



**City of Kirkland**  
**Tourism Development Committee (TDC) Minutes**  
**September 18, 2013**  
**9:00-12:00pm—Council Chambers**

**Present:** Toby Nixon (Chair), Belinda Jensen, Kathryn McNeill, Michelle Quisenberry, Dan Mayer, Ellen Miller-Wolfe (staff), Philly Hoshko (staff)

**Absent:** Jac Cooper, Clarisa Baltazar

**Guest:** Applicants came to present

**Welcome**

The meeting came to order at 10:01 a.m.

**Tourism Funding Presentations**

**Kirkland Performance Center**

Marguerite Kennedy from Kirkland Performance Center (KPC) presented the “Sit ’n Stay” program. She illustrated a sample promotion of a “Lover’s Getaway” Package that featured a Heathman Hotel stay with a performance at KPC with a Spanish guitarist.

She reported that marketing stats for the KPC website had 112,000 unique visitors per year. She mentioned many KPC patrons are visiting Kirkland for the first time. She covered the online marketing campaign as well as print and radio campaigns that reach up to Vancouver Canada.

A question was asked how she measures 2,000 patrons from outside of 50 miles away. She answered that they extract this data from credit card zip codes. She further explained that the 400 hotel stays reported was from surveys.

**12K’s of Christmas**

Garett Slettebak from Pro-Motion Events presented the 12K’s of Christmas. He relayed that the run course begins in Marina Park and goes along the waterfront. The event consists of a 12K, 5K

and free kids dash. He also shared that the 12K's of Christmas is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest 12K in America as reported by a running magazine and runners come from 16 other states and well as Canada.

Garett is requesting funds for marketing at the Seattle Marathon Expo in which there is an estimated 20,000 attendees. At the Expo, there will be an opportunity for people to sign up for the 12K's of Christmas and receive a discount. Garett added that a 12K distance makes for a great recovery run after a marathon.

Pro-Motion Events produces 20 running events a year and they were granted money by the Kirkland LTAC in 2010 for a display. The display has been used for many years and is in need of replacement. The display would include photos of Marina Park.

Additional Explore Kirkland exposure would include the tourism logo on the following:

- 10,000 event brochures
- 400 posters
- Magazine ads
- Website and Facebook pages
- 50,000 person runner email list.

Display would also be used for their other events including a run they do in San Francisco.

The TDC had questions on the booth fee vs. the booth display.

### **Early Music Fridays**

Hayley Woldseth from Early Music Guild (EMG) presented Early Music Fridays on behalf of Gus Denhard.

Early Music Fridays are classical music performances that take place at Northlake Unitarian Church. The funding would support January 10 and January 31 performances intended to bring the best early music for people in Kirkland and on the Eastside. PCC and Whole Foods will sponsor after-concert receptions.

Hayley noted it is not realistic to say there is a huge influx of people coming in town for the event but instead EMG increases the experience for people in the area. They are contacting Kirkland hotels individually to learn how they can best give information to hotel guests.

EMG has an email list that reaches several thousand people from Vancouver to Portland. 30% of their Facebook viewers live outside of the area. Quite a few people will also come from Seattle and have the potential to dine in the area.

Approximately 60–70 people attend each performance. Their goal this year is to have 80 people attend each performance. Capacity of the chapel is 110 and they can switch to a sanctuary space that can accommodate 200 hundred people. However, a lot of followers are looking for intimate performances on period piece instruments.

### **Kirkland Garden Tour**

Karen Lightfeldt opened her presentation with a quote from a book titled “Garden Tourism” that states more people visit gardens than Disneyland and Disneyworld combined. She continued that there are event conferences on garden tourism.

The event, going in to its second year has received past funding from neighborhood grant seed money. They are hoping to grow to 600 attendees.

Woodinville, Bellevue and Snohomish all have garden tours. This event increases visibility on the beautiful gardens within Kirkland.

The event will market with posters and postcards, tour guide and social media with distribution to regional garden stores. They will track attendees by a survey when people arrive at the starting location.

The Garden Tourism book also states that on average of 22% garden tour visitors are from outside area.

