

PDA Board Transition Committees

The Draft Master Lease with Washington State Parks requires the establishment of a mobilization fund for the PDA to fund start-up marketing and advertising efforts, website upgrades, improved reservation systems and other transition priorities, which need to be developed and in place by May 1, 2014. Towards these ends, the Board will establish four ad hoc working committees to initiate these efforts: Hospitality Services, IT/Technology, Marketing and Business Development and Planning.

Hospitality Services: Focus: Begin the transition to PDA operations and management of coordinated hospitality services in the Campus. The Committee will seek to:

1. Understand and formalize rate structure, costs of supplies, maintenance and room amenities
2. Identify improvements to existing facilities that would increase heads in beds and meeting room uses
3. Evaluate short-term strategies to increase rentals in 2014.
4. Identify staffing structure and job descriptions for hospitality services
5. Study and initiate integrated coordination of hospitality services for a “one-stop” customer experience that includes accommodations, food service, room rentals and other visitor amenities.

Proposed tasks may include:

Review of Accommodation Rates:

- Evaluate previous accommodation trends and rates by month
- Assess existing accommodations, amenities and supplies by rental rate
- Review competitiveness of rates for all accommodations
- Develop recommendations for off season rates
- Develop recommendations for incentives for increasing Partner programs
- Evaluate faculty housing needs/rates

Review of Accommodations and Conference Marketing:

- Review conference groups usage from last four years

- Assess market for independent travelers
- Evaluate Trip Advisor listing, Facebook and Google ad words

Evaluate Reservation System Needs/Software:

- Evaluate reservation system
- Identify and implement new reservation system and software
- Develop best management practices for reservations

Review Contract /Concession Services:

- Review custodial maintenance responsibilities for accommodations and meeting rooms
- Review Food & Beverage Services
- Identify and develop service standards and performance goals for contract services

Define Future Staffing Needs:

- Review, identify needs and revise job descriptions for all aspects of Campus hospitality services
- Develop best management practices for customer service representatives

Hospitality Committee: Chair—Bill James, Cindy Finnie, Bill Brown (Non-board members: Rick Zajicek, Rochelle Prather, Hali Ransom, Carla Vanderveen, Jill DeCianne)

IT/Technology: Focus: Assess the PDA's technology needs to support the transition and recommend priority technology improvements and budget estimates. The Committee will undertake the following functions:

1. Evaluate technology and IT needs to support the transition and staffing of PDA operations.
2. Research and recommend technology changes to improve reservations and communications through the use of personnel, technology and equipment.
3. Develop short-term and long-term technology priorities.

Proposed tasks may include the following:

- Undertake feasibility of existing IT infrastructure. Assess inventory to be transferred to the PDA and the PDA's future needs for technology and FF&E (e.g., number of work stations, computer operating systems, etc.) to support PDA staffing, communications and hospitality services.
- Review recommended reservation and software system requirements by hospitality committee.
- Identify technology requirements for integrated website platform for Parks/PDA and Campus partners
- Integrate reservation system with property management system, accounting system and integrated website
- Coordinate information management and broadband connections and timing with state Parks
- Identify and recommend telecommunications and phone system networks and routing systems for PDA needs
- Develop plan for wireless coverage for entire campus

IT Committee: Chair—Jeff Jackson, Norm Tonina (Non-board members; Kevin Alexander, Ron Kubec, Tim Lawson, Lisa Werner, Joyce Gustafson, Erin Fristad)

Marketing: Focus: Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to increase conferences/meetings and accommodations sales. Specifically, the Committee will:

1. Develop marketing materials for the Campus vision and Lifelong Learning Center (branding for the Campus and its programs).
2. Build an integrated marketing strategic plan with Partner organizations for arts, culture and education activities in the Campus.
3. Develop an integrated website for the marketing of Fort Worden as a destination for residential learning events programs, conferences and accommodation.
4. Define an approach that enables cross-selling of services to create a more holistic Fort Worden experience leveraging the breadth of Partner assets available to visitors.
5. Enhance the value-added services called out in the Business Plan via marketing.
6. Develop a short-term business and sales/marketing strategy for increasing conferences, meetings and accommodation sales.

Develop Marketing Materials:

- Review existing marketing information, images and other materials describing the Fort, its assets and programs
- Pull together a compelling visual narrative and portfolio of imagery; secure approvals for use of any images or materials
- Develop logo, letterhead and business cards
- Prepare brochures, promotional information, information sheets, maps, etc.—coordinate with website development

Coordinate Marketing Efforts:

- Identify strategic communication objectives and audiences
- Develop marketing strategies for conference facilities with Partner programs
- Develop targeted marketing strategies for overnight accommodations
- Identify advertising methods and media to use for each target market

Marketing Committee: Chair—Herb Cook, Lela Hilton, Scott Wilson (Non-board members: Rob Birman, Christina Pivarnik,)

Business Development and Planning: Focus: Build on the market analysis contained in the 8/2012 Business Plan to identify new or expanding Partners as tenants for Fort Worden that will increase traffic through the Fort, increase sales of beds, and create new broad revenue opportunities for the PDA, with a particular focus on shoulder season activity. Specifically, the Committee will:

1. Develop a strategic approach to identify the kinds of Partners/tenants that would be welcomed or recruited to be part of the Lifelong Learning Center, and use this as the basis for accepting or denying applicants, or for directing recruitment efforts.
2. Review existing visitors/customers and identify target markets and potential new customers. This includes approaching a new type of customer and event – corporate retreats, increased packaging of programs for school field trips, etc – that increases sales in the shoulder seasons.
3. Identify market segments currently underserved at FW that align to lifelong learning and provide the opportunity to expand the Partner base.
4. Develop a longer-term business and sales/marketing strategy for increasing conferences, meetings and accommodation sales.

Define target markets for future growth and new customer attraction:

- Review Business Plan and other information to understand potential customer and Partner segments not currently served at FW
- Evaluate and identify market segments to pursue based on revenue opportunity and discrete investments required to attract

Identify potential new Partners that meet market opportunity:

- Brainstorm potential partners aligned to revenue opportunity
- Coordinate with Partners to discuss alignment and any conflict to existing Partner business models
- Build relationship and influence strategy to approach Partners

Understand business impact of opportunities and map to business plan:

- Model financial impact and potential of opportunities based on best-available information
- Evolve financial models to consolidate cumulative impact of opportunities

Business Development and Planning Committee: Chair—Norm Tonina, Anne Murphy, (Non-board members: Tim Lawson, Erin Fristad, Rick Zajicek, Rob Birman)

