



CITY OF
Vancouver
WASHINGTON

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

Chris Harder

Deputy Director

Economic Prosperity and Housing

February 14, 2024



Overview of Lodging Tax Program



Alignment to Strategic Plan

- **Economic Opportunity:** Business Diversity; Job Creation; Engagement by Visitors & Residents
- **Culture & Heritage:** Economic Impact; Participation on Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Experiences





Program Overview

- RCW 67.28.180 allows municipalities to impose a 4% lodging tax on stays of less than 30 days at hotels, motels, campgrounds, bed and breakfasts and RV parks. In 2023 revenues = ~\$3 Million
- Funds can only be used for tourism-related projects, events and facilities.
- 50% of funds collected annually are committed to service the debt on the Vancouver Hilton Hotel & Convention Center
- Remaining funds support Visit Vancouver, WA – the local destination marketing organization – and local events and festivals





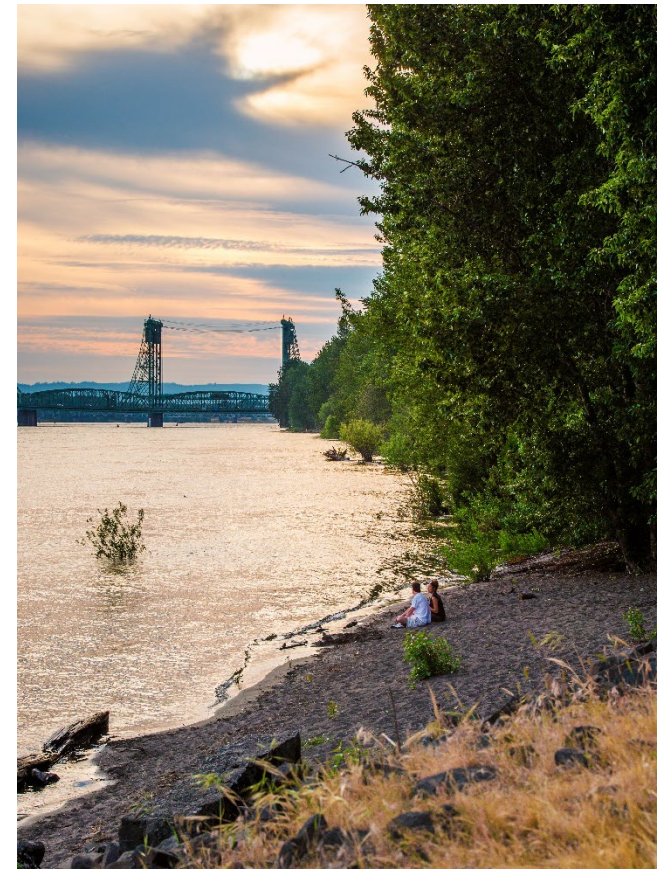
Overview of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee



Membership

LTAC consists of 9 Members

- Councilmember Harless (Chair)
- 4 members representing businesses required to collect hotel-motel tax
- 4 members representing organizations qualified to receive lodging tax funds





Committee Role

- RCW 67.28.180 requires that in order for the municipality to expend lodging tax funds, the City's LTAC must review and recommend proposed expenditures to City Council.
- Per state regulations, the Council may only approve awards to candidates recommended by the LTAC and only at the amount recommended unless Council submits its change in the amount to the LTAC for comment.
- All approved grant recipients must enter into a professional services agreement with the city.



Recent (2023) LTAC Recommendations

- Recommendation to fund Visit Vancouver at \$700K in 2024
- Fourteen proposals were received totaling \$549,967. LTAC recommended full or partial funding of nine projects, totaling \$157,000. Council approved all recommendations.

Event, Festival or Project	Award Amount
Columbia River and Girlfriends Triathlon Festival	\$7,250
George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue Centennial Concert	\$11,500
Summer Fest 2024	\$9,250
Downtown Vancouver Information Centers	\$40,000
22nd Annual 4 Days of Aloha	\$11,500
Vancouver Go Fest Celebration 2024	\$11,750
Girlfriends Breast Cancer Walk/Run	\$7,250
24th Annual Vancouver Wine & Jazz Festival	\$8,500
Craft Beer & Wine Festival	\$50,000





Proposed 2024 Work Plan

(See Draft 2024 LTAC Meeting Schedule & Agendas)



Discussion



DRAFT 2024 LTAC Meeting Schedule & Agendas

Meeting 1 (February 14, 2024; Noon-1:30pm)

Introduction of Members and City Staff	Kim Harless & Chris Harder
Overview of Lodging Tax Program & Role of Advisory Committee	Chris Harder & Taylor Hallvik
Review Annual Agenda & 2024 Priorities	Kim Harless & Chris Harder

Meeting 2 (March 13, 2024; Noon-1:00pm)

Vancouver Destination Master Plan Presentation & Discussion	Cliff Myers, Visit Vancouver
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Meeting 3 (April 10, 2024; Noon-1:30pm)

Kick-Off Meeting: LTAC Grant Program Criteria & Impact Reporting Evaluation	Matthew Landkamer, Whereabout Consulting
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Between Meeting Staff/Consultant Work