KAC had produced a garden tour in the past but she did not have much information on that previous event. The date of the garden tour is based on not conflicting with other neighboring garden tours.

The current garden tour will feature five–six gardens with people spending about an hour at each garden. They have already received great nominations for 2014 gardens.

### **Jr Softball World Series**

John Chadwick from Little League Baseball and Softball, Inc. presented the Jr Softball World Series event. Nine teams from all over the world come to Kirkland for a week-long tournament in which five games are played in a day. Girls have to win a district, state and regional tournament to get to the World Series. Kirkland received publicity within all of these tournaments.

The event puts players up in Kirkland hotels and it is estimated that \$54,000 is spent on hotel rooms. Last year it was estimated that 6,500 people flew in and stayed a total of 1,000 room nights. Additionally, the committee goes around to Kirkland restaurants to let them know food allowances so restaurants can set menu items in the price range. An estimated \$40,000 is spent on dining in Kirkland.

John also relayed that ESPN covers the championship game and the organizer estimated that \$6,000 is spent by ESPN.

A question was asked if ESPN can do more features on Kirkland throughout their coverage. The response was that headquarters creates the contract with ESPN but the event organizer will ask.

An estimate on the number of people that attend who are not affiliated with a team has not been made but there is still room for more people to attend all of the games.

There are also Public Service Announcements at Mariner Games.

### **Kirkland Artist Studio Tours**

Jennifer Gill from Kirkland Arts Center presented the Kirkland Artist Studio Tour. They are going into their 11<sup>th</sup> year. Over 20 Kirkland Artist studios are included on the tour and 1,000 people come to this event. Many sites are walkable or bikeable.

Jennifer relayed that 10 of 20 studios reported \$19,000 in art sales. They hope to improve data reporting by incentivizing studios to complete reporting. They also hope to improve attendance tracking. Last year, they tracked zip codes but are looking into stickers or wristbands for next year. KPC partnered with local businesses and with the Kirkland half marathon on a banner and a Mother's Day flyer.

KPC shared their total budget and want to expand marketing outreach to regional magazines.

### **Fall Fashion Nights**

Samantha St. John and Jeremiah Khan from the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce presented Fall Fashion Nights. The inaugural event is taking place the day after the presentation. They have sold out of VIP and front row tickets and believe there is a big potential to grow this event. They expressed how the event fits in perfectly with Kirkland and aims to bring business to downtown

Kirkland. They believe they can brand Kirkland being the fashion spot of the Eastside capitalizing on Bellevue not having a fashion show anymore.

The 2014 event is planned to be a two-day event with the possibility of using hotel space for breakout sessions and trainings. In the future, they hope to make the event three days to a week-long conference. This fall event would help keep momentum of business throughout winter.

For the 2013 event there are currently 150 tickets sold for 250 seats. Next year the organizers are looking at having two fashion shows.

A question was asked regarding the possibility of not having the location available next year. They responded that they could move the tent to a parking lot if the current location is under construction. Jeremiah explained the importance of having a tent versus using a banquet room.

### **Kirkland Summer Concerts**

Julie Metter presented Kirkland Summer Concerts and explained that the event was put on by the City until it was cut from the budget in 2010. Moving the children's concerts to Juanita Beach Park—estimated to be about two times the size of Marina Park—was a success and gave an opportunity for easy parking. An additional benefit of having the children's concerts at Juanita Beach Park is that it brings an event to another quadrant of Kirkland. The Summer Concert series partnered with Eastside Time Bank for volunteer support.

Julie explained that the event needs an updated website that has more Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and is mobile friendly. Funding will also be used for booking the bands.

Julie shared that a Google search for Kirkland Summer Concerts in 2013 came up with a lot of hits. A more formal survey conducted said 40% of respondents are from outside of the area. She mentioned it is hard to determine heads in beds but 5–10% may be staying in hotels.

Juanita Beach has a capacity for 220 cars—Casper Baby Pants had over 500 cars.

The budget for 2014 is \$32,000. Julie and Karen Story paid themselves \$2,500 a piece for the coordination of the events.

