



## TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

May 11, 2023

1:00 p.m.

Hybrid

Approved: September 21, 2023

#### Call to Order

Chair Pam Silbernagel called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

#### Roll Call

Members present: Sharon Konopa, Pam Silbernagel, Steve Reynolds, Peggy Burris, Bob Moore

Members absent: Cyndi Wiggins, Kim McAloney

#### Approval of Minutes

1:03 p.m.

Member Silbernagel expressed the importance of capturing motions during a meeting and additional discussion followed.

**Motion:** Member Bob Moore moved to incorporate the Request for Proposal (FRP) timeline that was proposed in the staff memo in the April 13, 2023, meeting minutes. Member Burris seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

**Motion:** Member Burris moved to approve the April 13, 2023, meeting minutes with the inclusion of the RFP timeline proposed in the staff memo. Member Reynolds seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

#### Scheduled Business

1:05 p.m.

- Tourism and Marketing Promotion Request for Proposal Scope of Work Development

Member Silbernagel briefly outlined the meeting agenda noting things that would be covered.

Member Silbernagel asked if the City Council had approved the budget yet, to which Community Development Director Matthew Ruetters replied that the Budget Committee has recommended that the Council approve the budget, but that it has not gone to the Council for adoption yet. Ruetters provided additional clarifications regarding the budget.

Member Moore noted that while reviewing the memo regarding Tourism and Marketing Promotion RFP Scope of Work Development included in the meeting agenda materials that listed the activities that the Albany Visitors Association (AVA) have been doing, that he did not see much of the historical piece. Member Burris concurred that there is no mention of the historic piece in the memo.

Member Silbernagel asked Economics Development Coordinator Sophie Adams if she had anything to add to the information provided in the memo, which Adams replied that they based the revised scope off of the Tourism Advisory Commission's recommendations and showed where those were incorporated. Adams also provided that in an RFP scope of work if there are specific things they would like that they need to be called out.

**Motion:** Member Burris moved that a Historic Preservation category be added on its own to the RFP scope of work. Member Moore seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

Contract and Procurement Officer Diane Murzynski provided information on the evaluation criteria that are used during the RFP process and noted that previous RFPs are posted on the City's website for reference. Additional member and staff discussions regarding evaluation criteria ensued.

Member Reynolds asked for some clarification on costs if the costs are unknown, to which member Silbernagel provided that they have been advised that it is not best practice to put out a not to exceed amount and provided additional explanations. Murzynski provided additional information, and discussions regarding applicant scoring and negotiations followed.

**Motion:** Member Moore moved that the evaluation criteria include, cost of the proposal, understanding of Albany's unique visitor opportunities and connections, preference for operating as a Destinated Marketing Management Organization (DMO), ability to respond to emerging opportunities and issues, and city may have other criteria as required by ORS for city procurement. Member Burris seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

Member Silbernagel questioned if the committee should make a motion regarding them not being in favor of going through a Request for Proposal process, to which member Moore looked to Murzynski for clarification that this is what the committee has been tasked to do, and whether they disagree or not it is work that the committee needs to do.

Next member Silbernagel introduced the Tourism and Marketing Scope of Work, adding historic preservation as a header.

Member Konopa asked for clarification of what "service events" is meant to entail. Member Silbernagel added that she didn't feel that "Event and Sports Competitions" as a header was appropriate.

Member Moore suggested combining "Business, Conventions, and Meetings" with "Events and Sports Competitions Support". Member Burris suggested removing the language inferring that the proposers would be out working the events themselves. Members and staff shared additional ideas about what should be included in the Scope of Work.

Member Burris inquired if the Parks and Recreation Department solicits baseball events etc. and if they must go out for an RFP. Murzynski responded that in her experience when they have gone out for an offering that they have responded to an RFP to receive the award to host.

Ruettgers provided that when looking at the bullet of "Events and Sporting Competitions" that they could be sperate items, but they could also be referring to the same thing.

Adams shared that if the committee feels that sports tournaments which do bring in a lot of families that stay long weekends, and the committee wants to see how they would handle and promote sports events that they should call it out. Member Konopa shared support for including sporting events as they can bring in large number of heads to beds.

Ruettgers also mentioned that the YMCA facility in Albany has been drawing a lot of people in for soccer tournaments and other things, and the committee needs to decide if "Events and Sporting Competitions" should be looked at separately or together. Additional member and staff discussions followed regarding whether they should be looked at separately or together.

Member Reynolds inquired how evaluations would be done and if heads in beds, return on investment (ROI), or key performance indicator (KPI) would be used, and that without knowing the evaluation criteria would not be able to determine what should be included in the scope of work.

