State of Wisconsin

Scott Walker, Governor | Governor's Council on Tourism | Lola Roeh, Chair

Governor's Council on Tourism
May 12, 2011
Madison, WI

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Lola Roeh, Secretary Stephanie Klett, Mr. Joe Klimczak, Ms. Romy Snyder, Ms. Ruth Goetz, Ms. Deb Archer, Ms. Kari Zambon, Ms. Linda John, Mr. Paul Upchurch, Ms. Stacey Watson, Mr. George Tzougros, Ms. Janee' Doxtator, Sen. Terry Moulton, Sen. Jim Holperin, Mr. Brian Kelsey, Mr. Omar Shaikh.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Representative Kaufert, Representative Clark, Mr. Dave Olsen, Ms. Kathy Kopp.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Steve Lightbourn (for Dr. Brown),Trisha Pugal, Adam Field (Rep. Kaufert's office), Julia Hertel, Lori Severson, Kris Ullmer, Lynn Peters, Pam Seidl, Christine Rebout, Tammy Tritz, Joe Morgensen.

STAFF: Deputy Secretary Dave Fantle, Shelly Allness, Janet DesChenes, Dawn Zanoni, Sarah Klavas, Lisa Marshall.

Note: order of agenda was shuffled to accommodate schedules.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. GVIC Update: At a strategic planning event held April 28, 2011, GVIC's determined they want to continue as visitor center system, however they need assistance in several areas such as training, integration with the state's brand and a better way to handle brochure distribution. The Department of Tourism will be analyzing a number of other state models, looking at best practices and furthering research on public-private partnerships. A recommendation will be coming on how to reactivate some centers .

3. Marketing
   a) Council Marketing Committee: March 22 meeting with ad agency, discussed applying the research in the most effective ways and agreed to meet again in June to work on a strategic plan.
   b) Media Tours: Geiger tour went very well in Sheboygan County; starting to see results coming in from the Mississippi River Road tour. Next up is Lake Superior region, then Lake Geneva/ Walworth County in October. Deputy will be going to Michigan for general PR outreach.

c) Research Update: Davidson-Peterson economic impact vendor is completing their contract with the Department of Tourism. Tourism Economics, a division of Longwoods international has been secured for future economic impact research. , this year there is a hybrid of both sources, but next year it will be only Longwoods.

d) Marketing, Summer & Winter Campaign: Using the research that uncovered the principle travel motivator as FUN, and the brand strategy that also supports it, the Department will unveil the 'picture the fun' campaign today. At the core are three TV spots, each focusing on different ways to have fun in Wisconsin. A photo contest will be big part of the campaign, visitors can submit photos. Campaign is available online at www.travelwisconsinl.com.

e) Fall and Winter: TV concept is ready for fall, will be shot soon; hoping we will be able to manage two executions for winter, depends on budget.

f) Niche Markets

Meetings & Conventions: Committee is established with a plan for the first meeting in June. Working on a grant program for the industry funded at $110,000. Collaborative will take place in Chicago where the industry and the Department will pitch our state to CEO's and meeting planners. Secretary and Deputy will attend.

Think WI Campaign: Started at end of March using various on-line channels driving visits Think Wisconsin site. Metrics report was presented which indicated a surge in web visits.

Sports Travel: Started at end of March using various on-line channels driving visits sportswisconsin site. Metrics report was presented which indicated a surge in web visits.

Travel Green Wisconsin: A new vendor was selected and began work in February. Part of a permanent staff position is being dedicated to this program development. FY12 work plan development is underway which include a review of the application, fees and process. Signs will be created to help increase the visual recognition of the certified participants and business will receive one free.

4. Council Strategic Plan: 4 Main Goals established as well as team leaders .

Goal #1: Marketing/Branding- Romy Snyder; educate the industry on brand research/message , operationalize Governor's Tourism Council Marketing Committee, and embrace high ROI niches, and utilize date for ROI decision making. Meeting in June to start taking action.
Goal #2: Harness the Power of the Industry – Deb Archer; tell the tourism story, advocate for tourism growth and build events to harness the power of the industry. Great ideas established, will work with team to implement.
Goal #3: Increase funding for Department – Lola Roeh; tell the story of the industry's economic impact, testify at hearings, develop new funding sources, research, and seek out legislator input.
Goal #4: Communication: Ruth Goetz, develop strong communication between Department and Council, Council and the industry, Department and the industry.