Still yet to be determined is if the concerts will be under the Kirkland Events Foundation or the Kirkland Downtown Association. Dan Mayer shared that Kirkland has the only concert series geared toward kids on the eastside.

### **Kirkland Classic Car Show**

Doug Davis from Kirkland Downtown Association presented the Kirkland Car Show event. He relayed that it was an award-winning car show and has been produced in conjunction with Legends Car Club. This year insurance costs went up and they are negotiating with Legends Car Club because the club has other non-profits they like to support.

Doug shared that 10–20K people come to the Car Show and many car owners stay at Kirkland hotels but it is hard to gauge hotel stays. The event has a positive impact on restaurants and is a Seafair-sanctioned event.

A question was raised regarding past event coordinator Terri Fletcher would no longer coordinate the event. Doug mentioned that a committee of six will now run the event and Dick Bezel will continue to work on the event from his “remote” location in California.

### **Kirkland Summerfest**

Rob Butcher and Christine Exline from Kirkland Events Foundation presented the Kirkland Summerfest event. Summerfest is a free, three-day event with five stages and art that includes a Fish Frolic, Raku demonstrations, poles art, as well as food trucks. The event organizers explained that the food trucks are good at gauging attendance and an estimated 35–40K attended this event.

The event collaborates with many organizations including the KDA, Chamber and Rotary that put on a baseball game and duck dash. Northwest Folklife participated in the event on Sunday and there was a Tech Zone.

Volunteers are proud to be part of the event and there is something for everyone.

The organizers plan to continue to market farther out and capitalize on the weekend event. The event had two teams from Alberta Canada enter the cardboard races. Merchant surveys said there was 46% from Kirkland and 54% from outside the area.

A question was asked regarding plans for future outreach. The organizers answered that they would like to use the money to expand to regional magazines. They are currently advertising with yard signs, local papers, and posters.

Another question was asked regarding the number of food trucks. There were 12–16 food trucks depending on the day.

The event organizers explained how they shifted the event away from Park Lane and worked with Georges to do a “bump out.” They thought the location was a good place.

### **Kirkland Events Guide**

Rob Butcher and Christine Exline from Kirkland Events Foundation presented the Kirkland Summer Events Guide. They shared how the Kirkland Reporter says it is a keepsake and suggested to make it a Kirkland Events Guide instead of Summer Events Guide. 100% of net proceeds go back to events that can't fund themselves.

Approximately 110,000 copies go to eastside homes as well as regional tourist centers. They received great feedback from Point Gamble Visitor's Center.

They explained how with increased funding they can increase restaurant and business listings and there is an opportunity for editorial in guide.

It is used as a vehicle to support Summerfest and Oktoberfest.

A question was raised regarding what events were included. The organizers explained that the first year they started with the nonprofits and they hope to include all events.

### **Loomis House Marketing Strategy**

Barbara Loomis came to present her marketing strategy for Loomis House Bed and Breakfast. The Loomis House is the only B&B in Kirkland. She has many historic Preservationists wanting to come to the house. Currently the B&B's sole presence has been on Explore Kirkland. The B&B only serves breakfast and encourages people to go downtown. Barbara Loomis looks forward to attending more tourism networking meetings and would love to do packages with KPC and other events.

The house is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and appeals to historic interest. Since it is just a one bedroom suite she refers people to other hotels.

Her goal is to reach 80% annual occupancy and add a second bedroom. She shared that many people she talked to are excited that there is a B&B in town and she will be included in the new West of Market magazine.

Barbara invited everyone to an open house on October 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Five years ago she opened the B&B but it was only open on Friday and Saturday nights. Now the B&B is open full time.

### **7 Hills of Kirkland**

Bill Fores and Christine Rose from Kirkland Interfaith Transitions in Housing (KITH) presented the 7 Hills of Kirkland event. This year will be the 15<sup>th</sup> annual event in Kirkland. The organizers recently attended a cycling expo and everyone knows about the event. The event is a major fundraiser for KITH and is an all-volunteer, grass-roots effort.

The event currently has 1,400 riders and through their marketing efforts would like to increase ridership to 5,000 by 2020.

