

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce
Tourism Committee – Meeting Minutes
11/8/22

In attendance: Carol Tannenbaum, Tricia Miller, Pete Petty, Mike Kruse, Bob Wilson, Chris LaVoie, Judy Casad, Kimberly Paul, Melissa Prestinario, Stephen Hoshaw, Jeff Malik

Announcements:

- From Jeff Dehne - encouraging businesses and residents to light up for the holidays
 - Bob noticed the Goodpasture Bridge lights were not on lately - he will try to call Lane County Public Works
- Spaghetti Dinner at Walterville Grange this Friday evening
- World Athletics Championships received two sporting event awards:
 - "Champions of Economic Impact in Sports Tourism" from Sports Destination Management magazine
 - "Best Professional Event" from SportsTravel magazine
- Melissa Prestinario - new RAIN venture catalyst working in the McKenzie

Agenda:

2023 RTMP proposal

- Carol will submit all documentation this afternoon
- Hopefully will be approved at December County Commission meeting

McKenzie Wayfinding

- Walterville signage completed
 - Fundraising is not complete; there are still some pending asks, but bills are due
 - If donations don't come in, it will take up all of the previous funding years of RTMP funding as well as all/most of the 2023 budget
 - ~\$40-50K short
- There are other local/regional companies that could donate, but Carol & this group doesn't have contacts with them
- There is nothing posted on the McKenzie Chamber yet, to try to drive donations, but the McKenzie Community Partnership does have a link.
<https://mckenziecommunity.org/project/tourism-economic-resiliency/>

McKenzie River Marketing Messaging - Stephen

- "Always On" marketing in Portland, Seattle, LA, etc...
- Itineraries that include the McKenzie region
- We are also working on a series of McKenzie blogs with more specific topics

Engaging Lodging Properties

- Tricia has been emailing and following up with calls to lodging properties
 - 3 owners did express interest in attending Tourism Committee meetings
 - They did confirm that 11am is better than 9am
- Majority of properties that Tricia has been in touch with would prefer physical binder
 - Most said that they would be willing to print themselves if we provide the copy
 - Requests for useful information: Forest Service information (hiking, mushroom picking), fishing, food/restaurant, RV dump sites, gas stations
- Idea: what about a single produced map?
 - RAIN would be happy to support - possibly through funding or coordination
 - There is the River Reflections guide - could that be updated?

- Connect with Melissa if we want to pursue the map idea

Tourism Website Proposal - Chris LaVoie

- McKenzie Community Partnership could take lead on this
- Looking for \$20-30K in grants and other donations
- Current status: <https://mckenziecommunity.org/project/tourism-economic-resiliency/>
- Wants to work in conjunction with the Chamber to develop a complete business list
- Website, mailing list, newsletters, blogs
 - Seems like his idea would be very business-centric
 - Would highlight businesses in each post, less general content?
- He wants to encourage spending at local businesses and not in Bend/Sisters, where he sees the economic leakage is going to
- Stephen and Chris will connect to discuss content creation / overall strategy

McKenzie Events

- Christmas Bazaar - first Saturday in December
- Carol will share the poster ASAP to WOW Hall for distribution in Southern Willamette Valley

New Business

- Pete is contacting some locals to help re-stain the community signs
 - The McKenzie Bridge sign might be the worst - is having vegetation grow up all around it
 - Judy (and other real estate agents) put their signs up near the Blue River sign
 - It needs yearly maintenance from weeds / blackberries
 - Need to identify a community organization / leader who could keep them clean
- Melissa (RAIN) is going to be trained to facilitate business "destination marketing" program
 - Once she has finished that training, could offer those classes to area businesses
- Kimberly Paul is a newer Chamber member with Summit Lending
 - Interested in being on the Chamber board in the future

McKenzie History Highway

- The Track still has several signs at their facility
- Pete has talked to the Eagle Rock Lodge about putting some of the signs there
- The other Blue River signs can stay at the Track
- Pete should connect to Jeff Dehne to figure that out

Next meeting - Tuesday, December 13th at 11am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86584934054?pwd=LzJOQWx1L2lJY1dIMjh5ZU5VaUJlVQ09>