

**Meeting Minutes Revised
Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism of Island County
November 3, 2022
Zoom**

Quorum: x=members present

Mayor Scott Chaplin Craig Cyr X	Com. Melanie Bacon	Jackie Henderson X
Alannah Johansen X	Gregg Lanza	OH Lodging- Vacant
Maggie Bailey X	Max Lindsay-Thorsen	Tom Felvey X
Christina Swan X	Jessica McCready X	Chet Ross X
Magi Aguilar	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:

Sherrye Wyatt, Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism PR & Marketing Manager
 Jack Penland Whidbey and Camano Islands digital projects
 Laura Hilton, Whidbey and Camano Islands special projects and Film Liaison
 Scott Rosenkranz, Whidbey and Camano Island Tourism design projects
 Erin Osborne, Media Relations, ON Public Relations
 Pam Schell, Langley Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
 Joann Quintana, Langley Lodging Tax Advisory Committee & Langley Creates Creative District
 David Price, Langley Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
 Deana Duncan, Executive Director Whidbey Island Center for the Arts & Langley Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
 Melanie Serroels, Camano Arts Association

Meeting called to order at 11:04 am by Vice Chair, Chet Ross.

1. **Adoption of Agenda** – Maggie Bailey motioned, and Jessica McCready seconded to accept the agenda. Approved with no objections.
2. **Approval of October 2022 Minutes** -Maggie Bailey motioned, Inge Morascini seconded to approve the minutes. Approved with no objections.
3. **Treasurer's Report and Invoice review** – Sherrye explained each line item in the October invoices to the guests and committee. These were approved at the management meeting on October 28. There were no questions or objections to the invoices.
4. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Bylaw Amendment & Interlocal Agreement Committee:** Chet reported he had a conversation with the legal counsel, but not yet had any updates. He will forward the report to the committee when it is received. It was tentatively on track to be received today.
5. **New Business:**
 - a. **Management Committee Report-** everything discussed is on the agenda

b. 2023 Budget –

The entire creative team was present and explained in detail the following proposed work plan and budget narrative for 2023. No action was taken, but a special meeting was discussed to complete the work.

**Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism
2023 BUDGET NARRATIVE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights in 2023 include:

- Complete Regenerative Places Program and launch new strategic plan;
- Create and integrate new tourism brand, which aligns with goals of the strategic plan;
- Create opportunities for our community and guests to embrace the new plan and brand;
- Update and reprint original tourism map (100,000 copies);
- Reprint the 24 Trails off the Beaten Path Guide (15,000 copies) and continue developing the TREAD Map App with State of Washington Tourism;
- Develop and print new Heritage and Culture guide & digital companion (30,000 copies);
- Develop and print new Regenerative Travel Guide & digital companion (30,000 copies);
- Weave into digital storytelling a new emphasis on transformational & regenerative travel;
- Cultivate new media partners and messages reflecting stewardship, community and deep connection to the islands;
- Promote film readiness to create new opportunities for positive experiences for local communities, film productions and visitors; and
- Continue collecting, analyzing and sharing data.

EXPENSES

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES \$183,000

Independent Contractors manage our organization which means we do not have any employees, so we do not pay for any benefits or office expense. Our contractors carry and pay their own health and business insurance and file and pay all their own taxes. Our Public Relations and Marketing Manager is **Sherrye Wyatt Public Relations & Writing** who serves as the lead contractor – which means she oversees the big picture. She will continue to serve as the Destination Ambassador and is responsible for completing and launching the new strategic plan resulting from the **Regenerative Places Program** with the Transformational Travel Council. She is the primary contact for the destination’s tourism efforts. She collaborates and meets regularly with community stakeholders as

well as other destination leaders, government agencies, related organizations, and key industry officials, not only within Washington state but around the world.

