

Meeting Minutes
Island County 2% Joint Advisory Board
Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism
December 2, 2021
Zoom, due to COVID-19

Quorum: x=members present

Elected Town of Langley- Vacant	Com. Melanie Bacon x	Jackie Henderson
Lodging Camano Island - Vacant	Gregg Lanza x	OH Lodging- Vacant
Dianne Binder	S. Whidbey lodging- Vacant	Tom Felvey x
Janae Cameron	Jessica McCready x	Chet Ross x
Vicki Graham x	Inge Morascini x	Sharon Sappington, EDC x
Lynda Eccles x	Robyn Myers x	Jim Woessner

In addition to the above members, guests also in attendance were: Melanie Serroels, Camano Arts Association; Nan Devlin, Arts Consultant; Kay Parsons, President, Whidbey Island Arts Council; Kathy Dannerbeck, Co-President of Camano Arts Association; Amy Bush, Camano Arts Association; Marilyn Crandall, Co-President of Camano Arts Association; Alannah Johansen, Program Specialist 2, Washington State Parks, Camano Island; Selene Muldowney-Stratton, Island Transit Marketing and Comm. Officer; Jack Penland, Computer Pix LLC; Sherrye Wyatt, Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism PR & Marketing Manager and Film Liaison; Scott Rosenkranz, Rosenkranz Productions; Laura Hilton, Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism special projects.

Meeting called to order at 11:46 am by Vice Chair Chet Ross.

1. **Adoption of Agenda** – Inge motioned, and Lynda seconded to accept the agenda. Approved with no objections.
2. **Approval of November 2021 Minutes** -Vickie motioned, Lynda seconded to approve the minutes. Approved with no objections.
3. **Treasurer's Report and Invoice review** - all invoices were approved at the management committee meeting. There were no objections to the invoices presented.
4. **Old Business: None**
5. **New Business:**
 - a. **Management Committee Report-** everything discussed is on the agenda.
 - b. **Transformative Destinations Program – 6-9 month process Sherrye will be embarking in 2022.** The concept is to look at Island County holistically. We will need to identify an ambassador and a few key people to represent Island County on a “Regenerator Team.” It was encouraged for the committee to review some of the terms mentioned. Sherrye will send an email follow up with a small homework assignment related. Chet motioned and Jessica seconded to nominate Sherrye Wyatt as our ambassador to the program. No objections to the motion, motion passes.

c. **Trail Guides Update:** ground truthing continues, weather permitting. They are working with Whidbey Camano Land Trust as a new collaborator.

d. **PR Media Report:**

The full monthly tourism report is presented here:

SHERRYE WYATT PUBLIC RELATIONS & WRITING

- **Washington Film Day** is going to extend beyond one day, to be held throughout the week of January 19, 2022. Some of the presentations will be done virtually as the state legislature has set up new protocols. More information will be forthcoming.
- **Whidbey Camano Land Trust** is joining **Sound Water Stewards** as another partner for the 25 Trails Guide. These are the lesser-known trails, to encourage visitors and locals to discover new options and to direct them away from the most beloved trails. “Ground truthing” is now underway by our team, utilizing a template in order to gather the same data about each trail.
- Our second international virtual FAM is November 30 with the **Port of Seattle** and the **Washington Tourism Alliance** this time for travel operators in Ireland and UK. Nearly 100 are participating in the live program.
- **The Jet Set** travel program has aired. Watch the full episode here [Episode 19 - Whidbey & Camano Islands, Washington - The Jet Set](#) as well as individual stories. The version in Spanish is coming up later. We will be receiving the BRoll in the next several weeks.
- The **Island County Economic Recovery Task Force** that was assembled when COVID began, is now re-grouping and considering a new focus and format. Sherrye has represented the tourism committee on the task force virtual meeting calls since Spring 2021.
- The **Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD)** is beginning a long-range planning process to outline priorities for the next 5 years. They have reached out to the tourism committee to seek a representative to participate as a Stakeholder Advisor in the planning process. This role requires familiarizing themselves with the WICD work plan and participating in a Zoom call the evening of Dec. 6 as well as several additional hours of contribution to the process. Preservation of the rural landscape is important to Island County and one of the reasons visitors are drawn to the islands.
- **Transformational Travel Council** plans are progressing this month, with the real work to begin in 2022. Essentially in the next several weeks we need to:

