

Tourism Council Outline

- **How did the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee begin?**

An advisory committee was assembled in accordance with the State regulations to weigh-in on the creating of a hotel/ motel tax.

- **When was Committee and Tax implemented?**

- 1998 LTAC was formed
- 1999 the Lodging tax was implemented
- Funding for this program is made possible through revenues Redmond collects from a one percent (1%) lodging tax on the rental of hotel/ lodging rooms in Redmond.

- **Where does the funding come from?**

A 1% tax is charged on each overnight stay at Redmond hotels and motels.

- **How is the revenue from the lodging tax used?**

LTAC advised the City Council on a four-way split use of the tax. It was adopted by City Council in 2014.

Use of the revenue is split into the following:

- 2% for administration of the program
- 50% for marketing
- 39% city events and programing
- 9% to event matching grants

- **What are the goals and limitations of the revenue?**

- Must be used to attract visitors external to the city. Due to the funding being generated by our local hotels, grants and uses of the tax revenue often prioritizes efforts that will support hotels night stays, but attraction of external visitors to our small businesses and enrichment of the community is also heavily weighted.
- As an example, events that would likely draw only Redmond residents in majority would not align with the goals of the tax.

- **Who is the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) comprised of?**

Per state regulations, the LTAC is required to be comprised of four hoteliers and three persons who are associated with organizations that could benefit directly from the tax such as, venues or organizational representatives that hold events

- **Are there any conflicts of interests?**

Due to the requirements for holding a seat on the board, there is potential for frequent potential conflicts of interest. In past years several members have had events proposed for grant funding or supported events requesting funding. Their participation does not impact the potential value an

event does or does not have. However, when discussion or forwarding recommendations for grants awards those with conflicts are excluded from the review discussions or recommendation decisions.

- **What authority does the committee have?**

- LTAC does not have any assigned authority. Technically speaking their only codified responsibilities are to weigh-in or advise on:
 - Creation of a tax
 - Repeal or modification of the tax
 - How the tax revenue is used (the assigned split).
- They do not have formal decision or recommendation authority decision on grant applications or any other program level components.
- Due to the limited authority and role assigned to LTAC, and requirements to be on the board it is often difficult to fill vacancies.
- This is an area to be revisited as part of the 2022 workplan.

- **When does the board meet?**

Again, due to the limited duties and authority of LTAC they meet in frequently between 2-4 times per year. Their meetings are notices and posted in-advance.

- **Why are there are no meeting minutes for previous years?**

- This was a training issue that has been since rectified. The Clerk's office has consolidated oversight of all boards and commissions and are working directly with staff liaisons to create uniformed consistency with both state and local regulations.
- All future LTAC meetings will have posted agendas and meeting minutes uploaded following adoption of them at next meeting. Staff plans to post draft notes as meetings are typically several months apart.

- **What are the planned updates to the program for 2021 and 2022?**

- Staff resources and time have been dedicated to responding to COVID-19 while events were unable to take place. Staff also used the past year to complete an in-depth review and audit of the program.
- Some updates have been made to the applications to gather more data and ensure increased consistency with performance outcome reporting and alignment with State requirements.
- An interim weighted ranking for grant applications applied for through October 2022.
- A larger update to the program will take place next year.

- **What is on the 2022 workplan?**

- Draft formal rules and procedures for the committee
 - When will LTAC meet, setup regular schedule

- Other guidance or operating procedures
 - Provide Council an annual update
 - Grant outcomes
 - Workplan
 - Questions or support needed
 - Review current assigned uses of lodging tax dollars
 - Review and begin revising Tourism Strategic Plan.
 - The Tourism Strategic Plan has not been updated in nearly ten years and is outdated. Staff have requested LTAC's support and feedback in the updating of the plan.
 - While this is not a defined role, LTAC's insight and input would be extremely valuable in defining the goals of tourism programming.
 - Refine grant criteria and present to Council for feedback
 - A few additional areas for related discussion as well include:
 - Consider barriers: Cost of production
 - All forms of accessibility
 - Type organizations or events to be prioritized
 - Collection of data/ survey methods
 - Joint meeting with Council in 2022
 - Consider one to two programs for spring and/or summer
- **Applicable Regulations:**
 - Redmond Municipal Code 4.37
 - [Revised Code of Washington](#)