Also included in this budget area is **Laura Hilton** who contributes digital content development including writing and photography, research, film project management, and a wide variety of roles, including website calendar updates as needed. She will continue to serve as Destination Liaison throughout the **Regenerative Places Program** and will assist with writing of the final strategic plan, as well as implementation of the new branding strategies expected in 2023. She will be the lead writer on a number of projects in the coming year, including the new **Heritage and Culture** guide and new **Regenerative Travel Guide**. She has been assigned the role of lead **Regional Film Liaison** and has ambitious plans for expanding our film readiness, including developing a network of film ambassadors. The participation of local residents will result in a better coordinated grassroots effort to encourage and support increased film production on both islands.

A new addition to this budget area is the outsourcing of accounting to **Dianne Binder** who is providing monthly reports. Additionally, funding is allocated to secure other professional services if they are needed.

ADVERTISING/PRINTING/DESIGN \$288,090

The largest investments in 2023 in this category are the creation of two new guides: **24 Historic and Cultural Experiences** to encourage stewardship and more meaningful experiences for visitors by promoting lesser-known historic and cultural attractions. We are developing this with Island County Historical Society and other local partners on both islands; and a **Regenerative Travel Guide** to encourage stewardship from visitors and promote both islands' communities. We also intend to refresh and print the current **Map**, as well as reprint the **24 Trails off the Beaten Path Guide**. Rosenkranz Productions is doing these projects for the destination.

Most of the advertising planned for 2023 is intentionally being left undefined so that we may be flexible, and focus on the best target messages, audiences and delivery based on what the strategic planning work informs us as we continue working with the Transformational Travel Council. We do plan to continue our relationships and advertise with the **Cascade Loop, Sound Publishing** and several arts events on both islands. We expect to continue to distribute our primary map asset in a few select locations through **Certified Folder**.

We contract with **Rosenkranz Productions**, for visual brand management and ongoing creative services in support of our brand and its narrative. Creative services include: campaign strategy, project management, graphic design and production of advertising and collateral pieces (such as the map brochure), illustration, creation of digital advertising, image editing, copy writing and print management. We foresee an increased scope of work over the next year and beyond as print and digital assets are brought into

the new transformational brand direction and there is an increased need to reach new and existing audiences with new messaging.

MARKETING/PR/SPECIAL PROJECTS

\$222,000

This category is quite comprehensive as it includes all expenses related to travel, hosting, trade shows and other unique programs.

Rebranding. One key part of 2023 will be rebranding – to include research, information gathering, creation of concepts for review, feedback and revision and the creation of finalized logo files. This will be followed by the design of a new marketing campaign based on the new transformational direction. Rosenkranz Productions is doing this work for us. A brand equates to how people feel about an organization. Many elements go into this, from how the organization presents itself visually and, in its communications, what others say about it, how the organization compares to competitors, and of course what people actually experience when they interact with it.

Effective branding can also have a positive impact on an organization's team and partners. Instilling clarity of purpose and pride. Rosenkranz Productions, through the creation of a logo mark, color palettes, typeface selections, and brand guidelines, works to shape people's impression of an organization. Working with the tourism committee's creative team they also help define the voice and personality of Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism.

Taking all of that into account the logo still has a major role to play. It will be the one consistent identifier of the organization across all content and communications. Its job is to: Identify the organization - Who we are - What we do – Personality - and, it should do all of this at a glance, in a clear, engaging and relevant way.

Each element of a logo should work hard to accomplish that job: shapes, images, typefaces, visual organization, silhouette and colors. All of these factors are why branding is one of the most exciting and challenging of design projects. Almost no other project provides such a huge opportunity to positively affect an organization. As part of our ongoing creative services contract, Rosenkranz Productions acts as the brand guardian to ensure consistent usage to minimize brand erosion.

Marketing Campaign. This new campaign will take the place of the long running *Drive off the Mainland* campaign. Its objective will be to inspire both visitors and locals to imagine ways they can positively affect the communities and the culture of Whidbey & Camano Islands.

