



HOTEL/MOTEL DISCRETIONARY FUND COMMITTEE  
WRAP-UP MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 15, 2021, 12:00 P.M.  
HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE AND AT  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The Hotel-Motel Discretionary Fund Committee convened at 12:01 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Wrap-up Meeting at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, and via teleconference with Council Member Lonny Marney (Seat F) presiding (remotely) and with the following members in attendance:

Members Present: Kathryn Fitzgerald, Seat A (arrived at 12:10 p.m.)  
Ron Woolf, Seat B (remotely)  
Samantha Kirstein, Seat C (remotely)  
Traci Gatewood, Seat D (remotely)  
Randi Carnahan, Seat E (remotely, arrived at 12:04 p.m.)

Also Present: Diana Hebel, Deputy City Clerk I  
Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Ms. Kirstein**, seconded by **Mr. Woolf**, moved to APPROVE Agenda.

With no objection, the agenda was APPROVED.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

a) Meeting Minutes of December 21, 2020

**Ms. Kirstein**, seconded by **Ms. Gatewood**, moved to APPROVE the meeting minutes of December 21, 2020.

With no objection, the minutes were APPROVED.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public members were present to comment.

**NEW BUSINESS**

a) Review of Hotel/Motel Discretionary Fund Grant Application and Committee Process

**Ms. Gatewood** explained that this being her first year she had a few questions. She asked for clarification on question six in the application regarding a tax ID number. Ms. Bell explained that all businesses need a tax ID number (or social security number for individuals) to receive payment. **Ms. Gatewood** expressed concerns over the tax ID or Social Security numbers being written on the applications as being a security issue. Ms. Bell explained that an individual could answer the question by checking the "no"

box, so they would not have to supply their SSN. She stated that those individuals would work with finance regarding supplying this information.

**Ms. Gatewood** asked for clarification on question nine, which asks about the history of an organization. Ms. Bell explained that the question pertains to the history of the organization, not of their funding.

**Ms. Gatewood** also asked whether the wording on use of the logo is intended to apply to before or after funding was granted. The issue was clarified as being proof after funding was granted for those entities who had received a previous grant – not those who would be new to receiving a grant. Ms. Bell stated she would make sure it is clear in the next application that the use of the logo would be required from the previously funded year for previous applicants.

**Ms. Kirstein** asked when the review of questions in the application are to be done and expressed interest in being involved as she has a few more questions she would like to add to the application. Ms. Bell explained that any changes to the application or process would happen at this meeting. **Ms. Kirstein** pointed out that she submitted some questions she would like to add to the application and that Clerk Snider should have a copy of it somewhere. She asked to read those questions aloud to the Committee.

**Ms. Kirstein** first expressed that bed tax money should be given to agencies to enhance tourism.

Ms. Bell quoted Fairbanks General Code (FGC) Sec. 74-117(a):

*The tax on the daily rental of rooms levied by this article is for the primary purpose of funding services for the promotion of the tourist industry and other economic development, and for the funding of services for the general public.*

**Ms. Kirstein** continued with the questions that she wished to add to the application:

1. How many people would attend your function?
2. What is your target audience?
3. What are your support fundraising goals?
4. What is unique about your event?
5. Who are you funded by?

**Chair Marney** asked for any discussion on the suggested questions.

**Ms. Gatewood** pointed that it would be helpful to have a gauge or some kind of rubric to help score applications.

**Mr. Marney** asked Mr. Woolf and Ms. Fitzgerald, having been on the committee for several years, their opinion on the recommendations.

**Ms. Fitzgerald** explained that she had been on both sides of the application process and that there is already a section of the application that would explain what the money is used for. She stated that an applicant's "worthiness" is based largely on the committee member's personal opinion.

**Ms. Kirstein** clarified that it should never be about “worthiness.” She stated questions are needed because she would not want to award money to a recipient that does not have the structure to get through a crisis such as COVID-19. She stated it is not about worthiness, it is about sustainability.

**Ms. Fitzgerald** pointed out that perhaps applicants who are “less solid” would need the funding the most. She continued by stating that not every applicant is going to be a returning applicant, as some of them are funding a project for a limited time and do not need funding once their project is completed. **Ms. Fitzgerald** asked whether it has been considered to increase the fund or whether it would remain the same as it has for years: twenty-two percent of the bed tax going to the City’s General Fund and different line items allocated for other items, such as the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, the Community Service Patrol, etc.

**Mr. Woolf** explained that a large part of the bed tax goes to Explore Fairbanks, but the way the taxes are divided is set in the FGC. He stated that this is something the City cannot afford to add money to; rather, it would be something subject to be cut. **Mr. Woolf** continued that he is not in favor of adding any more questions to the application. He stated that the applicants are not solid, non-profit organizations with paid employees and volunteers, and the forms are made to be as simple as possible. He stated that volunteers may not be good at completing grant paperwork, and the process is not set up to award those who can do the best grant writing.

After considerable discussion regarding adding questions to the application, the time allotted for questions and answers during the Presentation Meeting, and past experiences regarding grants, it was decided that the additional questions, as brought up by Ms. Kirstein, be added under either question 9 or 10 and be a sub-headed as 9a, 9b, and 9c, depending on where they fit best within the list of questions.

It was requested that Ms. Kirstein read the questions again, and she did so.

**Chair Marney** asked the group for discussion on whether to place the additional questions in question 9 or 10.

**Ms. Gatewood** pointed out that additional questions need to add value to the application, and the Committee should be sure that the questions do so, or they should not be added at all.

Ms. Bell suggested that if the questions should be incorporated in the application that new questions 3 and 5 be placed under question 9, and new numbers 1, 2, and 4 be placed under question 10.

**Ms. Fitzgerald** provided an example of where some of the questions may not be relevant. She reminded the Committee that the additional questions may be asked during the question and answer time of the Presentation Meeting.

**Chair Marney** asked for a vote on whether or not to make changes or to keep things as status quo.

**Ms. Carnahan**, seconded by **Ms. Gatewood**, moved that the application be kept as-is.

The motion to keep the application as is PASSED unanimously.

b) Review of Hotel/Motel Discretionary Fund Policies and Procedures

**Chair Marney** asked for any discussion, comments, or objections to the current policies and procedures. There was no discussion, comments or objections to the current policies and procedures.

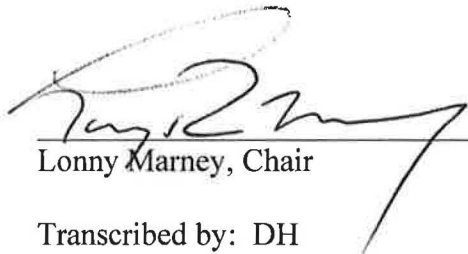
**NEXT MEETING**

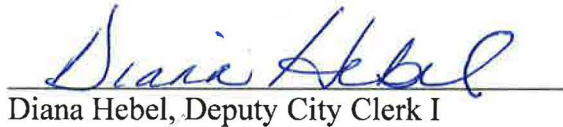
It was agreed that the next meeting date, to be determined by the Committee, not be too close to Thanksgiving. Ms. Bell pointed out that the meeting needs to allow for time for review of the applications and should be at least around or after Friday, November 5, 2021. **Chair Marney** stated that an ideal date would be November 5 at 12:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Woolf**, seconded by **Ms. Fitzgerald**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

There being no objection, the meeting ADJOURNED at 1:27 p.m.

  
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Lonny Marney, Chair

  
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Diana Hebel, Deputy City Clerk I

Transcribed by: DH