Assessment of current grant program

- 1:1 interviews w/ program stakeholders (~5)
- Survey to past applicants & grantees
- Insight Report – summary of current challenges and opportunities

Meeting 4 (May 8, 2024; Noon-2:00pm)

Presentation & Discussion of Insight Report	Matthew Landkamer, Whereabout Consulting
Development of LTAC Grant Criteria	Matthew Landkamer, Whereabout Consulting

Between Meeting Staff/Consultant Work

- Development of draft Grant Evaluation Framework & Tool

Meeting 5 (June 12, 2024; Noon-2:00pm)

Evaluation Tool/Framework Refinement	Matthew Landkamer, Whereabout Consulting
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Post Grant / Impact Reporting Discussion	Matthew Landkamer, Whereabout Consulting
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Between Meeting Staff Work

- Development of a new Grant Application based on approved Grant Evaluation Framework & Tool
- Publication of new Grant Application and solicitation of event vendors

Meeting 6 (August 14, 2024; Noon-1:30pm)

Review of Lodging Tax Grant Applications	LTAC

Meeting 7 (September 11, 2024; Noon-1:30pm)

Review of Lodging Tax Grant Applications	LTAC
Recommendation of 2025 Grant Awards	LTAC

Meeting 8 (October 9, 2024; Noon-1:00pm)

Review of Visit Vancouver 2024 Work	LTAC
Recommendation of 2025 LTAC Funding to <u>Visit Vancouver</u>	LTAC

Staff Work

- Staff Report and Council Packet for 2025 LTAC Grant Recommendations
- Staff Report and Council Packet for 2025 Visit Vancouver Grant



**Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
MINUTES
August 16th, 2023**

- Present:** Kim Harless, Chair; Jordan Boldt, Vancouver Farmer's Market; Jennifer Kenney, Hough Foundation; Carla Rise, Staybridge Suites; Steve Bowers, Hampton Inn & Suites; Linda Reid, Heritage Bank; Bradley Richardson, Clark County Historical Museum
- Guests:** April Buzby, Clark County Historical Museum - Downtown Vancouver Information Centers and Kelsey Allen, Director of Operations for the Vancouver Farmers Market; John Park, Vancouver Arena - Vancouver Go Fest Celebration 2024
- Absent:** Mike Mcleod, Hilton and Kari Jonassen, Homewood Suites
- Staff:** Teresa Brum, Deputy Economic Development Director; Kimberly Kerlee, Support Specialist; Andrew Westlund, Senior Management Analysis; Taylor Hallvik, Assistant City Attorney; Cliff Meyers, Visit Vancouver

Item 1: Welcome & Overview/Call to order

The August 16, 2023, Lodging Tax Advisory Committee was called to order at 12:04 pm by Chair/Councilmember, Kim Harless.

Roll Call

Completed by Kimberly Kerlee

Excusal of Absences

Mike Mcleod
Kari Jonassen

Item 2: Approval of 8/9/23 Minutes

Motion: Motion by Linda Reid, seconded by Jennifer Kenney to approve the August 9, 2023, minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

Item 3: Legal and Procedural Questions - Memorandum

No questions.

Memorandum

Teresa Brum informed all attendees that this will be her last LTAC meeting as she is retiring from the City on August 18, 2023. Announced that the new Deputy Director of Economic Development, Chris Harder, starts on Monday and will assume the role of LTAC staff lead.

Teresa Brum continued to state that the committee's activities are guided by state law and explained the authority of the Lodging Tax Committee. Brum then went on to state that for 2024, the city allocated \$125,000 out of the Lodging Tax and received an additional \$31,883 in unspent funds which was added this week for a total of \$156,883. This year's grant applications total \$549,967.

Jordan Boldt, Executive Director of the Farmers Market and Bradley Richardson, Executive Director of the CCHM, who submitted a grant application, formally excused themselves from deliberations due to a conflict of interest.

Assistant City Attorney Taylor Hallvik confirmed there is a Quorum remaining and asked if Bradley and Jordan should sign off. Brum and Harless confirmed both can remain on the call if they wish to, but they cannot participate in the discussion.

Brum went on to state that Cliff Meyers, President & CEO of Visit Vancouver WA, has at the City's request, presented a spreadsheet of possible funding scenarios for the committee's consideration, based on his professional evaluation. As a reminder, the committees review is based on the program goal as stated in the program guidelines. The next step would be that the recommendations would be presented to City Council for approval by the end of the year. Additionally, those applications that are funded and for which a permit is required, will need to meet the necessary requirements for the special event permit required by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. Teresa also announced that there will be construction at Esther Short Park next year within the area they call the bricks, which may impact some of the events.

Item 4: Review Lodging Tax Grant Applications

The following applicants joined the meeting remotely or in person and presented their grant proposals to the board. After the presentations, the board members posed any questions they had to the applicants.