The tourism creative team will develop the full objective of the campaign. The objective of the campaign will revolve around the strategic plan. And the call to action will most likely be for people to think, and more importantly to act, to help preserve and strengthen the unique nature, communities, and cultures of our islands. Creation of a consistent design theme across all channels of communications. Layout designs, guidelines for

typeface use and the relationships between headline, subheads and body copy, and photography. Rosenkranz Productions also helps the campaign evolve over its lifespan to accommodate shifts in the marketplace.

Deliverables:

- Brand Guidelines, to include typefaces, color palettes and usage standards for the new logo and other brand elements.
- Logo files, configured for print, digital and social media use.
- Stationery, to include: business cards, note cards and name tags.
- Marketing campaign ad and collateral layout examples.
- Initial design input for the update of the existing website to incorporate the new brand direction. (Design of a new website would be a separate special project.)

We are paying the second of our two installments to participate in the **TREAD Map App** with the **State of Washington Tourism** and we will continue the successful **Simpleview Lodging Platform**.

For our earned media and media relations work we contract with **Osborne Northwest Public Relations (ON PR)**. The public relations (PR) efforts for the coming year runs in tandem with the shift in strategic focus, programming and mission driven messaging that will evolve as we complete the final stages of the **Regenerative Places Program**, and the strategic plan rolls out in Spring 2023.

The destination's mission will be supported by messaging and earned media that reflects the regenerative travel pillars. Programs and storylines will be developed to focus on the connection between visitor, community and environment to drive home the importance of regenerative tourism and a sense of place.

An enhanced connection between our work and the community will be reflected in an enhanced reporting chain, ensuring that tourism partners and businesses see and connect our work with the featured stories, placements and brand endorsements they receive from our PR strategies. The most valuable impact of a comprehensive PR strategy is to influence consumer behavior and opinion through trusted third-party endorsements. We shape and share stories and messages that show target audiences how to interact with the community.

Our key messages and media partners will reflect messages of stewardship, community and connection to the islands. We will continue to support regional chambers and communities with targeted event weekend outreach. Themes and stories will be developed and shared with key media partners to amplify small businesses, environmental groups offering hands-on opportunities, chefs and craft producers working in tandem with farmers and similar experiences that invite tourists into the eco-system.

The following will be implemented on an ongoing basis to reflect the stories, goals and message of the organization.

- **Research, Content Development and Strategy Evolution.** Programs, tactics and messaging will support an emphasis on regenerative tourism, highlighting stories that focus on cultural experiences and the connection between the community, environment and the visitor experience. We will develop itineraries/press trip opportunities, story sheets and pitches on a seasonal basis, in addition to direct pitch development as news and opportunities dictate. All messaging will align with goals of transformative travel, stewardship and community focus. This coming year, we plan to hone our visiting media strategy with regenerative travel focus. We can anticipate less volume of visiting media, yet longer stays and more detailed stories and experiences.
- **Selective Media Outreach and Engagement.** Efforts with influencers and traditional media continue to be implemented to ensure seamless publicity and relationship management. Partnerships and collaborations will align with our regenerative travel themes as listed above. This includes connection through story pitching, media visits (individual and group FAMs will be evaluated) and Instagram engagement in real time. Sample media targets will include:
 - Digital media brands and content creators that focus on sustainable and regenerative tourism topics like [Green Global Travel](#) , [The Dharma Trails](#), [Ecotravelist](#), [The Crowded Planet](#) and similar brands.
 - Travel media with a sustainable or environmental focus like *Sunset Wildlands*, *Outside*, *AFAR*, *National Geographic*, *NPR*.
 - High profile regional media like *KING 5 Evening*, *Seattle Magazine*, *Seattle Met*, *Northwest Travel*.
Note that many of these regional and national outlets have covered us in previous years, but it's important to nurture these relationships to share the destination's shift in focus, generating the "right stories" and messages.
- **Instagram Engagement.** Manage the @GoWhidbeyCamano Instagram account, posting 2-3 times per week, resharing relevant Instagram stories, and engaging the community (liking, commenting, messaging) with influencers, island community members, and businesses to ensure we're maintaining meaningful engagements in real time.
- **Content partnerships.** While earned media is the focus of our PR efforts, this year we may seek an opportunity to fully "own" our key messages. Sponsored content opportunities will be evaluated to own and drive home the messages of stewardship. This could be creative content placements with the drive market - in partnership with NPR or KING 5. Topics could be Sound Water Stewards on Digging for Dinner and Best Beach Practices with the Cama Beach Foundation, Trail Tips with Whidbey Camano Land Trust, How to Eat Acorns with the Garry Oak Society and more.
- **Seek and vet travel programming, partnerships, conferences and events.** This year, we will seek new opportunities to connect with sustainable travel experts,

