



Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

July 9, 2025

12:00 PM

Location

City Hall, Aspen Room, Fl 1

415 W 6th Street

Vancouver, WA 98660

Virtual Meeting Link & Call-In Number:

Please call 360-487-7846 or

email kimberly.kerlee@cityofvancouver.us to request the virtual meeting information.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. 6/11/25 Minutes
3. **Grant Program Communication and Promotion**
 - a. Presentation - Chris Harder, Deputy Director
4. **Review of Application and Award Process**
5. **Hotel Booking Guidelines**
6. **Other Business**
7. **Community Forum**

To provide public testimony, please see instructions below.
8. **Adjournment**

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

Members

Kim Harless
Committee Chair

Janet Kenefsky
Ryan Hart
Steve Bowers
Jennifer Kenney
Carla Rise
Terry Goldman
Temple Lentz
Christie Rust

Economic, Prosperity and Housing

415 W. 6th Street
Vancouver, WA 98660
TTY: 711
www.cityofvancouver.us

Community Forum Instructions

The public is invited to speak regarding any issue on the agenda. Members of the public testifying are asked to limit testimony to three minutes. There are three ways to provide comments:

1. Writing: Public comments can be submitted in writing (name, address, contact information and comments)

via email to kimberly.kerlee@cityofvancouver.us by 5pm the day before the meeting.

2. Remotely: Remotely: Pre-register by phone at 360-487-7846 or email kimberly.kerlee@cityofvancouver.us by 5pm the day before the meeting.
3. In Person: Pre-register by phone at 360-487-7846 or email kimberly.kerlee@cityofvancouver.us by 5pm the day before the meeting or fill out a Public Comment form in person prior to the start of the Community Communications portion of the meeting.

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Date: June 11, 2025

Time: 12 – 1:30 p.m.

Location

City Hall – Aspen Room, Fl 1
415 W 6th Street
Vancouver, WA

Regular Meeting (Convened in-person and via video conference)

The meeting agenda materials referenced in these minutes can be found [online](#).

Link to Microsoft Teams meeting video: [25 06 11 LTAC Meeting Video](#).

Item 1: Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee was called to order at 12:01 pm by Kim Harless, Committee Chair.

Board Members Present: Kim Harless, Carla Rise (late), Temple Lentz, Terry Goldman, Christie Rust, Jennifer Kenney, Ryan Hart (virtual), Janet Kenefsky

Board Members Absent: Steve Bowers

Staff Present: Chris Harder, Kimberly Kerlee, Taylor Hallvik

Guests: Cliff Myers, President and CEO, Visit Vancouver; Kelsie Munoz, Destination Services Manager, Visit Vancouver; Erica Lindemann, Director of Marketing; Laura Yocabel-Dibble, Director of Sales; Olivia Vanis, Destination Sales & Services Coordinator, Visit Vancouver

Motion by Rust, seconded by Kenney, and carried unanimously to excuse the absence of Steve Bowers.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Goldman, seconded by Rust, and carried unanimously to approve the May 14, 2025, minutes.

Item 3: Visit Vancouver – State of Tourism

Cliff Meyers from Visit Vancouver highlighted the organization's efforts in promoting tourism, noting that nine direct booking campaigns last year resulted in approximately 48,000 room nights and nearly \$7 million in hotel revenue. The committee also addressed the partnership with the City of Vancouver to assist grant applicants and analyze the economic impact of events. Concerns were raised regarding the current state of the travel industry, indicating a slowdown in hotel performance, particularly in East Vancouver, where occupancy rates have

Members

Kim Harless
Chair

Steve Bowers
Temple Lentz
Janet Kenefsky
Jennifer Kenney
Christie Rust
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Carla Rise

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significantly declined. The committee noted the impact of budget cuts facing the State Tourism Office, which will affect advertising and promotional efforts in 2026. Additionally, discussions included ongoing talks with entrepreneurs about sports venue development and the importance of collaboration with local businesses to enhance tourism. The committee also discussed maintaining destination services, such as downtown walking maps, to enhance visitor experience.

Item 4: Miscellaneous Program & Application Topics

Chris Harder began the conversation around the eligibility of for-profit organizations for lodging tax grants. Taylor Hallvik stated that further discussions with city leadership are needed to clarify statutory interpretations, while Janet Kenefsky highlighted the potential public perception issues. The committee leaned towards maintaining the current requirement for applicants to be non-profits, with confirmation from Harder that the existing grant application language would remain unchanged for now. Additionally, Harder proposed an increase of the cap for the cultural enrichment grant from \$2,500 to \$5,000. The committee overall agreed with the intent that the committee would be open to considering requests above that amount should there be a unique circumstance or a clearly demonstrated need.

Item 5: Other Business

None

Item 6: Community Communications

None

Item 7: Adjournment

1:36 p.m.

Kim Harless, Board President

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



Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

July 9, 2025



Marketing & Promotion

- City Communications Team to take lead on social media and communications strategy.
- Promotion will focus on attracting applications that prioritize one or more of the following:
 - Representing cultural communities and underserved populations
 - Non-peak or shoulder season events/festivals
 - Locations outside of downtown/central city
 - Demonstrated connection to supporting local small businesses and supporting climate action.
- Partner Outreach Support
 - Past Cultural, Arts, and Heritage Grant applicants; Past Community & Neighborhood Grant applicants; Equity Office partners/stakeholders; Culturally specific organizations



Misc Discussion Topics/Updates

Term Limit Extensions

- On 7/7 Council voted to extend all current term limits to 12/31/2025
- During appointment/reappointment process, Council will decide on staggered terms

Events & Festivals Located Outside of City Limits

- Contacted by event organizer hosting the Washington Men's Gymnastics state championships
- Potentially holding event in March 2026 at Clark County Fairgrounds
- Inquiring about Lodging Tax Grant eligibility
- Anticipate 500+ families, 2,000 in total attendance, and 1,000 overnight stays
- RCW doesn't require awards to be within City limits
- 2019 Program Guidelines: *"Special events/festivals, capital projects or facilities requesting operating funds must be located inside the City limits."*



2025 Calendar

Date	Topic(s)	Participants
Aug 13	No Meeting	
Sep 10	TBD	
October	Proposal Presentations & Evaluation - October 8: 12pm - 3pm - October 17: 11am - 2pm - October 28: 12:30pm - 3:30pm	LTAC + Applicants
November	Proposal Presentations & Evaluation - November 7: 12pm - 3pm Final Award Recommendations - November 12: 12pm - 3pm	LTAC + Applicants
Dec 10	TBD	



Thank You

