



Indiana Office of Tourism Development

MINUTES AND MEMORANDA OF A MEETING OF THE INDIANA TOURISM COUNCIL

Held: January 23, 2019

An extra-quarterly meeting of the Indiana Tourism Council was held at 1:30 p.m. in the first floor conference room of One North Capitol, Indianapolis.

The following council members were present: Chief of Staff to the Lieutenant Governor Tracy Barnes, IOTD Executive Director Misty Weisensteiner, Karen Niverson, Cam Clark, Cindy Hoye, Lorelei Weimer, Patrick Tamm, Eric Snow, James Wallis, and Carrie Lambert. Guests present included Adam Moschell from LG Grant Services and David Holder from JLL.

Tracy Barnes called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

I. Welcome

Tracy Barnes welcomed the council and asked everyone to introduce themselves. He introduced Misty Weisensteiner, the newly instated director of IOTD.

II. Approval of Minutes

Due to a lack of quorum, minutes from the June and September meetings were unable to be approved at previous meetings. The June meeting minutes were approved with a motion from James Wallis and a second from Cindy Hoye. The September minutes were approved, with a motion from Carrie Lambert and a second from Cindy Hoye. The December minutes were approved with a motion from Karen Niverson and a second from James Wallis.

III. Updates to Destination Development Grant Process

As a recap, the Tourism Council met in December and had just received applications for the current cycle of Destination Development Grants. There was a request for more transparency into the vetting process and insight into the applications. In response to this and the consensus for more industry input into selections, several actions were taken. First, all council members who responded received electronic access to the applications to review at their leisure. Second, the grant selection team was expanded to include Dr. Amanda Cecil, Dr. Liping Cai, Melissa Thompson of the Indiana Sports Corp, and Karen Niverson.

Kyle Johnson: The scoring meeting will take place on February 8. We are working to figure out why some council members have been unable to access Syncplicity. The thought is that some people needed to download an app first. We are working to create a 1-pager to help people set it up.

IV. Basic Overview of Applicants

- Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site: Presidential Commons and Advancing American Democracy Plaza – construction of enhanced signage
- Brown County Maple Leaf Management Group: Maple Leaf Performing Arts Center – upgrade the lobby design
- Evansville Zoological Society: Penguins of Patagonia – large and dynamic penguin habitat at the front of the property
- Fair Oaks Farms: Robotic Dairy Experience – new attraction, inside view of a robotic dairy farm
- Greenfield Youth Baseball Association: Greenfield Baseball Complex – construct a 12 field baseball complex
- Headwaters Junction: Historic Craigville Depot and Turntable Renovation Project – restoration to launch a much larger attraction
- Town of Highland: Arts Culture Culinary Marketplace – transform a downtown district into creative hub
- Jasper Newton Foundation: Parks for People Campaign – 3 baseball and softball fields to host tournaments
- Kokomo Automobile Museum—wants to relaunch location, currently has insufficient funds
- City of LaPorte: Dunes Event Center at Newport Landing – complete event space with signage, landscape, and parking
- Town of Newburgh; Newburgh Riverfront Pavilion – amphitheater for events, all matching funds from the community
- Radius Indiana: Discover Southern Indiana – branding initiative
- Redevelop Old Jasper Action Coalition: Jasper Schoolhouse Visitor Experience – dynamic visitor experience, a/v
- Riley Old Home Society: ‘Lizabuth Ann’s Kitchen – renovate, make better meeting space, seat 50 people, make ADA compliant
- South Bend Chocolate Company: SBC Destination Project – modeled after Fair Oaks Farms and Huber Winery, Education experiential attraction for South Bend
- Tippecanoe Arts Federation: Wells Community Cultural Center – expansion and renovation
- City of Whiting: Lakefront Play Center – really innovative playground on lakefront

V. Discussion

Carrie Lambert: How much grant money do we have to award?

Adam Moschell: \$500,000.

Tracy Barnes: The 1st winner gets up to \$250,000 of their request.

Cam Clark: Is there a threshold they have to clear to present?

KJ: Usually, we score the applicants and there is an obvious gap. You'll have your top caliber applications and then a drop of 50 or 60 points. The goal is to have good projects that we turn away.

Cindy Hoye: Do we have any returning applicants?

KJ: Yes, the Riley Old Home Society and the Wells Community Cultural Center. Neither reach the level of presenting to the council.

CL: After you receive the applications?

KJ: We'll give you a full report and say, "this is who we recommend to present." We score individually, then come together as a group of seven to agree on a final score.

CH: How do you look at for-profit entities applying for grants?

KJ: We adhere to guidelines actually set up and approved by the Tourism Council. Non-profits are free to apply. Of those that do, at the very least they have support from CVBs, if not actual partnerships.

CL: What reviewing a project that has already been completed?

KJ: The application must address how they intend to obtain funding if they cannot receive the grant...big projects, little projects, it all measures out. That's the beauty of it being a competitive project.

AM: We look at money on hand that could be donated, versus already committed money. This happens before the threshold meeting.

TB: Info, thoughts, feedback? I feel like we are in a better place than we were at the December meeting.

James Wallis: This is an improvement.

CL: It's nice to have a heads up of what is coming down the pike.

CH: Can you send us the slide deck? I'll be honest, I'm not going to read in-depth on 18 applications.

CL: What if the scoring committee decides the break, but there's an applicant the council wanted to see?

TB: We don't have the time to invite all 18 applicants in to present. We are cognizant of everyone's time.

KJ: In a 500 point scoring process, the break is pretty indicative. I don't believe we have ever let a proposal behind that was really regrettable.

TB: Thank you Adam and Kyle for putting that information together. The point of this meeting was to

make sure everyone had visibility into the grant process.

VI. Other Business

Eric Snow: INDOT is closing rest stops around the state, with plans to open new, improved areas. Is the Lieutenant Governor's office aware?

TB: We are aware, yes. It is a mixed bag. Rest Area, Rest Stop. Visitors Center, these all have different classifications. There are conversations to keep IOTD in the loop regarding the aesthetics of new centers. We care about how they look, INDOT cares about how they work. For the past 15 months, I've been pushing to keep tourism included in how they look and feel. There's a lot of back and forth about control, funding, what purpose the centers serve. It's been a hot issue.

CL: Which centers have been closed?

Noelle Szydyk: We've talked to a contact at INDOT, nothing has been officially closed yet.

CL: Spencer County gets money from the state to help operate their; so does Harrison County. This will affect their budget.

NS: We are reaching out to CVBs so they don't send their brochures to a location that is shutting down.

VII. Adjournment

Seeing no other business, Tracy Barnes asked for a motion to adjourn. Cam Clark motioned and Cindy Hoye seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Barnes
Designee for the Lieutenant Governor

ATTEST:

Misty Weisensteiner
Executive Director, IOTD