



**Visit Walla Walla Board Meeting
Columbia REA Conference Facility
March 29, 2016**

Present:

Zachary Fraser, Ron Williams, James Payne, Ron Peck, Ann Hooper, Melissa Berghan, David Woolson, Chris Garratt, Tim McCarty, Jim Barrow, Dan Leeper, Terra Luthi, Scott Peters, Carrie Brennan,

Absent:

Mindy Nelson, Andrae Bopp, Jennifer Northam,

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm by Zachary Fraser, Chair. A quorum was present.

Zachary announced that Duane Wollmuth has resigned from the VWW board. Discussion ensued that included the rationale for Duane's resignation, his past contributions to Visit Walla Walla and filling this position on the board.

Zachary stated that he met with City Manager, Nabil Shawa, and received assurance that VWW would not have issues renewing the organizations contract with the city and that Visit Walla Walla had performed effectively as the destination marketing organization for Walla Walla.

David Woolson commented on the significant role the WWV Chamber plays in tourism, and that consideration should be given to having additional discussion that focus on how the organizations can be better aligned. David suggested that both the chamber and VWW would be well-served by a strategic conversation about how efforts can be combined.

Ron Williams agreed with David Woolson's comments and suggested that VWW study the possibility of closer alignment with other organizations (DWWF, VWW, WWVCC, WWVWA)

Zachary wondered if strategic alignments come before the new executive director is hired, or hire the new ED and let them be a part of deciding on how VWW will work with others.



Jim Barrow commented that the city wants to be sure that, whatever the structure, all the various constituents are well-represented.

A motion was made by Dan Leeper that the board go forward with a search for a new ED. The motion was seconded by Ann Hooper. The motion passed unanimously.

Board consensus was reached to expend up to \$7,500 of ATIA funds for the job search efforts.

Ron Peck stated that he had made a few modifications to the job description for the search committee and Zachary will distribute that document to the board.

Zachary asked for volunteers to serve on the search committee. Scott P., Ron W., Ann H., Carrie B (back-up), Melissa (back-up), Tim McCarty (chair). Zachary asked if David W. would be available and interested in being on the search committee - potentially yes. A motion was made by Chris that the aforementioned list be named as the search committee. The motion was seconded by Terra. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion ensued about what the search committee did when hiring Ron. The following subjects were identified:

- Developed a job description
- Worked with executive committee to post job listing.
- Search committee screened resumes, conducted phone interviews.
- Preliminary job interviews were held and finalists were brought to Walla Walla for interviews.

Zachary stated that he met with Ron P. and staff members Barb Commare and Marcus Carney to generate a list of projects upcoming for current, 30–60–90 days out. Ron P. stated his confidence that current staff can handle the current projects as identified and assigned on the staff projects / task worksheet. Ron Peck's last day is April 15.

David brought up the Travel & Words writers conference in May and how to be sure that board members are engaged. Zachary agreed, and said that board members will be called upon to help with that event. Guided by Barb



and Marcus, board member will provide back-up. David asked if we have access to the list of writers coming. Ron P. will ask for that list. *(Note: Travel and words media list is considered proprietary)*

Need additional signers on checking account: (Remove Ron Peck, Jay Brodt and Cynthia Purcell from account.) Scott Peters and Chris Garratt are current signatories and will remain. Ann recommends having a minimum of four signers, looking for people who are usually in town. Zachary Fraser, Ann Hooper and Terra Luthi to be added as signers on the bank account.

Melissa asked what other duties may need to have board back-up.

- 1) Participate in weekly DVA conference call.
- 2) Someone from board should work with Barb/Marcus on budget management.
 - a. This would normally be the Secretary/Treasurer on the executive committee (formerly Duane).

A discussion ensued regarding whether an interim director was needed or not.

- 1) Ron P. does not think an interim director will be needed immediately, but thinks the board should give consideration if the job search goes much farther beyond 90 days.
 - a. Dan asked about Ron's emails – they will be handled by Zachary after April 15.
 - b. Jim points out that training an interim director is sometimes more work.
- 2) Conversation ensued about how the existing employees will be used to fill gaps, and how to handle additional duties that may fall to them.
 - a. Chris G. left at 3:15 p.m. and said he would not be in favor of hiring an interim director. A quorum was still present.
 - b. Board recognizes that staff may or will need additional support and will be sensitive to their workload. We agree to defer any other decisions about an interim strategy until after mid-April once the search is under way.
 - c. How to handle the local press: "VWW will not currently look for an interim director. Employees will report directly to the executive committee."



Terra mentioned she's been approached by people who are asking if they should bother applying for the job because they are locals. Zachary responded that our answer is that "we will hire the best person for the job."

A motion was made by Scott to have Tim McCarty chair the search committee. The motion was seconded by James. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Scott to nominate Ann Hooper to serve on the executive committee as Secretary/Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Dan. The motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that Ann or Tim may need to use the VWW office for printing/copying. Ron's office will be available.

Zachary gave a recap of the meeting:

- 1) Search committee established.
- 2) Search committee has a budget.
- 3) Division of duties was handled.
- 4) No interim director will be selected at this point.

The May board retreat was discussed. The Board feels a mini-retreat may be appropriate and the agenda items TBD.

Ron P. will send out possible dates for board retreat.

Ron P. reported that the January numbers for sales lodging were up.

Meeting adjourned at 3:52pm.