regenerative tourism programs and networking opportunities that place our organization in front of this key audience of media and stakeholders. Examples we'll consider include [SKIFT Sustainable Tourism Conference](#) and [Transend \(TTC\)](#). In previous years, we've selected events like International Media Marketplace, IFTWA and others – we will review agendas and opportunities with these organizations but prioritize events with a focus on sustainable tourism.

Communication, Tracking and Reporting play a key role in our ongoing campaign.

Making the connection between media outreach can be immediate but can also take months (or sometimes years!) to come to fruition. This year, we are developing a new communications procedure to ensure that partners mentioned in the media we influence will receive an alert as soon we know the media is placed.

We also compile the press received in a monthly report using three key performance indicators to analyze results and track awareness efforts: **Impressions** address the reach of earned media by way of circulation for print media, unique monthly visits for online media and viewer/listenership for broadcast media. **Domain Authority**, an average rate that defines the collective influence of earned media placements and the likelihood of google visibility. The greater the domain authority score, the greater the chance of earned content appearing higher in a google search. **Social Shares** provide a snapshot of engagement with content we've earned, including how many times links were shared across link-driven sharing platforms including Facebook and Twitter.

RESEARCH

\$17,000

Data and research continues to be valuable. **Dean Runyon:** For the fourth consecutive year we have contracted with Dean Runyon to create a comprehensive and customized report of economic impact tourism has on Island County. This report has been broken down to show the incorporated areas and both islands. **Datafy:** We are entering our third year with this new service. Through a negotiated partnership with the Washington Tourism Alliance we are able to subscribe to a new service at 50% discount. The information we purchased from AirDNA can be obtained through Datafy so we are going to included that this year.

DIGITAL

\$150,000

ComputerPIX continues to serve as the key contractor for some of the most critical work of the tourism program, our digital presence. With our successful and **comprehensive website** now reaching more than 26,000 visitors a month, keeping things relevant and fresh will continue to be key. A monthly e-newsletter and quarterly contests are part of that effort, not to mention social media work, plus content creation of video, stories and photography.

With rebranding potentially an outcome of our strategic planning, much of the look and feel of our **digital marketing** will need to be reworked in 2023. Even without a full rebranding, the new input from stakeholder leaders will doubtless result in the need for new website content. This year will offer a fresh emphasis in stewardship and regenerative travel opportunities.

One known area for additional content will be in our **“things to do heritage/culture.”** There will be an expanded section that will complement the new guide and include maps and videos.

A new emphasis on transformational and regenerative travel will be woven into our storytelling, as well as efforts to embrace our new brand.

It will take considerable time for our audience to catch up with these changes, so there will have to be an effort to keep old content fresh, and at the same time, create new content. The e-commerce aspect of the website is also something that should get fresh emphasis in 2023, including more internal linking to lodging and more descriptive storytelling, again with an eye towards stewardship and regenerative travel opportunities.

Included in this budget area are a number of important digital subscriptions, platforms and tools including **MailChimp, Facebook Ads, HootSuite, Buffer, Co- Schedule, Word Press Plugins, Trello, Cloudways Hosting, Simpleview Asset Management.** Periodically we also contract with an exceptionally talented IT expert **Michael Bourne.** ComputerPIX will also continue to offer detailed analytics from Datafy, Book Direct (Simpleview) and Google Analytics. 2023 will feature a regular rotation of reports with each month focusing upon a different facet such as travelers, lodging, and marketing. ComputerPIX has also become one of the early adopters of Datafy’s 2.0 data system, which will allow us to generate reports about major events.