1. April Buzby, Clark County Historical Museum and Kelsey Allen, Director of Operations for the Vancouver Farmers Market - Downtown Vancouver Information Centers
2. John Park, Vancouver Arena - Vancouver Go Fest Celebration 2024
3. Jesse Jimenez, Police Activities League of SW Washington - PeaceHealth Apple Tree – **Did not attend.**
4. Joe Stephens, Our City Cares - Couve Clover Run – **Did not attend.**

Item 5: Grant Recommendations

Cliff Meyers, CEO of Visit Vancouver, presented four Grant Recommendations for the committee to review.

Item 6: Discussion to Renew Visit Vancouver's Contract for 2024

Cliff Meyers stated that the Council voted on a two-year budget, which would include the \$700,000 per year. Meyers asked for a motion to approve the \$700,000 budget for Visit Vancouver for 2024.

Motion: Motion by Carla Rise, seconded by Linda Reid to approve the \$700,000 budget for Visit Vancouver for 2024. Motion approved unanimously per a roll call vote.

Item 7: Discussion to Recommend Lodging Tax Grant Funds for 2024 Grants

Board members deliberated and came to an agreement on the recommendations of the allocation of the Lodging Tax Grant Fund. Those final recommendations will be brought to City Council for approval by the end of the year.

Taylor Hallvik stated that now would be the appropriate time for a motion and a second to recommend to City Council, the Lodging Tax Grant Awards as reflected in the LTAC Recommendations spreadsheet that was displayed during deliberation. Spreadsheet is attached to the minutes.

Brum brought up the question of rounding up the final total amount that is to be allocated, in which Andrew Westlund stated rounding up should be fine as the final amount will be approved by City Council during the final process.

Motion: Motion by Steven Bowers, seconded by Linda Reid to approve the amounts per the LTAC Committee Recommendations displayed on the spreadsheet for 2024 funding to bring to City Council for final approval. Motion approved unanimously per a roll call vote.

Item 8: Other Business

Committee members discussed possible application changes for 2024. Discussed adding in more detail the expectation regarding event expansion for applicants who have applied for grants for more than three years in a row. Also discussed adding in a section for the applicants to state the proposed city location for the event and a recommendation to increase outreach in 2024 by completing this process twice a year instead of once a year.

Item 9: Public Comment

None

Item 10: Executive Session

None

Item 11: Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 1:32 pm.

Kim Harless, President

Meetings of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee are electronically recorded on audio. The audio tapes are kept on file in the office of the City Clerk for a period of six years.



To request other formats, please
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City Manager's Office

(360) 487-8600 | WA Relay: 711

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2024 City of Vancouver Lodging Tax Grant Applications Submitted

LTAC Recommendations to Council

	<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Organization Name</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Event Date/Type of Event</u>	<u>Amount Requested by Applicant</u>	<u>Percent of request funded</u>	<u>LTAC Recommendation to City Council 8/16/2024</u>
1	Columbia River and Girlfriends Triathlon Festival	WHY Community	SherriMcMillan	Aug 2024 TBD	\$30,000	24%	\$ 7,250.00
2	The Ne Plus Ultra Jaxx Orchestra - George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue Centennial Concert	Historic Music Preservation Project	Sammuel Murry-Hawkins	Feb 11-12, 2024	\$50,000	23%	\$ 11,500.00
3	Southwest Washington Walk to Defeat ALS	The ALS Assoc Oregon & SW WA	Lance Christian	May 19, 2024	\$5,467	0%	\$ -
4	Summer Fest 2024	The Historic Trust	Holly Chamberlain	Jun 21-Aug 24, 2024	\$30,000	31%	\$ 9,250.00
5	Downtown Vancouver Information Centers	Clark County Historical Museum	April Buzby	Calendar year 2024	\$40,000	100%	\$ 40,000.00
6	22nd Annual 4 Days of Aloha	Ke Kukui Foundation	Kaloku Holt	July 25-28, 2024	\$50,000	23%	\$ 11,500.00
7	Vancouver Go Fest Celebration 2024	Vancouver Arena	John Park	TBD weekend Jun- Aug	\$16,000	73%	\$ 11,750.00
8	Girlfriends Walk/Run	Pink Lemonade Project	Ann Berryman	Oct 7, 2024	\$30,000	24%	\$ 7,250.00
9	City of Vancouver Promotional Tours	Columbia River Economic Development Council	Jennifer Baker	Summer & Fall 2024	\$125,000	0%	\$ -
10	You Stay, We Pay!	Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce	Janet Kenefsky	Calendar year 2024	\$25,000	0%	\$ -
11	PeaceHealth Apple Tree	Police Activities League of SW Washington	Jesse Jimenez	Sep 16 & 17	\$20,000	0%	\$ -
12	24th Annual Vnacouver Wine & Jazz Festival	Bravo! Vancouver	Maria Manzo	Aug 23-25, 2024	\$35,000	24%	\$ 8,500.00
13	Couve Clover Run	Our City Cares	Joe Stephens	March 24, 2024	\$20,000	0%	\$ -
14	Craft Beer & Wine Festival	Choice Charities	Rusty Hoyle	Aug 2024 TBD	\$73,500	68%	\$ 50,000.00
TOTALS					\$549,967		\$ 157,000.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE					\$157,000		\$0