- Identify a small team that makes up the **Island County Destination Leadership Group**, those that are actively involved in tourism development and strategic planning.
- Select a separate individual who will take on the role of **Destination Liaison/Ambassador**. They will be responsible for leading, organizing, and inspiring destination development practitioners, participants, and the broader community through the entire process, including post-workshop implementation and Ally community engagement.
- TTC will collaborate with the Destination Ambassador to identify and map key stakeholders to form a "**Regenerator Team**" that will work with the TTC to lead the destination through the entire process, including the development and implementation of the **Strategic Action Plan** and the **Train the Trainer Guidebook**.
 - Destination development practitioners (aka "Regenerators") should come from the following segments:
 - *Accommodations*
 - *Experience Designers: Tour Operators, Guides, & Attractions*
 - *Agriculture, Farms, and Cuisine: Farmers, Producers, Wineries, & Restaurants*
 - *Communities and Indigenous Peoples*
 - *Conservation and Wildlife*
- Soon we will want to write and distribute a **press release** that celebrates our selection as a TTC TDP Early Adopter. TTC will be happy to distribute in their channels as well.
- In the coming weeks, TTC will be sending over the **Green Destinations START Program Self Assessment**, which will generate a report which they will review with us and use to customize our program.
- Program timeline, including identifying the date of the workshop and seeking out the host venue, will also be in place soon.
- Slide Deck about the TTC process.
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OSBORNE NORTHWEST PUBLIC RELATIONS

Monthly Overview

- Following a busy month of visits in early fall, this month we worked with media to develop stories to fruition while also planning for the launch of the impending trail guide.
- As expected, and intentionally, our on-island visits were brought to a minimum as we realign our plans, messages and strategies for the coming months.
- We identified a timeline and launch strategy to successfully position and launch the new resource.
- We initiated planning for 2022 and will be working with identified influencers to bolster awareness and content for the guide, with anticipated tours, itinerary development, and photo shoots planned for early December.

Project Management

- Managed ongoing media relations to ensure placement in winter travel roundups and travel pieces, highlighting holiday events for December and for early 2022.
 - Participated in team planning calls and communication regarding the new Trail Guide to understand the project timeline and develop a PR plan to match it.
- Influencer/Media Visits**
- Confirmed interest in collaboration with the following influencers to help develop photography and recommended itinerary content surrounding the launch of the guide:
 - **@SuziPratt**; a Seattle-based photographer specializing in food, nature and outdoors. She also has a significant travel following, a young baby who will appear in the family-focused trail content. Visit Date: Dec. 3-5
 - **Suzanne Stavert**, blogger at Adventures of Empty Nesters plans to visit Whidbey sometime in December (date TBD) and publish a story to her blog. She will also plan to cover her visit in her podcast series, Travel Connections. Visit Date: Dec. 3-5
 - **@FeatherandSkull**; a Camano-island based influencer with a significant audience who covers lifestyle topics, and often posts her island life content. She will supply photos and local recommendations for top places to check out surrounding the chosen trails. She is local, so a formal visit won't occur, we will work on her content weather permitting to be due end of November. Instagram

Engagement

- Reposted influencer and local business content, and managed the community with likes, comments and interaction on the @GoWhidbeyCamano Instagram page. Maintained goal of 2-3 posts per week, with stories posting on an ongoing basis.
- Follower count grew from 2033 on October 28 to 2099 on November 22 ; a growth rate of 3.24%.

Media Visits/Pending Press

- Spring 2022; the following media visits are in the process of rescheduling, with additional anticipated:
 - **Kelly Stilwell**, influencer and travel blogger at Food, Fun and Faraway Places, is planning a visit to cover Washington’s islands for her blog and social channels.
 - **Sara Franklin**, RESCHEDULED/Postponed for Spring 2022, freelance writer with Travel + Leisure to cover the food and drinks, culinary culture of Whidbey Island.
 - **Corrine Whiting**, a Seattle based writer who contributes to publications such as USA Today’s 10 Best, KOMO 4’s Seattle Refined, 1889 Magazine and more, will be highlighting Captain Whidbey Inn for an upcoming article in 1889 Magazine in a story highlighting romantic getaways for the December/January issue.
 - **Northwest Travel & Life Magazine** is planning to feature Whidbey Island in an upcoming article titled, “Pacific Northwest Cycling – Amtrak Style”. Publication date TBD for some time later this fall.
 - **Michele Herrmann**, freelance writer for Forbes, is planning to feature Washington-made gift baskets from Whidbey. Publication date TBD. Press Highlights include 11 pieces of coverage with an estimated 2.77 million impressions.

Coverage Book

To view the coverage in full: <https://share.coveragebook.com/b/9f539918884d8730>

COMPUTERPIX

Website

- **Content | Events**

Our calendar is filling back up with events. Major events that are cancelled will continue to be listed and noted as cancelled.

- **Content | Shop Local**

The Shop Local campaign returned to the website for November and December. Businesses with listings were invited via email to update those listings. About half of the 193 people who received the email opened it and 12 responded with change requests. I'll do this again in the spring.

Newsletter

The Shop Local campaign was the main feature of the most recent newsletter.

<https://mailchi.mp/whidbeycamanoislands/unique-gifts-and-an-amazing-contest>

Topics	Clicks	Unique Clicks
Contest	540	458
Home for the Holidays	201	160
Island Discoveries	112	83
Island Touch	54	46
Lodging	50	35

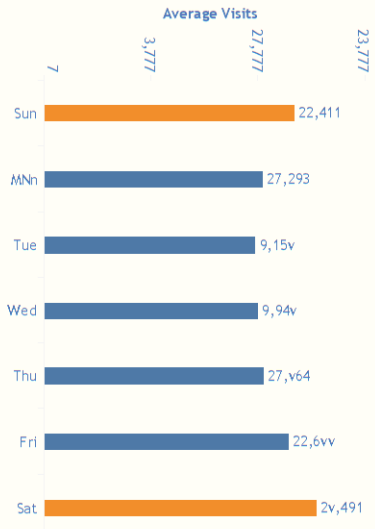
Datafy Insights

The chart shows the number of visitors each week to each island from everywhere BUT the Seattle market. Noteworthy items on the chart are:

- How evenly distributed visitation is on weekdays vs. weekends.
- Despite how far they traveled, a majority (56%) are day-trippers.
- Up until the last couple of months, Whidbey & Camano Island were about equal in long-distance visitation.
- In case anyone is interested, these markets can be explored individually.

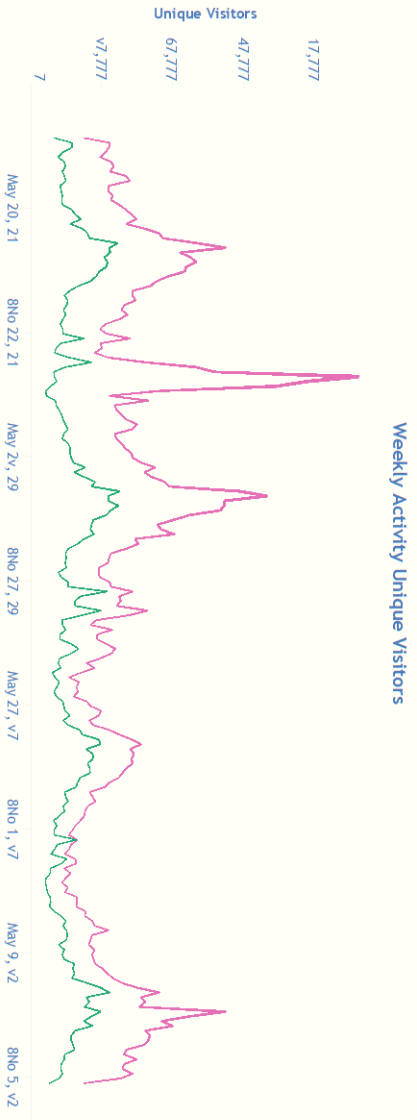
Top Markets Excluding Seattle February 2018 to September 2021