5. Walk with Walker Initiative: June 4 is the kickoff date at High Cliff State Park at the Lime Kiln trail. Park director will participate and give guided tour. The goal is one event per month. July scheduled to be in Cable area, August in Eagle River with Sept. still under discussion.

6. Conference Recap & Future Locations: The Governor's Conference on Tourism will be rotating among destination which means that the conference will not be held in Madison every other year.
   - Due to the success of the 2011 conference, many opportunities will be explored to reach to even higher success, drive more participants and increase sponsorships.

7. Secretary's Report

   a) Budget Status/Update: Joint Committee on Finance testimony went well and there is optimism for a budget increase.
   b) National Tourism Week Report: Secretary, Deputy Secretary & Sarah Klavas have been out in force, traveling around the state during the past 10 days.
   Dave Fantle: Marshfield, Washington Co., Green Bay, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Door County, Green Lake, Manitowoc.
   Sarah Klavas: WI Dells VCB dinner, WI Main Street program dinner, Platteville, Belmont, Kenosha, and Tri-County event.

Secretary: NATOW Conference, Bayfield, Port Wing, Cable, Sheboygan for Geiger

Media Tour, Fishing Opener in Chippewa Falls, Platteville, Monroe, Beaver Dam,

Milwaukee, Kenosha, Oshkosh, Sheboygan Co., Madison, also to be on the Vicki

McKenna radio show all day Friday to wrap up NTW.

Governor and Lt. Governor also did many events for National Tourism Week.

c) JEM Grants: Governor will be presenting grants around the state.

d) Governor's Office: Will be doing monthly one- on- one meetings.

e) May 24 Event: Sponsor Reception at Executive Residence.

f) Other: Tourism Business Journal (TBJ), this is our key communication tool with the industry; Regional Tourism Specialists working to ensure participation/awareness. Council was reminded to make sure their community members and stakeholders are registered to get the TBJ.

7. Other Business and Closing Remarks: Snapshot of how things are going around the state:

Paul Upchurch: Busy convention season, museum activity high, Summerfest is adding a marathon

Ruth Goetz: summer looks good, ticket sales are up at Big Top, cruise service is doing well, expect summer to be really good.

Kari Zambon: things are looking good so far for the northeast.

Linda John: strong in Eau Claire, 2010 ended up 10.5 % and continues to grow; location to Fox Cities is big part of it. Launched new mobile visitor center this week; going to festival and events.

Stacey Watson: Improving from last year; increase in food and beverage at museum, seeing last minute planning.

Brian Kelsey: Didn't have good snow in the winter, so lodging was hurt, however looking pretty good for summer. Don't feel the cost of gas will affect them too much. Inquiries are up.

Lola Roeh: ADR improved; community-wide promotion helped; rooms conducive to families are booking first.

Janee' Doxtator: NATOW hosting annual conference June 10-12 in Hayward, Menominee next year. The U. S. Indigenous Games will be in Milwaukee in July and NATOW is sponsoring the Native Village. 25th Anniversary of Indian Summer this year.

Deb Archer: Numbers climbed for Madison and surrounding area. Good year for meetings bookings and sports market. Gearing up for media relations culinary tours.

Romy Snyder: Had a great 2010, almost back at 2008 numbers; spring was good, a lot of spring breakers; 2011 looks really well. Gas prices don't really impact the area; campgrounds have done really well the past few years. Optimistic, weather does have impact to success.

Joe Klimczak: Optimistic for summer, spring was a bit challenging due to weather.

George Tzougros: Arts Board will cease to exist as independent organization on July 1; losing 5 of 10 staff as well as funding, 73% was cut. Many community based programs will go away; their goal is to build something that the Department can market. Artists and arts across the state will be affected, fewer programs to offer our visitors.

Sen. Holperin: moderately strong winter, north central will focus on new activities that are not snowmobile/snow focused. Will focus on weekend food, arts, etc. type of events so that weather can't negatively impact it. Many counties are switching to ATV trails. Summer, gas prices won't affect them, but need to watch how much that takes out of pockets, affects the discretionary spending. Expecting a strong summer.

Next Council Meeting: Thursday, June 16, 2011, Madison. **Start time is 1pm.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.