2023 BUDGET

Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism 2% Joint Advisory Board

	2023	2022	Difference
<u>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</u>			
Marketing Coordinator - Wyatt	\$108,000	\$108,000	\$0
PR Support/Fulfillment/Admin/Film - Hilton	\$60,000	\$35,000	\$25,000
Professional Services/Accounting	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Subtotal Professional Services	\$183,000	\$143,000	\$40,000
<u>ADVERTISING/PRINTING/DESIGN</u>			
Advertising/Print/Radio/TV	\$33,000	\$43,000	(\$10,000)
Printing & Development – 24 Cultural Heritage Guide	\$85,445	\$0	\$85,445
Printing & Development - Regenerative Guide	\$85,445	\$0	\$85,445
Reprinting 24 Trails Guide	\$38,000	\$50,000	(\$12,000)
Rebranded Map/Brochure	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Rosenkranz Productions/Routine Graphic Design	\$31,200	\$21,600	\$9,600
Subtotal Advertising	\$288,090	\$114,600	\$173,490
<u>MARKETING/PR/SPECIAL PROJECTS</u>			
PR Hosting/Contests/Shows/Travel	\$30,000	\$38,300	(\$8,300)
Osborne NW Media Relations/Earned Media/Instagram	\$72,000	\$54,000	\$18,000
Fulfillment Postage/Supplies/Storage	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0
Strategic Planning	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0
Rebranding	\$23,000	\$0	\$23,000
TREAD Map App	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Special Projects/R & D	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0
Ferry Marketing & Distribution	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0
Simpleview - Lodging Platform	\$8,000	\$12,000	(\$4,000)
Memberships*	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0
Subtotal Marketing & Public Relations	\$222,000	\$178,300	\$43,700
<u>RESEARCH</u>			
Datafy	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$0
Dean Runyon	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
AirDNA**	\$0	\$9,600	(\$9,600)
Subtotal Research	\$17,000	\$26,600	(\$9,600)
<u>DIGITAL</u>			
Platforms/Social Media/Ads/Platforms/Mail Chimp/Hoot Suite/ Buffer/Co-Schedule/Michael Bourne/WordPress Plugins/ Trello/Cloudways Hosting/Ads	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$5,000
ComputerPIX/Videos/Website Management/New Content/Listings/TREAD/Photography/ Blog Posts/Data Analysis/Web Refresh/Simpleview Asset Management	\$120,000	\$70,000	\$50,000
Subtotal Digital	\$150,000	\$95,000	\$55,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$860,090	\$557,500	\$302,590

*combined with marketing, no longer its own category

**Datafy contract will include this information now

- c. **2023 Budget Discussion:** A motion was made by Langley City Council Member Craig Cy to approve the budget with certain conditions, but it was withdrawn because he was not officially appointed as the City of Langley’s alternate representative to the committee. So, Tom Felvey made the same motion which was seconded by Inge Morascini, however it was modified

several times during discussion and eventually the motion was withdrawn. The 2023 budget was not voted on.

- d. **PR Media Report:** Below is the creative team's monthly report which was submitted in writing and was not presented verbally due to time constraints.

MONTHLY TOURISM REPORT

SHERRYE WYATT PUBLIC RELATIONS & WRITING

State of Washington Tourism Conference and Outdoor Recreation Day

The tourism creative team (Laura, Sherrye, Scott, Jack and Erin -who presented on a panel as well) all attended the meetings in Seattle and found the networking and information extremely valuable. Here is a link to many of the presentations from the main conference [SWT Conference Presentations - OneDrive \(live.com\)](#)

Collaborations

Sherrye and Jack helped provide data to the **Port of Coupeville** executive director Chris Michalopoulos for a presentation he made to port district leaders from around the state. Sherrye applied for and was awarded another three months of free advertising at SEA airport through the Spotlight Advertising program offered by the **Port of Seattle**. She is also participating in a statewide marketing roundtable with the State of Washington Tourism (Nov 9) and has been asked to serve on the **Washington State Destination Marketing Organization** (WSDMO) legislative advocacy committee (Nov. 5).