The event regularly attracts riders from Portland, Boise, Spokane, France and currently is featured in the Northwest Tour Guide and on Bicyclepaper.com.

The event takes place on Memorial Monday. This is due to light traffic on the road.

A question was asked regarding giving participant's paper information. The organizers responded that they have given people bags in the past but received feedback from them to focus everything online.

They have onsite booths as an opportunity for sponsors and are looking at ways to partner with merchants in order to drive traffic into restaurants and shops.

A question was asked regarding how to increase branding of Kirkland as a Bicycle Capital. The event is involved with Kirkland Cycle who conducts weekly rides in Kirkland .

### **Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) Kirkland**

Courtney Smith from SIFF presented the SIFF Kirkland event. In 2013 there was a 25% increase in attendance in Kirkland. The event has finally been in Kirkland for long enough that people expect SIFF to be in Kirkland. The 2013 Opening party sold out.

In 2013 31 films were featured and 12 SIFF-hosted guest filmmakers enjoyed their stay in Kirkland. They reported they liked being able to see something outside of Seattle.

The 2014 SIFF Kirkland is anticipated to be May 29-June 8 and because it will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SIFF, there will be a bolstered effort for marketing and programming.

SIFF hopes to increase local partnerships with hotels and restaurants.

They have streamlined marketing efforts and promoted to day trippers on the eastside so they could avoid Seattle's long lines. In addition, the SIFF website listed films as well as venues so people could search for a film and see that Kirkland is an option. The website also linked to the Explore Kirkland hotel page. They estimated about 20 hotel rooms were generated by SIFF. 25% of SIFF patrons live 50 miles away or more.

A question was asked regarding receiving information on the films earlier and SIFF responded they could definitely do that.

### **Kirkland Uncorked**

Phil Megenhardt from Bold Hat presented Kirkland Uncorked. The event worked with KPC on booking the music as well as worked with Kirkland restaurants on the food tasting and grill-off. Friday they held a burger brawl, on Saturday there was the grill-off, and Sunday featured a food truck feast with strong followers.

The event appeared in more food focused blogs and websites. Phil expressed his dream to be featured on the food network. He added The Seattle Times is the event's largest print partner and an article from Seattle Times NW magazine was presented.

The organizer expressed his hope to have the audience jump to 8,000. They had 16,000 views on kirklanduncorked.com "Stay the Weekend" page. Additionally, there were 79 cards redeemed from hotel stays.

Phil expressed that having a gate it gives an opportunity to provide a better quality experience to the guests.

Dan Mayer commented on the quality of application and Ellen Miller-Wolfe commented on the quality of art this year.

Phil shared that local business Canvas went through 800 canvases at the event. They event continues to post art and wine events going on in Kirkland year round through social media.

### **Seattle Synchro Soiree**

Eva Gonzalez from Seattle Synchro presented the Seattle Synchro Soiree event. The funds would support the main fundraiser celebration. Eva explained that the Seattle Syncho team is very successful and has attended a national championship.

They usually host three meets a year that attract people from other states (Oregon, Montana, Alaska and California). The only other teams in Washington are in Olympia and Gig Harbor.

Eva shared that families come from around the region to attend practices five nights a week. They would like to reach out to families to attract more people to the club.

They host a summer camp that had over 100 swimmers.

Last year the Tourism funds received enabled them to put an ad on a bus.

Swim meets and hotel stays are organized through the Pacific Northwest Association. They currently work with the Marriott to house out-of-state participants and can work on getting other hotels on the list to host swimmers and their families.

### **Tall Ships**

Howard Jacobs, General Manager of the Woodmark Hotel presented the Tall Ships event. He recapped the 2013 event as a great success and that they saw an increase in ticket sales.

They used Richmond PR for obtaining press mentions all the way up to Vancouver BC.

The 2014 event is once again planned for Labor Day Weekend. A concern was raised from the committee regarding two pricing options—one being handled by Tall Ships and one being handled by The Woodmark. Dan Mayer raised the question regarding the low hotel stays reported and Howard responded that although the hotel stays are low, Tall Ships is a unique event and a draw to Carillon Point.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.**

Minutes prepared by Philly Hoshko