

Minutes
 Island County 2% Committee
 October 1, 2020
 Zoom, due to COVID-19

Quorum: x=members present

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Tim Callison x | Com. Jill Johnson | Pat Powell x |
| Debra Bell | Gregg Lanza | Mitch Richards x |
| Dianne Binder x | Joanne Lechner x | Tom Felvey x |
| Janae Cameron x | Jessica McCready x | Chet Ross x |
| Vicki Graham x | Inge Morascini x | Sharon Sappington, EDC x |
| Lynda Eccles x | Robyn Myers x | Erica Wasinger |

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 Laura Hilton, Is Co. Tourism Contractor.

Guests: Matthew Godfrey, See Source

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 am by Chet Ross.

Adoption of the Agenda: No changes were made to the agenda. Lynda Eccles motioned, and JoAnne seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion approved unanimously via voice.

Minutes from the September 3, 2020 meeting were presented via email. Lynda Eccles motioned, and Inge Morascini seconded to approve the minutes from September 3, 2020 as presented. Motion approved unanimously via voice.

Treasurer's report was presented by Dianne Binder. Invoices were presented in the sum \$20,962.97. Joanne Lechner motioned, and Vicki Graham seconded to approve the invoices in the sum of \$20,962.97 as presented. Motion approved unanimously via voice.

| Island County Joint Tourism | | | | | Invoices on September 18, 2020 |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Vendor | | Date | Invoice# | Amt. | |
| 5007381 | ComputerPIX LLC | 9-24-20 | 20-19 | \$3,049.40 | Digital Marketing, Website |
| 5007381 | ComputerPIX LLC | 9-24-20 | 20-20 | \$552.08 | Platforms, Web Expenses |
| 5007383 | Laura Hilton | 9-23-20 | 920 | \$1,400.00 | Staff Support, Research, Content Development for Website |
| 5007383 | Laura Hilton | 9-23-20 | 923 | \$190.83 | Mileage and Expenses |
| 5008568 | Osborne Northwest Public Relations | 9-23-20 | 2256 | \$3,000.00 | Monthly Contract Media Relations and Expenses |
| 5004220 | Rosenkranz Productions | 9-23-20 | 3059 | \$1,800.00 | Monthly Contract for Design |
| 5005663 | Sherrye Wyatt PR & Writing | 9-15-20 | 91520 | \$7,500.00 | Monthly Contract for Public Relations/Marketing Services |
| 5005663 | Sherrye Wyatt PR & Writing | 9-23-20 | 9923 | \$3,470.66 | Expenses including registration for virtual trade show, hosting video crew for Washington Daytrips and Influencer |
| | Total | | | \$20,962.97 | |

Old Business

1. Expectations for Island County Tourism Committee Members. The following was offered as guidelines for current and future committee members. No questions or concerns were found.
 - Attend monthly tourism committee meetings
 - Read reports and be aware of the activities of the committee
 - Respond to communications when asked
 - Share information presented at meetings, and in reports, with those you are representing
 - Be a thought leader in your area of expertise and offer constructive input at meetings, as appropriate
 - Seek opportunities to speak on behalf of the work of the Island County Tourism Committee (2% Joint Advisory Board), serving as an ambassador to the larger community

New Business

1. Management Committee Report – all items on the agenda
2. PR & Media Report

Sherrye announced that the JAB will be awarded the \$35,000 by Island County from the CARES Community Impact Grant Request she submitted in September. She is revising an earlier request which she sent to the commissioners in July which supports a "stay safe, shop local" campaign including a new publication. She is planning to resubmit that updated version of the request next week to seek additional CARES funding.

Monthly PR media Report



**TOURISM REPORT
2020**

SEPTEMBER 27,

SHERRYE WYATT PUBLIC RELATIONS & WRITING



Gail the Whale continues to gain traction with Island Transit and Island County Public



Health who are both incorporating the COVID Character into their outreach. **SEE SOURCE** designed for DMOs and supported by Washington Tourism Alliance (WTA) will be presented on the next committee call. The video showcase program “Day Trips in WA” and “Northwest Travel Channel” filmed safe travel on Whidbey last weekend as part of an advertising buy. An Instagram super star @ScoutGolden Retriever (21k followers) will be our



21.4K Views

guest as part of a WTA FAM tour on safe travel in our state Oct. 9-11. Sherrye will participate in a virtual trade show called the **Western States Virtual Expo** on October 14 with San Juan Islands, Skamania, Tacoma and Seattle Southside. She is participating in three statewide PR efforts through WTA, WSDMO, and Washington Hospitality Association to help with COVID-10 recovery efforts. Sherrye graduated this month from the **National Scenic ByWays Foundation Leadership Program** and will be actively marketing the **Whidbey Scenic Isle Way**, including electrification. She also submitted a \$35,000 request to **Island County for CARES** recovery funding to reimburse out committee for outreach including new content and creation of comprehensive local online shopping to support local businesses during the holidays.