Sherrye and Robyn met with **Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve** manager Marie Shimada to explore several new opportunities for working together (Oct. 26). The creative team is working with **Sound Publishing** on a digital ad campaign to promote shoulder season travel to the islands (Nov-Dec). This is part of the 12 month long **Sound Edge** advertising program (Sept 2022-Aug 2023). The program provides an affordable partnership with several options for advertising to the local community (such as we did to promote the survey) as well as targeted off-island campaigns.

Regenerative Places Program

We held three virtual meetings Oct. 24, 25 and 26 to complete more work on the program including taking a green assessment survey, the global happiness index, and continue to work on the Destination Assessment Report which is now 72 pages long. We have five more virtual work sessions with the Steering Committee and TTC staff scheduled (Nov. 2, Nov. 16, Dec. 7, Dec. 13, and Mar. 15, 2023).

Over 600 people have completed the community survey which closes Oct. 31 and was widely advertised including even print media like Crosswinds, Crab Cracker, Whidbey News-Times, South Whidbey Record and the Whidbey Weekly. Thank you to the many organizations and individuals who helped promote it so heavily throughout the islands. The TTC Transcend international conference was a great success and here is a lovely recap video (about 7 minutes): <https://www.dropbox.com/s/biiz7trxwhsi6gm/TTC-3rdCUT-261022.mov?dl=0>

Representatives from Oregon's Willamette Valley did attend in person and also presented on a panel at another conference in Athens, Greece following that. TTC team showed this video at Transcend (about 6 minutes): [Master V_05_1.mp4 \(dropbox.com\)](#)

OSBORNE NORTHWEST PUBLIC RELATIONS

Monthly Overview

The month of October was a busy one, full of on-site media and influencers eager to take in shoulder season story research and content collection on the islands. We coordinated mushroom tours, wine harvest experiences and even kayaking to take advantage of the balmy weather. Looking ahead, we have a high-profile writer visiting in November to research a culinary piece for Travel + Leisure. Planning for 2023 is well underway, our team is eager to support the regenerative tourism mission and brand refresh with aligned messages of stewardship.

Project Management

- Developed a calendar alert of curated events taking place this fall through March 2023; this outreach resulted in coverage and future interest from outlets like *Seattle Met*, *AAA* and *Secret Seattle*.
- Worked with community businesses and media contacts to develop detailed itineraries for upcoming media visits.
- Joined team meetings to discuss marketing alignment for 2023; developed early plan for the coming year.

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 2451 on September 27th to 2481 on October 26th - a growth rate of 1.42%.

Media Visits

- **Bob Cooper, Oct 4-6, freelance travel writer** has confirmed an assignment to do a story on "high-end" accommodations in Washington's island destinations for [WATERWAYS](#), a luxury lifestyle magazine in Greater Austin, TX with readership of 40,000. The story that will appear in spring 2023 issue will feature Bainbridge, San Juan and Whidbey Islands. (coordinated with Washington State Tourism)
- **Megan Indoe, October 5, @boboandchichi**, participated in the guided mushroom tour and had lunch at the Front Street Grill.
- **Geoff Nudelman, October 7-8, freelance writer** covering sustainable businesses and travel for outlets like *Bicycling*, *Askmen.com* and others.

Coming up

- **Sara Franklin, October 30-November 2, freelance writer with *Travel + Leisure*** to cover the food and drinks, culinary culture of Whidbey Island. Lodging is confirmed at Captain Whidbey (10/30-9/1) and Inn at Langley (9/1- 9 /2).

Pending Press

- **Waterways** - Bob Cooper will be writing a story on "high-end" accommodations in Washington's island destinations for [*WATERWAYS*](#), a luxury lifestyle magazine in Greater Austin, TX with readership of 40,000. The story that will appear in spring 2023 issue will feature Bainbridge, San Juan and Whidbey Islands.
- **Travel + Leisure** – feature story slated for the 2023 editorial calendar (print) pending Sara Franklin’s visit this month.

