



Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: June 10, 2026

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: [Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Meeting: June 10, 2026](#)

Item 1: Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee was called to order at 12:03 p.m. by Sarah Fox, Committee Chair.

Board Members Present: Christie Rust, Janet Kenefsky (virtual), Keri Robinson, Angie Hildebrant, Luke Geisel, Sarah Fox

Motion by Rust, seconded by Robinson, and carried unanimously to excuse the absence of Mike Bomar and Kyle Byrd.

Staff Present: Andrew Westlund, Curtis Burns, Callie Taylor.

Presenters: None.

Item 3: Community Communications

No public comments or communications were received.

Item 4: New Member Introductions

Andrew Westlund, Data Analyst, introduced the new board members, Angie Hildebrant and Luke Geisel. The committee members and staff members introduced themselves.

Item 5: Budget Process and Fiscal Data

Andrew Westlund presented an overview of the Lodging Tax Fund, including recent revenue, expenditures, grant commitments, and projected funding available for the 2027 grant cycle. He explained the distinction between the lodging tax revenue available for LTAC grants and the separate lodging tax revenue dedicated to Convention Center debt service. Westlund noted that 2025 and 2026 represent the first

Members

Sarah Fox
Committee Chair

Temple Lentz
Janet Kenefsky
Christie Rust
Kyle Byrd
Keri Robinson
Mike Bomar
Angie Hildebrant
Luke Geisel

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years in which the full projected annual lodging tax revenue has been made available for grant awards following the establishment of reserve funds. Committee members discussed the budget summary included in the meeting packet and requested clarification regarding the revenue and expenditure figures. Westlund explained that the revenue totals reflected only the portion of lodging tax revenue available for LTAC activities, while Convention Center revenues and expenditures were tracked separately. Additional discussion covered year-to-date revenues, outstanding grant commitments, current revenue trends, and the projected funding available for the upcoming grant cycle. Westlund noted that approximately \$1.8 million is currently forecasted for the 2027 grant program and that future budget summaries would be revised to improve clarity.

Item 6: Program Guidelines Approval

Andrew Westlund presented the revised Lodging Tax Grant Program Guidelines, which incorporated committee feedback received throughout the program review process. Updates included clarification of the four grant categories, general program requirements, grant-specific eligibility, contracting expectations, and the addition of parking management coordination requirements for events held in the downtown area. Westlund highlighted revisions intended to better communicate award expectations and timelines for applicants. Committee members discussed several potential refinements, including encouraging applicants to incorporate transportation options such as C-TRAN shuttle services, exploring sustainability measures related to waste reduction and recycling, and confirming the eligible service period for the upcoming grant cycle. Members expressed appreciation for the revised document and agreed that it was more concise and applicant-friendly while still capturing the committee's previous discussions. The committee requested additional time to review the guidelines before final approval. Staff will distribute the document as a Microsoft Word file to facilitate comments, accept feedback through the end of June, and incorporate revisions prior to publication of the grant materials in August.

Item 7: Grant Application Questions and Scoring Criteria

Andrew Westlund facilitated a discussion regarding the grant application questions and scoring criteria to prepare for the upcoming grant cycle. Westlund explained that many application questions are required for state reporting purposes, while others could be revised to better reflect committee priorities and improve applicant understanding. Committee members discussed the value of publishing the scoring rubric to improve transparency and help applicants better understand how proposals are evaluated. Members also considered ways to strengthen guidance related to sustainability, equity and inclusion, marketing, and tourism impacts without substantially expanding the application itself. Staff noted that providing examples and additional coaching materials may be more effective than rewriting many of the existing questions. The committee also reviewed the current scoring criteria and discussed whether the weighting of certain categories continued to align with the program's goals. Discussion focused on the value of the Destination Master Plan alignment criterion, encouraging events during the winter tourism season, supporting events outside of downtown, and balancing lodging night generation with broader community priorities such as sustainability and equity. Staff agreed to gather additional information regarding available event venues, including venue capacity and utilization outside of downtown, and to coordinate with Visit Vancouver to develop a more comprehensive inventory of event spaces that could be shared with future applicants. Committee members agreed to continue reviewing the application materials and provide additional comments prior to finalizing the grant documents.

Item 8: Applicant Presentation and Recommendation Scheduling

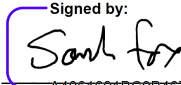
Andrew Westlund reviewed the anticipated timeline for the upcoming grant cycle and explained that applicant presentations and committee funding recommendations would occur during the fall following the opening of the grant application period in August. Westlund noted that multiple extended meetings would be necessary to accommodate applicant presentations and committee deliberations.

Item 9: Other Business

Christie Rust, Board Member, shared information regarding future opportunities for Visit Vancouver to host regional association meetings and conferences that would bring meeting planners and overnight visitors to Vancouver. She explained that these opportunities often require destinations to commit sponsorship funding several years in advance, creating challenges because they fall outside the Lodging Tax grant program's standard application timeline and Visit Vancouver's annual operating budget. Committee members discussed whether future requests of this nature could be considered through the Lodging Tax grant program if they aligned with the committee's goals of generating overnight stays, tourism, and economic impact. The committee expressed general support for exploring these opportunities further and discussed whether future requests should be incorporated into Visit Vancouver's annual funding request or submitted as separate grant applications. Staff indicated that the topic would be brought back for additional discussion at a future meeting to determine the most appropriate process for considering long-range tourism investment opportunities.

Item 10: Adjournment

1:39 p.m.

Signed by:

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Sarah Fox, Chair

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.