OSBORNE NORTHWEST PUBLIC RELATIONS

Overview

The Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism PR strategy compliments the integrated marketing plan for reaching potential visitors for trip-planning in 2021 and helping to shape safe travel experiences for regional, drive market tourists in the shorter term. We are planning for 2021 travel while also focusing on ways to drive awareness for island county hospitality businesses.

This month, our team reported stories we influenced in key regional and national media outlets like the Seattle Times, Conde Nast Traveler and KING 5 Evening. Find an overview below and links to press from the month in the Coveragebook attached.

Project Management

- **National Media Relations.** Secured appointments with regional and national editors and travel writers for Marketplace one on one meetings at the Society of American Travel Writers Convention (Oct. 14-17). Meetings will be confirmed by the end of the month.
- **Regional Media Relations.** We also maintained awareness for current business operations and offerings on the island; developed an itinerary for the travel writer visit, pitched stories and connected with target media on these topics resulting in several press hits, including a significant feature story on Whidbey Island in the Seattle Times focused on distanced, road trip travel.
- **Content Development.** Researched story lines and developed a story angle sheet for 2020 Fall/Winter and 2021 trip planning to share with writers during the SATW appointments, and with target media into the fourth quarter.

Media Visits/Pending Press

- **Seattleite, September 5-7** - writer [Aakanksha Agarwal](#) will research and cover a weekend getaway story for Seattleite, and post to her social channels (reaching more than 6k viewers).
- **USA Today Network, Sept. 1-12 2021;** travel writer Jean Chen Smith is planning a visit, per our pitch to cover “Family Travel” on the islands. She’s staying on Camano, South and Central/North Whidbey for an in depth research trip. Her outlet includes USA Today in addition to the syndicated network that can reach up to 1,000 daily newspapers around the country. (note: she will be covering 1/3 of her travel time as she is staying for an extended period).
- **KING 5 Evening;** Fall TBD. Discussed story plans for possible shoot bumped to fall to cover the new mural at the Allgire project. We will work to confirm the coverage and details as the date nears.

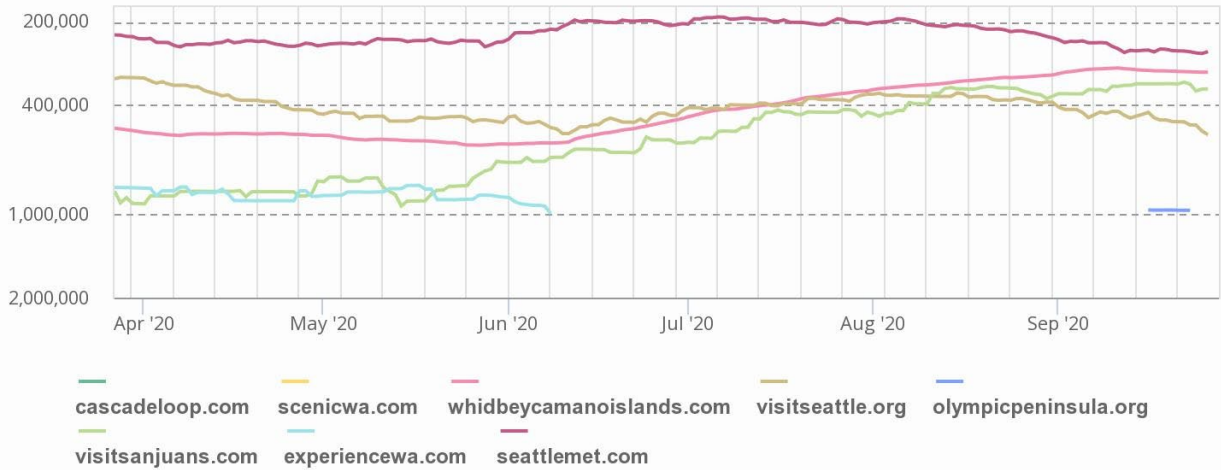
Press Highlights include 9 pieces of coverage with an estimated 37 million impressions. To view the coverage in full [go here](#) or reference the pdf document that accompanies this report.

COMPUTERPIX

Website Traffic

Alexa.com is an Amazon-owned website that tracks the relative popularity of websites and then ranks them. Here is a selection of how we rank compared with other travel websites in the region. This chart is kind of counter-intuitive, the smaller your number, the better (being ranked #1 would be best). For a short time, the site was in the top 300-thousand in the world. Our ranking will slip down as general interest in tourism wanes during the winter months.

