



City of Kirkland

Tourism Development Committee (TDC) Meeting Minutes

Date: September 2, 2021 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

“Virtual” Meeting via Zoom Conference

Present: Chairperson Toby Nixon, Lori Goldfarb, Skye Branson, Jac Cooper and Phil Megenhardt

Absent: Jeff Lockhart

Staff: Jim Lopez, Martha Chaudhry and Chris Hendrickson

Welcome and call to order: Chairperson Nixon called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2022 LTAC Funding Discussion

Chairperson Nixon opened discussion on the 2022 grant applications. The City received a total of 21 applications from external organizations for events in 2022 equaling a total requested funding amount of \$210,500. Of the 21 applications, two were for new events never held before in Kirkland.

Brief discussion ensued about different scoring methodologies, particularly in reference to the bonus points. Some TDC members employed an “all or nothing” approach, awarding bonus points based on the total bonus points possible. Others assigned bonus points based on the event’s fit into that bonus points category. As an example, new events (three years old and less) are eligible for up to 15 bonus points. One TDC member assigned points on a sliding scale based on the “newness” of the event. A brand-new first year event got the full 15, second year event 10, and third year event 5.

It was suggested that the TDC hold a future discussion on scoring consistency, specifically zeroing in bonus point allotment, and the interpretation of the safe, inclusive and welcoming bonus points category.

As in past years, City staff collected each TDC member’s scores in advance of the meeting and recorded them on a master spreadsheet listing each event and the initial funding request. The scores for each event were averaged and sorted so that the highest scoring events appeared at the top of the list. A formula was then applied to assign monetary values based strictly on how high the event scored. The TDC next adjusted the amounts based on how well each event met TDC tourism event criteria including the event’s capacity to draw overnight stays.

In a departure from last year (see September 2020 minutes), the committee resumed the funding of community events including Celebrate Kirkland and Winterfest (identified in 2022 as “Winter Programs”). Historically, funding these events has been status quo, but last year the committee agreed that community events should be primarily funded from the city general fund rather from tourism funds. This year, in order to boost tourism and support the recovery of events and event organizations in 2022, the TDC opted to resume the funding of these events while also maintaining and increasing the funding of other events.

2022 Explore Kirkland grant funding level

To accommodate the resumed funding of community events, while seeding new events and providing increased funding for multiday events, the TDC upped its overall total grant award total to \$102,000 instead of the normal \$60,000

typically allotted. The decision to increase the overall funding was made after deep analysis of the lodging tax reserves fund balance, which has enough working capital to increase the funding amount while also maintaining more than the required operating reserves, per TDC consensus to exceed the required target of 50% of the previous year's revenue.

2022 LTAC Tourism Grant Funding Recommendation:

2022 Tourism Funding Applications		Recommended Funding	
Event	Organization	2022 Funding Requests	2022 Recommended Funding
Junior Softball World Series	Little League Baseball, Inc	11,000	11,000
Kirkland Downtown 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament **	Stars Unlimited	30,000	10,000
Eastside Community Musical	Kirkland Performance Center	5,000	5,000
Kirkland Urban Pride **	Kirkland Urban	50,000	6,000
SRJO with Tia Fuller*	Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra	3,000	3,000
Kirkland Uncorked	Bold Hat Productions	15,000	10,000
Kirkland Oktoberfest	Chump Change Productions	15,000	10,000
Kirkland Summerfest	Chump Change Productions	15,000	10,000
7 Hills of Kirkland	Attain Housing	4,000	3,000
Celebrate Kirkland 4th of July	Kirkland Downtown Association	10,000	5,000
12Ks of Christmas	Snohomish Running Company	2,000	2,000
Mother's Day Half Marathon	Orca Running	1,500	2,000
Lake Washington Half Marathon	Orca Running	1,500	2,000
Studio East Shakespeare in the Park	Studio East Training for the Performing Arts	5,000	5,000
Studio East Summer Teen Show	Studio East Training for the Performing Arts	5,000	1,500
Kirkland Winter Programs	Kirkland Downtown Association	10,000	5,000
Pumpkins in the Park	Kirkland Downtown Association	3,000	2,000
Kirkland Waterfront Car Show	Kirkland Downtown Association	7,500	5,000
Tasveer Festival **	Tasveer	10,000	2,000
Kirkland Children's Fair **	Space for Youth	2,000	1,000
Kirkland Quarterly Wine Walks	Kirkland Downtown Association	4,500	1,500
*Different performance. **New event.		210,500	102,000

Phil Megenhardt moved that the TDC forward to the City Council the 2022 tourism grant funding recommendation as specified in the above table. The motion was seconded by Lori Goldfarb and carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: The meeting minutes from August 5 and August 20, 2021 were approved. Motion for approval made by Skye Branson and seconded by Lori Goldfarb. Approved unanimously.

Good of the order:

Phil shared that Tom Douglas is opening a new restaurant at Village at Totem Lake.

Chairperson Nixon asked that the TDC begin to contemplate future PR investments and requested that the item be added as a topic of discussion at the October 7 meeting. The TDC should analyze the benefit of current investments, which consist of an array of print and digital media stemming from sponsored media visits, and begin to consider whether other strategies, like boosted social media campaigns and television ads, would result in more heads in beds.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 7, 2021

Meeting adjourned at: 10:39 a.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Chris Hendrickson