Press Highlights include 15 pieces of coverage with an estimated 23.3 million impressions. To view the coverage in full go [here](#).

COMPUTERPIX

October 2022 Digital Report

Executive Summary

The Regenerative Tourism survey closes on 10/31/2022. Data will be collected on 11/1/2022 at which time analysis will begin. Additionally, The Port of Coupeville requested data to support how the port contributes to the economics of Coupeville, specifically during planned events. Data was a hot topic during the state tourism conference, as well.

Island County Regenerative Tourism Survey

In order to better serve all parts of Island County, Sherrye requested a breakdown of which zip codes were producing responses to the survey. On 10/27/2022, we collected that information and determined that Oak Harbor residents are not responding at a rate commiserate with the percentage of population for Island County (please see the chart below). This prompted the inclusion of the QR code in the November Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism Newsletter.

Zip Code	Location	Population	% of County	Number	Percentage of Survey Respondents
98277	Oak Harbor NAS	38,844	46.14%	122	19.15%
98278	Whidbey	2243	2.66%	1	0%
98239	Coupeville	7679	9.12%	104	16.33%
98253	Greenbank	1726	2.05%	26	4.08%
98249	Freeland	4458	5.30%	78	12.24%

98260	Langley	6024	7.16%	83	13.03%
98236	Clinton	6140	7.29%	73	11.46%
98282	Camano	17073	20.28%	150	23.55%
TOTAL		84,187	100.00%	637	100.00%

Zip Code Population

Source:

https://www.washington-demographics.com/zip_codes_by_population

For your planning purposes, I've created the following schedule for distribution of the survey results:

11/1/2022 – Download all data from Survey Monkey as survey closes on 10/31/2022

11/3/2022 – Q1 data released (Likert Scale and optional qualitative data) – Graph and Word Cloud; Comments will be included in Excel sorted by keyword and sentence

11/16/2022 – Qs 2 – 9 data released (qualitative data) – graph and Word Cloud;

Comments will be included in Excel sorted by keyword and sentence

11/30/2022 – Reports will be completed and submitted

- Regenerative Tourism Report
- Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism Report
- Report for Commissioners and City Councils

Demographic information will be included in the reports submitted on 11/30/2022.

Website

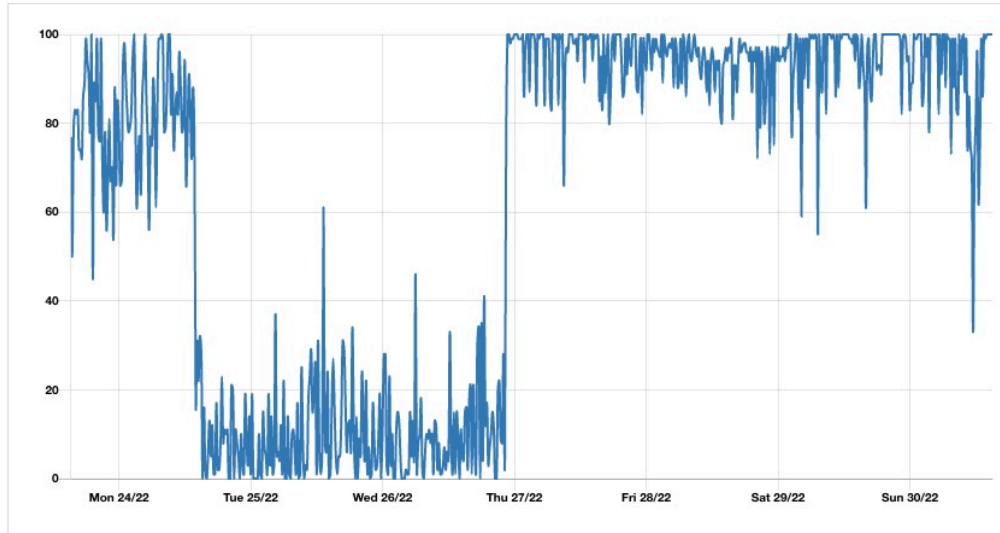
Search Engine “Magic”

Interest in the movie “Practical Magic” continues to take a lot of people to the website, especially this time of year. Google Analytics allows a website owner to see what searches drive users to the website. In October, 12 of the top 20 searches somehow referred to the movie.