Member Reynolds asked if ROI and KPI are defined, to which Murzynski said that with an RFP she does not typically have that defined, and further provided that with this she sees it as part of the scope not part of

the evaluation criteria, and that they are wanting the proposer to provide feedback via reporting structures on how they will provide that information from past practices.

Member Silbernagel inquired if there is a type of metrics or outline on how the Tourism Advisory Committee is going to evaluate its investments, to which Adams provided that the proposer would be providing information and staff will be formulating what is necessary in reporting so they can meet that likely based on previous metric.

Member Moore clarified that they would be asking for a report for an established timeframe to provide the City with what was generated during that period, not to serve as a benchmark rather to show what was generated versus what was spent.

**Motion:** Member Moore moved to combine “Business, convention and meeting support” with “Event and Sports Competitions Support” to create one bullet point being, “Business, Convention, and Sporting Events” as a main scope of work bullet with sub bullet “Promote, solicit and procure convention business, sporting events and general tourism”. Member Burris seconded which passed 4-0 with Member Reynolds abstaining for lack of clarity.

Next, Member Silbernagel introduced the metrics of measurements, and asked staff to come back to the next meeting with a proposal of what the metrics are. Member Reynolds asked if the focus is on heads in beds or intangibles. Member Moore noted that he gets what is being said but doesn’t know if that is what the Tourism Advisory Committees task is.

Economic Development Manager Seth Sherry provided that there is no mystery on how Tourism Lodging Taxes (TLT) dollars that are required to be spent on tourism need to be spent. Which is to attract tourists or support tourist facilities, and that tourists are defined by the State as people coming from at least 50 miles outside of the community or staying overnight. Sherry also shared that this is the scope of work, and what they are being offered, and to respond with how they as industry professionals track the work that they do.

**Motion:** Member Reynolds moved that staff would create the reporting metrics as related to the scope of work. Member Moore seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

Adams next provided a quick update on Collaborative Tourism Promotion (CTP) projects, including the Albany Civic Theater, Gallery Calapooia, The Garage, Team Bulldog Wrestling, and West Albany Youth Baseball.

Looking forward Adams stated that although the budget is not adopted yet that they anticipate having about \$50,000 per year to fund the CTP Grant Program again and suggested that the Tourism Advisory Committee meets again in September to review applications and make awards.

Member Silbernagel inquired if the next meeting could be the first week in September and asked that the meeting time be later in the day if possible.

Member Silbernagel asked about vacation home taxes, which Adams referred to as short term vacation rentals, which would include private owners and those using intermediaries. Adams shared that the City Finance Department manages the TLT collections for the City as well as for the County so when a change is made it does impact the County. Adams added that they are looking into hiring a third party that would identify the short-term vacation rentals, manage communications with them, and enforcement, and that the City would still deal with the collection and accounting side of things.

**Motion:** Member Konopa moved to expedite the establishment of Transient Lodging Taxes (TLT) being placed on short term vacation rentals. Member Burris seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

Business from the Public

2:28 p.m.

Adams shared that Lise Grato with the Albany Downtown Association was unable to attend the meeting but provided a newsletter\* for members.

Albany Visitors Association (AVA) Executive Director Rebecca Bond provided preliminary survey information but noted that the survey is remaining open until Sunday May 14, 2023. To date they have received 47 responses which she considered to be pretty good and provided additional details from respondents.

Business from the Committee

3:32 p.m.

Member Silbernagel asked if Member Konopa would send Adams the letter that she had sent to council via email and that it could be forwarded to committee members.

Member Konopa inquired if the AVA had its funding through the end of June, which Adams confirmed that it did and added that they could extend the current contract to cover a gap.

**Motion:** Member Reynolds moved to advise that staff extend the contract with the Albany Visitors Association until a new contract is in place. Member Konopa seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

Member Silbernagel asked Ruetters to look at the policy statement and asked for his interpretation of it, which he addressed providing clarifications. Member Konopa added that any committee member can submit their opinions to the City Council.

Member Silbernagel said that she had spoken to the Budget Committee and encouraged them to look at their transparency objectives and to compare to how muddled and difficult to understand she felt the budget had become. Silbernagel offered suggestions on ways to help clarify.

Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting is in September, the exact date to be determined.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Silbernagel adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

*Signature on file*

*Signature on file*

Kaitlin Martin  
Administrative Assistant I

Sophie Adams  
Interim Economics Development Manager

\*Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing [cityclerk@cityofalbany.net](mailto:cityclerk@cityofalbany.net).