idaho Conference on Recreation & Tourism (ICORT) Update – Diane Norton, Conference Coordinator, reported to the council that plans are moving forward smoothly for this year's May 4-6, conference which will be held in Boise at the DoubleTree Riverside. Reminder to register postcards, followed by a

press release, will be sent out the week of March 29. The current conference agenda is posted, along with registration information, at tourism.idaho.gov.

Karen Ballard and Diane Norton briefed the council on Council Choice Awards. Staff will work on categories and provide nominating information to the council at the May 3-4 meeting to enable them to select one award for each region.

Ballard told the council that we have budgeted for 200 attendees. Boise, Sun Valley and Coeur d'Alene are usually the sites that bring the most participants. She asked the council to consider rotating the conference in Boise every other year. Tadd Jenkins and John May expressed their agreement that it makes sense to hold the conference at best attendance sites and agree that the council should look at this for further discussion and decision. John May believes it is important to continue rotating council meetings throughout the state to provide the opportunity for local input, attendance and involvement.

Drake/Cooper Agency Updates – Bill Drake and Josh Mercaldo updated the council on projects they are working on:

Free Standing Insert (FSI) – Idaho's tourism industry will support a Spring FSI. Ad sales to date include: Division of Tourism, Route of the Hiawatha, Stanley-Sawtooth Chamber, Silverwood Theme Park, Coeur d'Alene Chamber/Coeur d'Alene Resort, Twin Falls Chamber, Idaho RV Campgrounds Assn., Idaho Outfitters and Guides Assn., Moscow Chamber, Sun Valley Resort, Post Falls Chamber, Museum of Idaho, SWITA, Boise CVB, Garden Valley Chamber, Warhawk Museum, InIdaho.com, Sun Valley/Ketchum CVB, Cascade Raft & Kayak and the Rexburg Chamber.

Media Pushes to FY11 include:

- Delta in-flight media June airing is part of "Destination" programming, will air on approximately 17,300 flights on Delta domestic and international flights.
- June Sunset and Family Fun ads have been pushed to July
- Salt Lake Magazine Summer Getaways e-blast has been added
- Miscellaneous publication upgrades include *Yellowstone 99 Things To Do* and *Western Journey* (co-op ad)

Travel Guide – Initial planning is that FY11 will have a printed guide using FY10 layout and Lumpkin family on the cover. Ad rates and sizes will be the same as FY10 and the digital guide will be expanded to include online itineraries.

Great Idaho Getaway campaign will include online banners and Visit Idaho integration. Preliminary FY11 plan includes footage, media, PR & continued outreach. Main site launched 2/9/10 after a two week teaser period. The home page has been updated with fresh content. March activity includes launching the contest which will run through the summer. Over 30 partners are participating in the contest and one winner will be pulled each week. The online campaign is scheduled to start April 1 using Google, Yahoo and Bing with a targeted keyword campaign. Public relations and social efforts will play a key role in the campaign.

Preliminary FY11 Plan – Continued deployment of current assets of footage with the creation of a footage library and interest list. Plans are to repurpose existing footage for new opportunities with new editing and bundling. If needed, new footage needs will be determined with a capped budget. Plans

include continued outreach with advertising and marketing efforts being closely monitored and adjusted as needed. Some Web enhancements will be explored.

Karen Ballard told the council that a fair amount of the marketing budget is going toward editing footage and suggests that rather than chase more footage, we continue to edit what we have. Greg Corlett, the department's IT manager, is helping to library and catalog footage or easy access and Ballard told the council that Element 242 is also interested in doing this. She said it is a challenge and large task but it is exciting to see how existing footage can be used, citing the Fiesta Bowl and the Delta Airlines project as examples. She also said there is an opportunity to sell footage to non-tourism industry businesses, such as realtors, and a market price needs to be determined. Acting Chair May asked if the catalog or library could be made available at ICORT so pieces could be used by the regions in their marketing efforts. Ballard responded that the information will be shared at the council during the time Breakfast Clubs have traditionally been held.

Film Grant Proposal – Peg Owens told the council that in the past workshops have been held to help bring training to Idaho's workforce but there are now two film professional organizations in the state serving that need. After exploring ways to provide people with the opportunity for hands-on learning on production, a grant program for the film industry is being proposed. Idaho's Film Bureau would work with the Commission on the Arts to provide grant opportunities in several different areas. Owens proposed to the council that the \$20,000 that has been spent in the past to assist film festivals and cover staff expenses to attend Sundance Film Festival be used for the grant program and asked for the council's input. Council members Norton and May asked that more information be provided to the council for their study before the council can consider whether or not to support the concept. Acting Chair May asked if the \$20,000 initial funding would be taken from the ITC budget and where the final decision on who receives grants rests. Owens responded that a panel would make recommendations to the council for presentation at the council's October meeting and that it would be the travel council's responsibility to award the funds. After discussing council members concerns about different ways of spending these funds, Acting Chair May asked Owens to provide the council with more information so they can be better prepared to discuss and act upon the proposal, if appropriate, at the May meeting. He also asked Owens to provide the council with current budget information and how this would affect film budget funding in the future.

Element 242 – Ron Gardner and Kevin Ryan briefed the council on Element 242's social media services. Gardner told the council that after reviewing the ITC grant criteria, most of the criteria reads like a description of what Element 242 is. Quality content is no longer cost prohibitive and they hope their services will be purchased by grantees to assist them in developing regional sites. Ryan told the council that Element 242 focused on production, not web site design. Karen Ballard told the council that Element 242 presented their services at the Grant Summit and a lot of excitement has been generated about what they bring to the table. She wanted the council to be aware of what they do because it is anticipated that Element 242 services may be included in some of the grant presentations the council will hear at the May meeting. Acting Chair John May said he attended the Grant Summit and there is a lot of buzz and excitement about Element 242's concept to help grantees develop a regional social media product.

ITC Grant Program Endorsements - Karen Ballard asked the council to comment on ITC grant program endorsements that were e-mailed to them for review prior to the meeting. She told the council these need to be sent to grantees before they do their grant presentations at the May meeting. Acting Chair May said he needed for time to review and comment and that I did agree with Frances Conklin's

suggestion that they be more user -friendly. It was agreed upon by the council that they will forward their comments and suggestions to Ballard in an effort to soften the wording and tone of the document.

Scenic ByWay Discussion – Karen Ballard told the council that Reid Rogers, President of the Scenic Byway for Idaho, is requesting a statewide scenic byway marketing plan be developed. After staff discussion and exploring options to requesting a federal grant which would required 20% cash match, staff backed away for the idea and have opted to explore what Element 242 and the Scenic Byways Committee might be able to develop together. She said this is a good project to test a social media section to our website and experiment with social media and blogging. Ballard told the council that the federal grant through the Department of Transportation would have been onerous and cumbersome. The council expressed enthusiasm for developing and promoting scenic byways throughout the state in any way possible.

Motion – It was moved (Anderson) and seconded (Code) that the minutes of the January 19, 2010 council meeting be approved as written. Motion passed.

Other Business

Next meeting May 3 & 4, 2010 in conjunction with the Idaho Conference on Recreation & Tourism, DoubleTree Riverside, Boise.

Acting Chair John May asked council members to submit their comments and thoughts about the web/conference call format used today for the meeting and thanked those participating.

Motion – It was moved (Anderson) and seconded (Code) that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed.