

**Minutes**  
**Island County 2% Committee (Joint Admin. Board)**  
 June 6, 2019  
 Freeland, China City

The meeting was called to order at 11:05am by Chairman

**Quorum:**

Debra Bell x	Comm. Jill Johnson x	Pat Powell x
Dianne Binder x	Gregg Lanza x	Frank Rose
Stephanie Cook x	Joanne Lechner x	Chet Ross x
Christine Cribb	Jessica McCready X	Sharon Sappington
Lynda Eccles x	Inge Morascini x	Erica Wasinger
Bruce Allen x	Robyn Myers x	OH Vacant

In addition to the above members also in attendance this meeting were Sherrye Wyatt, Whidbey Camano Islands Tourism Coordinator, Jack Penland, Computer PIX LLC, Scott Rosenkranz, Rosenkranz Productions.

**Guests:**

- 1) Brigid, Reynolds, City of Langley, Director of Community Planning
- 2) Owen Dennison, Town of Coupeville, Town Planner
- 3) Beckye Frey, Island County Long Range Planner
- 4) Jonathan Lang, Island County Long Range planner

Information was provided by guests relating to short term rentals vs. vacation rentals and the impacts to the local community and tourism. Both Coupeville and Langley are working through formal processes within their governments. Island County Planning is gathering information related to this topic and reporting in the future.

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

Lynda Eccles motioned and Greg Lanza seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Minutes from August meeting were presented. JoAnne Lechner motioned and Greg Lanza seconded the minutes from May 2, 2019 be approved as presented. Motion passed.

Treasurer's report and invoices were presented by Dianne Binder.

<b>Island County Joint Tourism</b>					<b>Invoices on Jun 2, 2019</b>
		<b>Date</b>	<b>Invoice#</b>	<b>Amt.</b>	
5009816	1990935 Alberta Ltd	5-22-19	INV-0136	\$600.00	Website Code Tweaks
	66Events LLC	6-3-19	101	\$354.00	Digital Advertising DayTripsWA.com
	Captain Whidbey Inn	4-28-19	863970	\$392.01	Hilary Larson - Travel Writer Discounted Lodging 3 nights
5000783	Certified Folder	5-30-19	557814-B	\$6,610.33	Second half of Contract for Brochure Distribution
5007381	ComputerPIX	5-24-19	19-9	\$4,508.40	Digital Marketing, Website
5007381	ComputerPIX	5-24-19	19-10	\$805.99	Platforms, Expenses, Digital
	International Food, Wine and Travel Writers Association (IFWTWA)	5-18-19	306	\$1,000.00	Platinum Level Advertising Support for Conference Nov. 2019 in Santa Fe, NM
<b>NEW</b>	Jessica Wick	5-23-19	1	\$223.38	Travel Writer - Influencer reimbursement for approved expenses
	Northwinds Wine Consulting	5-21-19	1911A	\$378.38	Travel Writer - Influencer reimbursement for approved expenses - Hilarie Larson
5008568	Osborne Northwest Public Relations	5-24-19	2134	\$2,983.30	Media Relations Consulting Fees and Expenses
5004220	Rosenkranz Productions	4-28-19	2987	\$1,500.00	Design, Layout, Production Services
5004220	Rosenkranz Productions	5-28-19	2988	\$756.51	Jets on Whidbey Rack Card Reprint 5,000
	Seattle Met (aka SagaCity Media)	4-19-19	2019-28939	\$1,500.00	Display and Digital Advertising Package
5003032	Seattle Pacific University	5-28-19	-1	\$254.62	Discounted Lodging Travel Writer Sheryl Nance - 2 nights
5005663	Sherrye Wyatt PR & Writing	5-15-19	51519	\$7,500.00	Public Relations/Marketing Services
5005663	Sherrye Wyatt PR & Writing	6-2-19	60219	\$1,971.73	Mileage and Expenses
	Statehood Media LLC	6-3-19	2018-12449	\$2,000.00	Display Advertising in 1859 Oregon's Magazine
5003235	Sound Business Center	5-1-19	204468	\$168.97	Copies and Office Supplies
	<b>Total</b>			<b>\$33,507.62</b>	

Jill Johnson motioned and JoAnne Lechner seconded the motion to approve the treasurer's report and that the invoices in the amount of \$33,507.62 are authorized and submitted to Island County for payment. Motion carried by majority.

## **Old Business**

None.

## **New Business**

### **Monthly PR media Report**

#### **S H E R R Y E W Y A T T**

The annual **DEAN RUNYON** report is available for 2018. **Direct travel - visitor destination spending in Island County is up by 10.2%** (WA state up 5.1%) . Visitor spending in 2018 in Island County is \$223.2 million vs. \$202.4 million in 2017. Island County local tax receipts grew by 10.1%. Earnings are up 11.2%. Jobs are up by 5.6% (WA State up 3.6%).

Upcoming advertising, both print and digital, include the **1859 OREGON MAGAZINE, DAYTRIPSWA.COM, SEATTLE MET, WHIDBEY ART TRAIL MAP** and **EXPERIENCEWA.COM**. Sherrye is participating in numerous meetings throughout the islands, Seattle, and the surrounding area this month including **WE CREATE WA** and **WASHINGTON FILMWORKS**.

Legislation regarding **SHORT TERM RENTALS** was signed into law by Governor Inslee and is linked [here HB 1798](#).

Sherrye attended the Hollywood film premiere at the Egyptian Theatre for the 25-minute short film that stars Whidbey Island as the primary location, called **THE HOUR AFTER WESTERLY**. She is also included in the documentary which was aired at the premiere, about the making of the film and more of the back story about how it all came together. It is potentially going to be shown in a few locations on Whidbey Island, either later this year, or in early 2020.

This time of year is always super busy with filming and other important visitors. There are at least two productions in June including an episode of a show which airs on **HGTV**.

Many **VIP GUESTS** are visiting both Whidbey and Camano Islands in June, including a food/travel influencer, a high profile travel writer (co-hosted with Visit Seattle), and a Paris-based tour operator **NORD ESCAPES** also part of a Visit Seattle partnership. Sherrye is working with all of them. We are aware that smoke from wildfires this summer is a potential issue that can impact photography/filming as well as other visitors. We are encouraging VIPs to schedule later in the fall whenever possible. Not just because of hazy skies but also, our desire is to promote and showcase the shoulder seasons, when more lodging is available.

Sherrye is speaking with the **FILSON** public relations staff about opportunities for co-promotion. The Captain Whidbey is redoing one of their cabins with a **FILSON** theme.

New air travel is available out of Oak Harbor to SEA TAC on LYNK AIR  
<https://www.lynkair.com/>

Island County is now part of a very exciting new **NATIONAL MARITIME HERITAGE AREA** - the only one devoted to the Maritime culture!  
<https://www.preservewa.org/programs/national-maritime-heritage-area/> These are places where historic, cultural, and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes. Unlike national parks, National Heritage Areas are large lived-in landscapes. Consequently, National Heritage Areas entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs. Today there are **55 National Heritage Areas** across the country.

## **JACK PENLAND**

### **Website**

Per Google Analytics, in the last 30 days 26,049 people have visited the site in the last 30 days (April 23 – May 22). That's 22% more than the same period last year.

The top 10 pages during that period were:

1. Home Page
2. Contest for The Captain Whidbey
3. Holland Happening
4. Things to Do
5. Jets on Whidbey
6. How to Get to Whidbey Island
7. Calendar of Events
8. 3 Magic Deception Pass Hikes
9. Parks and Scenery
10. Lodging

Alexa.com has us ranked 344,170 in the world. A year ago, our rank was lower, at 400,612. The lower the number is, the better. Note: This number changes daily, improving in the summer and slipping down in the winter. Their ranking is created using a combination of number of visitors to a website and that website's perceived authority on the subject.

