

YVCOG General Membership Video Conference
Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2020

JURISDICTION	PRESENT	ABSENT
GRANDVIEW	Bill Moore-M;	Cus Arteaga-A
GRANGER	Lilia Villarreal-M; Julie Sharp-A	Veronica Bermudez-PC
HARRAH		Pat Krueger – M
MABTON		Sophie Sotelo – M; Arturo Dela Fuente - A
MOXEE		David Mullen-M; Greg LaBree-A
NACHES		Kit Hawver – M; Wayne Hawver - A
SELAH	Jacque Matson-M; Sherry Raymond-A	Lisa Smith-PC
SUNNYSIDE	Dean Broersma-M	Francisco Guerrero-A
TIETON	Ed Marquand-M	Amy Oberrender-A
TOPPENISH	Clara Jimenez-A; Al Hubert-PC	Mark Oaks-M
UNION GAP	Jack Galloway-M; Sandy Dailey-A	Mike Moore-PC
WAPATO		
YAKIMA CITY		Brad Hill-M; Holly Cousens-A
YAKIMA CO.	Ron Anderson – M; Amanda McKinney-M; LaDon Linde-M	
ZILLAH	Doug Stewart-A	Janice Gonzales-M; Ardele Steele-PC/A/A

Note: M=Member; A=Alternate; PC=Planning Commission

Additional Attendees: Speakers: John Cooper, President & CEO of Yakima Valley Tourism
Others: Hilda Guzman (Granger); Lance Hoyt, Heidi Riojas (Toppenish); Bob Harrison (Yakima).
YVCOG Staff Chris Wickenhagen, Alan Adolf, Tami Hayward, Jodi Smith, Shane Andreas, Lynn Deitrick, Jeff Watson.

CALL TO ORDER: James Restucci, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 6:06 p.m.
INTRODUCTIONS AND ROLL CALL The meeting was hosted via ZOOM. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY It is the policy of the YVCOG General Membership to accept public comment on agenda items at the time the item is being discussed. Public comments regarding items not on the agenda will be heard at the end of the meeting.

WELCOMING REMARKS Chris Wickenhagen, YVCOG Executive Director, welcomed the General Membership to our December meeting and took the opportunity to provide a brief summary on how each of YVCOG’s staff members help meet the needs of our jurisdictions and some of the various tasks they perform, along with how long they have been part of the YVCOG family.

In 2020, YVCOG has overseen \$7.5 million in federal and state transportation projects, and assisted multiple cities and towns with land use planning activities.

BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes – October 21, 2020 General Membership Meeting The City of Toppenish moved to approve the [Minutes from October 21, 2020](#). The City of Grandview seconded. *The motion carried.*

John Cooper, President & CEO of Yakima Valley Tourism (10:40)

Mr. Cooper provided background on the Yakima Valley Tourism organization, where tourism stands and what it might look like in the future.

- When people travel for business, sports, leisure, etc., their money flows through our community in many ways – transportation (gas, etc.), restaurants, hotels, shops, etc., which generates jobs (over 3,300 direct), wages, and taxes, in our communities.
- The organization has been around for over 60 years – official name is Yakima County Visitors and Convention Bureau.
- Not-for Profit trade association with members and a board and body that includes voting and ex officio members.
- Their mission is to help improve the economy and quality of life in Yakima County by bringing visitors here.
- They market the destination to a variety of groups.
- Under contract with City of Yakima to operate the Convention Center. The Convention Center is currently under construction to expand the facility by 18,000 square feet. Once completed, it will be the 2nd largest convention center in Central and Eastern Washington, and one of the top 5 centers in Washington state.
- Run the Yakima Valley Sports Commission – over 500 sporting events are held throughout the Valley in a normal year. \$50 million economic impact.
- Destination promotions (advertising to PR) for several of our communities.
- Visitor services – Yakima Valley Tourism runs the Visitor Center near Target.
- Yakima Valley Tourism has management contracts with different municipalities, including the City of Sunnyside, and the City of Union Gap. Currently assists Sunnyside with their travel guide and website (Come to the Sun), etc., and similar activities for Union Gap.
- Media coverage is really important and brings attention to our Valley's destinations and festivals, in advance.
- Provide educational activities and send out a newsletter each week.
- The pandemic has hit the travel industry very hard – over 4.5 million direct jobs will be lost this year (50%).
- Website: Visit Yakima.com or Yakima Valley Tourism.com
- Things should be getting better by the beginning of summer. A lot of opportunity in outdoor activities.
- Yakima is a drive-destination.
- The 3rd or 4th quarter should see an increase in business and corporate travel. People desire in person meetings.
- Surveys show that people plan to take about 3 trips in 2021. Normally it would be 3 or 4, but they still plan to travel. Budgeting travel for leisure.
- Leisure travel will hit 90% of our 2019 travel.
- Probably will not meet or exceed business or convention travel for 2019 until 2022.

The 2020 YVCOG Outstanding Service Award

Mr. Restucci made the presentation of the 2020 YVCOG Outstanding Service Award, posthumously, to Norm Childress.

Mr. Childress was raised in the Naches Valley and later moved to Grandview. For over 40 years, he served on numerous memberships, boards, and committees, including YVCOG.

He was very proud of his community. In 2004, he became Mayor of Grandview and served in that position until becoming a Yakima County Commissioner in 2018.

We will never forget Norm, and are better persons for having known him.

UPCOMING GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

2021 meetings may be held via Zoom, or we may be able to meet in one of our cities. Please email Chris if you would like to volunteer your city to host one of our meetings.

Meeting dates: February 17, March 17, May 19, September 15, October 20, and December 8

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURN

With no further business, Chairman Restucci adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Restucci, YVCOG Chairman

Date signed: _____

Tamara Hayward, Financial Specialist