DMS	# of visitors
Portland-OR	v02,251
Spokane	291,777
Los Angeles	203,494
Chicago	270,264
Phoenix-Preccott	15,315
Yakima-Praco-Rehln..	10,629
San Francisco-Oak-San J..	47,00v
Denver	33,274
Dallas-Ft. Worth	30,v15
San Diego	61,0v3
Sacramnto-Slkon-M..	65,544
Salt Lake City	6v,020
Las Vegas	62,172
New York	67,551
Minneapolis-St. Paul	04,106
Houston	06,4v1
Washington-DC-Hagrtwm	0v,339
Boise	07,176
Atlanta	v4,219
Eugene	v6,54v



POI Breakdown

Whidbey Island v,422,575
 pink line = Whidbey
 Camano Island 2,791,079
 green line = Camano

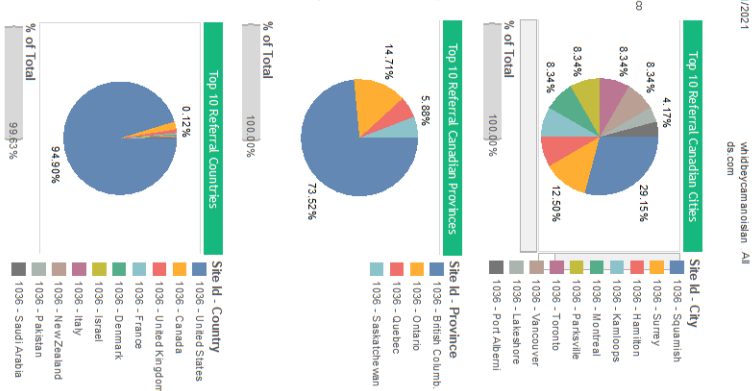
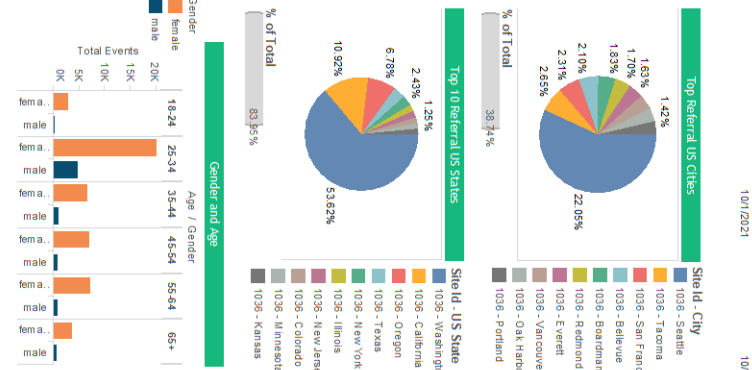
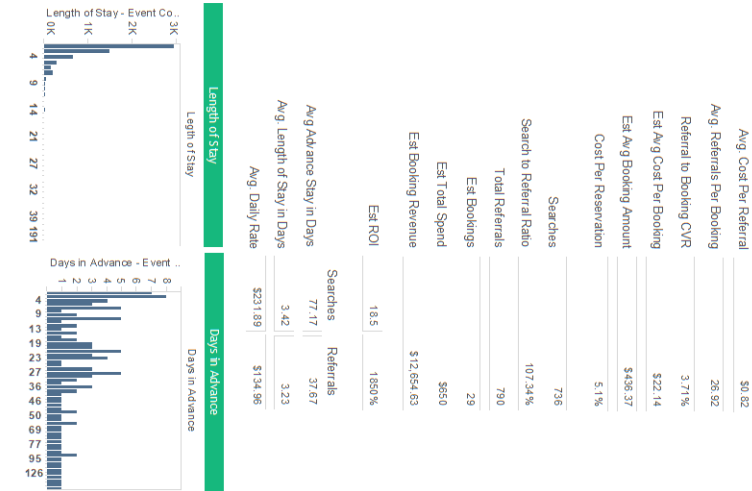


Book Direct Monthly Report

The October report is attached. There were 790 referrals in October, versus 671 in 2020. The 790 referrals produced an estimated 29 bookings and estimated revenue of \$12,654. There have been 417 referrals as of November 26.

Performance Summary

A breakdown of search, referral and conversion data for the given timeframe.



6. Chamber Round Table: lots of holiday activities in local communities. 2022 planning continues to be top of mind for Chambers as well.

7. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 12:26 pm.

Next regular meeting is to be communicated via email. Meeting minutes recorded by Robyn Myers and reviewed for submission by Sherrye Wyatt.