### **Recent Photos**

- Langley Business Fronts for improved restaurant and gallery listings
- Possession Beach
- Central Whidbey Car Commercial

We've also supplied images to:

- Washington Tourism Alliance for IPW

- Northwest Travel and Life Magazine

### **Email**

Our most recent email was sent out April 29. Here's a link:

[https://us12.campaign-archive.com/?u=11380ced8373e34392577e79b&id=306b97b11e&e=\[UNIQID\]](https://us12.campaign-archive.com/?u=11380ced8373e34392577e79b&id=306b97b11e&e=[UNIQID])

It had an open rate of 18.9%. The top links were:

1. The Captain Whidbey Lodging Contest
2. Whidbey Island – A Food Lover's Paradise – North Whidbey
3. Lodging Specials
4. Penn Cove Water Festival
5. Construction Alerts
6. Savor Spring Food-Wine Spirits Tour
7. Kayaking
8. Camano Studio Tour

### **Travel App**

At the last meeting, two members brought up the idea of us developing a mobile app. Since then, I've done some research and talked with people about their opinion on developing an app.

The information I've found says we're better-off concentrating on a mobile-friendly website that is full of great information.

Miles Media is a major online travel marketing company and we've often discussed their data in our tourism meetings. Their Director of Research and Online Marketing, Chris Adams, says, "From our experience, the added complexity, cost and maintenance required to keep apps updated is usually not worth the small (and decreasing) benefits of an app over a leading-edge mobile web solution."

Another consulting company, Tourism Currents, is a bit blunter about it. They note things like Google Maps and Yelp are changing travel, but add, "That does not mean that anyone will care enough about YOUR app to add it to the pile of apps that are already on their phone."

What do the numbers say? Miles Media does travel surveys and sends out quarterly reports. In their most recent survey on apps, they found, "1 on 5 travelers indicated using an app from a destination – down from 2016." The full graph is on the next page.

Another consideration is Google, and to a lesser extent other search engines. People use Google every day to search for answers to destination questions. But Google doesn't

search apps, only web sites. And Google is very significant to us. Over the course of the past 12 months, Google has been responsible for 77.4% of the traffic to our site.

Finally, we'd have to market that app. That means, instead of spending money to get people to the website to learn about our islands and, hopefully, book a room, we'd have to spend that same money to tell them about an app. THEN, we'd have to hope that they'd investigate the islands and book a room. That's a much harder thing to do.

So, I would suggest we watch how technology evolves and the ongoing research. If a specific idea comes about that shows a need for an app, we make our move then.

Jack also discussed the status of improvements on the restaurant tab on the website.

## **OSBORNE NORTHWEST PUBLIC RELATIONS**

### **Project Management**

- Managed ongoing media outreach for new and pending media visits; pitched angles related to upcoming events, Paine Field access and summer and fall travel.
- Developed itineraries and travel plans for high volume of media visiting in May-July.

### **Media Visits**

- Hilarie Larson, IFWTWA Officer and contributor to Wine Folly, and other major wine and travel outlets, May 17-20, toured the island for Savor Spring and joined a hands-on class at Captain Whidbey Inn
- Lisa Dawn Drogin, May 18-19, Story of My Dress blogger covered Savor Spring and seasonal travel on Whidbey; we will also soon receive 4-5 images from her visit for use in our marketing efforts.