Another popular October search is for the Fort Casey Haunted Fort. Interestingly, searchers made reference to the Fort Casey Haunted *House*. This shows the importance of including generic terms in writing about an event because that's what people use when doing Google searches.

Website Attack

For the second time in a year, the website was attacked by someone trying to hack into the site. The graph below shows starting on Tuesday the 25th, a surge in use. The line shows how the amount of available CPU (Central Processing Unit-the main “brain” of the computer) is at 0 or near 0 for about 3 days. It turns out that this traffic was coming from Germany. We have taken steps to mitigate it. This bears watching over time, as there are still some unusual traffic surges to worry about.



Conference and a Blog Post

The creative team attended the State of Washington Tourism Conference and several of us also attended the Responsible Outdoor Travel Summit. Highlights from my notes:

Tourism Conference

- It’s easy to show a vista, “Show me the story of the people of the vista.” - Jaye Peterson, Adventure Creative
- Arts and Culture is driving more visitors to the state of Washington and spending by visitors from Idaho and Oregon has had the most recovery from the pandemic. – Lauren Rogers, Datafy
- “Embrace the Rain” – Ali Daniels, Visit Seattle
- Use geodata to determine what should be in itineraries – Matt Wakefield, Travel Tacoma
- “PR has taken a back seat. Everything that wasn’t trackable was thrown out. – Steven (didn’t get last name), Olympic Peninsula
- Slides from the conference are available here-
<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AEPMGk92YBCq62k&id=7E233479F5041D55%215208&cid=7E233479F5041D55>

Outdoor Conference

- “Be sure to pack your responsibility.” – Fred Fellman, Port of Seattle
- “People fell in love,” when they visited Washington’s outdoors during the pandemic – Hilary Franz, Washington Commissioner of Public Lands
- 90% of travelers are looking for sustainable options.” – Thresa Hillis, Expedia

Unfortunately, my notes from the rest of the outdoor conference were erased when my iPad went missing for a few days. What I can say is that the state’s tribes stand ready to be involved in marketing projects but would like to be consulted at the outset, not when the project is essentially ready to be made public. Other speakers noted that people of color worry about their own personal safety while camping and hiking and that they do make choices based on if they can “see themselves” in a region’s marketing.

I took the opportunity to take ride sharing and the Sounder Train from downtown Seattle to the Clinton Ferry and turned it into a blog post.

TREAD App

I met with the people involved in the TREAD App over improving content for our area and resolving errors. We now have a system in place where I can make corrections and suggestions so that will be a focus of what I do in early November.

Email Newsletter

The November email newsletter featured a two-minute long video of beauty shots around the island. You can see it here. <https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/our-media/video-tour-of-whidbey-and-camano-islands/>

The newsletter was successfully delivered to 20K readers and was opened 10K times by 7337 people. Top links clicked were the Sounder train blog post and the beauty video.

You can see the email here... <https://us12.campaign-archive.com/?u=11380ced8373e34392577e79b&id=0cca0c5fa8>

Datafy Ad Spend

At the last tourism meeting, the board approved spending \$5K with Datafy to advertise the 24 Off the Beaten Path trails. After looking at the strong downturn in outdoor use that logically happens during the next three months, we are waiting until spring to do the campaign. We will use data from Datafy to determine what those dates should be.

6. Chamber Round Table:

- a. No time was available to discuss.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:58 pm.

Next regular meeting is Thursday, December 1, 2022, location TBD.

Meeting minutes recorded by Robyn Myers and reviewed by Jessica McCready