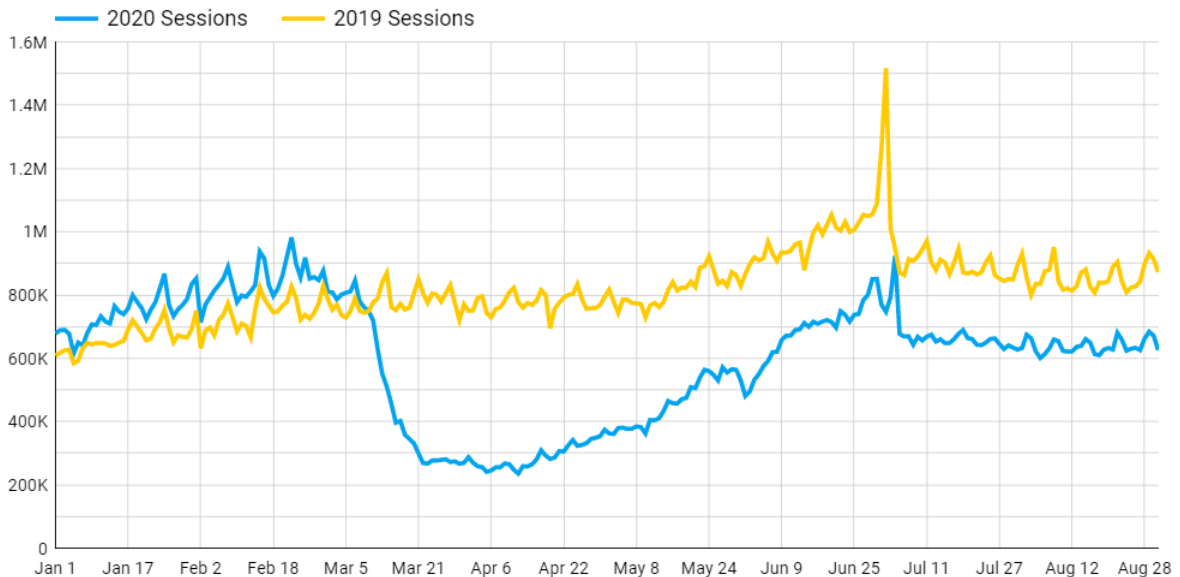
Historical Traffic Trends: Alexa Traffic Rank



www.alexa.com

In this comparison, we are ahead of numerous statewide sites including ExperienceWA.com and VisitSeattle.org. We are close to being competitive with SeattleMet.com. (You see some lines stop and start. That's because Alexa only charts the top million sites worldwide.)

Our traffic remains up. As of September 27, the last 30 days was up 15.9% over 2019. This is not typical of what other Destination Marketing Organizations are reporting. According to travel consultant SimpleView, the company that owns Book Direct, *"The industry continues to muddle along through the shutdown...with overall sessions maintaining a level around 25% down from 2019 and organic traffic hovering in the -15% growth range."*



Speaking of Book Direct, here are the August referral numbers. Up a bit from July. June's numbers were artificially high. There is bot traffic (other computers) continually visiting the site and they had to figure out how to filter that out of their reporting.

TOTAL REFERRALS TO PROPERTIES: 1,810

Overall Search to Referral Ratio 151.59%

Desktop 252.75%

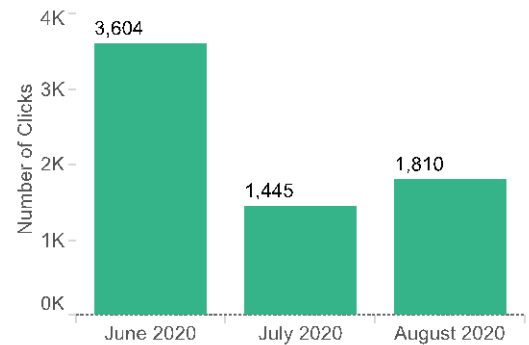
Mobile 66.36%

BOOK DIRECT NETWORK SEARCH TO REFERRAL RATIOS

Overall 86.00%

Desktop 167.59%

Mobile 45.02%



BOOK DIRECT

Finally...

There's actually a little magic in our numbers, specifically *Practical Magic*. In the last 7 days, there were 1,465 visits where people got to our website through our page about the movie being filmed here. That's more than the number of visits to the site's home page. In this next chart you'll see that there's been a steady increase in traffic to this page in 2020, particularly in the last three months. The reason might be because people are staying home binge-watching movies and we've been promoting films made in Island County.

3. Chamber Roundtable

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:04pm

Next regular meeting is November 5, 2020, location TBD, from 11am-1pm.

Meeting recorded by Robyn Myers and reviewed for submission by Sherrye Wyatt.