### **Pending Media Visits**

- Sheryl Nance-Nash, June 9-12, freelance travel writer for US News & World Report, AFAR, Fodors, several others.
- Daniel Scheffler, July 12-15 - Daniel Scheffler is a freelance writer from New York, contributing to outlets like GQ, The New York Times (including the annual "52 Places to Go" issue) Departures, Conde Nast Traveler, Town & Country and others.
- Q13 Morning News Reporter Ellen Taylor, July 18, will tape two segments on Whidbey Island, including Whidbey Island Fair (live) and Whidbey Island Shakespeare Festival (pre-taped, slated to air in early August).
- Chelsea Lowe, July 28-30, visiting from LAX to feature the ease of Paine Field and flying to Island Time Faster, for industry trade magazine TravelAge West and national pop culture and parenting site Mom.me
- Jean Chen, USA Today GO Magazine, Sept. 2019

**Press received** *(destination articles and broadcast stories that include Whidbey or Camano as a result of our collective efforts. Reach is defined as circulation for print,*

*view/internship for broadcast, follower count for earned social media endorsements and unique monthly views for digital media).*

<b>Media Outlet</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Published</b>	<b>Circulation/Unique Visitors per Month</b>
<u>Alaska Beyond</u>	Side Trips: Whidbey Island	May 1, 2019	91,201
<u>Alaska Beyond - Digital</u>	Side Trips: Whidbey Island	May 1, 2019	5,558
<u>@StoryofMyDress</u>	Instagram giveaway Savor Spring Food, Wine & Spirits Tour	May 7, 2019	19,300
AAA Journey - Print	Camano Island Studio Tour & Mother's Day Saturday Sail	May/June 2019	657,910
<u>AAA E-Newsletter</u>	Mother's Day Sail featured	May 9, 2019	80,000
<u>AAA Journey - Online</u>	Camano Island Studio Tour & Mother's Day Saturday Sail	May 9, 2019	5,607,990
<u>@Dena Marie</u>	Facebook Post - Spoiled Dog Winery	April 6, 2019	868
<u>Seattle Met Daily E-Newsletter</u>	21 of Washington's Best Beaches	May 12, 2019	482,740
<u>@StoryofMyDress</u>	Instagram Post: Savor Spring Comforts of Whidbey	May 18, 2019	19,300
<u>@StoryofMyDress</u>	Instagram Story detailing her visit (51 posts during her live visit, now as a highlight on her page)	May 19, 2019	19,300
<u>@StoryofMyDress</u>	Instagram Post: Savor Spring Comforts of Whidbey	May 19, 2019	19,300
<u>Seattle Times - Print</u>	Summer Guide: Shakespeare Festival, Island Fair, Race Week	May 19, 2019	717,700
<u>Seattle Times - Print</u>	Free and cheap ways to entertain your kids in the Seattle area this summer	May 19, 2019	717,700
<u>Seattle Times - Online</u>	Free and cheap ways to entertain your kids in the Seattle area this summer	May 19, 2019	11,503,848
<u>@lalatinita19</u>	Instagram Post: Savor Spring food	May 22, 2019	969

AAA E-Newsletter	What to Do This Memorial Day Weekend	May 22, 2019	80,000
CNN Travel	Best things to do on Whidbey Island, roundup by visiting media guest Lilit Marcus	May 23, 2019	29,910,012
<b>Total</b>			<b>49,933,696</b>

### Chamber Round Table

**Camano:** They are researching digital chamber options during the off season and shared of success with Beer and Brats event recently.

**Langley:** They are investigating a creative district designation. October festival activities are in the works.

**Clinton:** They are having a fair amount of expansion in their membership. The new visitor center will be in the Madrona Supply Store. They will also be doing an Octoberfest.

**Coupeville:** Memorial Day parade success with B20 flyer over. Plein Air Arts event on August 23-24. October Haunting events still underway and being planned.

**Oak Harbor:** In June there is an NAS Whidbey Island Open House and the Windjammer Water Park will be opening.

**Announcement:** June 24 there is a special meeting, directly after the management committee meeting in Room 116 at Island County at 1:30pm.

### Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:17 PM

Next regular meeting is July 11, 2019, Pickle's Deli Mtg Room. \$13 lunch, 11am-1pm.

Meeting recorded by Robyn Myers, Secretary and reviewed for submission by Joanne Lechner.