

Island County Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
2% Hotel/Motel Tourism Lodging Tax (first or basic 2% tax)
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025

The Island County Lodging Tax Advisory Committee met on September 9, 2025, beginning at 2:30 p.m., in the Annex Building, Commissioners' Hearing Room, #B102, 1 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA

Committee Members Present:

Janet St. Clair, Chair	
Tom Felvey	Paul Foster
Barry Wenaas	Hannah Bates

Commissioner St. Clair called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Review of Funds

The Committee reviewed the funding available for the 2026 grant year of \$725,000 of lodging tax revenue, including up to 38% of the total amount allocated to Chambers of Commerce, 20% allocated to museums, historical societies, and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, 30% allocated to non-chamber related events, and 12% allocated to one-time capital funding requests with a possible additional 1% of funding to be added to the capital requests if needed.

Discussion

The Committee discussed the funding for the Chambers of Commerce, which is based on their awards from previous years, with a percentage cut from those amounts to arrive at the \$275,500 in available funds.

The Committee discussed cutting Historical Society funding based on a combination of scoring and consistent return on investment of established organizations to arrive at the available funds of \$145,000.

The Committee discussed the one-time capital facilities requests and determined that they wanted to request an additional \$8,700 to partially fund both project requests, totaling \$95,700.

The Committee discussed how to align non-chamber-related events with the available budget of \$217,500 and took the step of eliminating all requests that scored below an average of 120 points. This eliminated funding for Island County Chauns Motorcycle Club, Island County Fair Association, Oak Harbor Main Street, Pacific Northwest Art School, Pacific Rim Institute, Sound Water Stewards, Stanwood Camano Arts Festival, and Whidbey Health Foundation. The Committee also decided to eliminate requests from for-profit entities, and that decision eliminated funding for Ragnar. From there, the Committee then cut the remaining requests by 10% to arrive at a total of \$218,967 requesting an additional \$1,467 in funding for non-chamber events.

The Committee agreed upon the final recommendations for all categories as follows:

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES			
RANK	ORGANIZATION	REQUESTED AMOUNT	RECOMMENDED FUNDING AMOUNT
1	Camano Chamber of Commerce - Camano Island Visitor Kiosk	\$45,000.00	\$40,000.00
2	Camano Island Chamber of Commerce - Northwest Glass Quest	\$12,000.00	\$9,250.00
3	Clinton Chamber of Commerce - Visit Clinton	\$26,433.30	\$17,406.00
4	Coupeville Chamber of Commerce - Vistor Information Center	\$74,130.00	\$62,316.00
5	Freeland Chamber of Commerce - Operations	\$150,000.00	\$65,490.00
6	Langley Chamber of Commerce - Operations	\$68,000.00	\$51,785.00
7	Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce	\$46,000.00	\$29,250.00
		TOTAL REQUESTS:	TOTAL RECOMMENDATION:
		\$421,563.30	\$275,497.00
		TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS:	
		\$275,500.00	
		DIFFERENCE:	
		\$3.00	

MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES				
RANK	ORGANIZATION	REQUESTED AMOUNT	RECOMMENDED FUNDING AMOUNT	
1	Camano Island American Legion	\$48,349.92	\$25,000	
2	Ebey's Reserve - Visitor Contact Station	\$40,000.00	\$35,000	
3	Island County Historical Society - Operations	\$72,000.00	\$36,000	
4	Pacific Northwest Naval Air Museum - Operations	\$60,000.00	\$29,000	
5	Whidbey Island Maritime Heritage Foundation - Schooner Suva	\$60,000.00	\$20,000	
			TOTAL RECOMMENDED:	
			TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS:	\$145,000.00
			\$145,000.00	
			DIFFERENCE:	
			\$0.00	

NON-CHAMBER RELATED COMMUNITY EVENTS			
RANK	ORGANIZATION	REQUESTED AMOUNT	RECOMMENDED FUNDING AMOUNT
1	Camano Arts Association - 2025 Camano Island Studio Tour	\$18,000.00	\$16,200.00
2	Camano Arts Association - Welcome To Art Island	\$22,560.00	\$20,304.00
3	Camano Community Events - Camano Ciderfest	\$6,200.00	\$5,580.00
4	Cascade Loop National Scenic Byway Assoc.	\$8,930.40	\$8,033.00
5	City of Oak Harbor - Whidbey Island Marathon	\$17,500.00	\$15,750.00
6	Coupeville Historic Waterfront Association - Musslefest	\$15,000.00	\$13,500.00
7	Deception Pass Foundation - American Roots Concert Series 2026	\$14,000.00	\$12,600.00
8	Island County Chauns Motorcycle Club - Make A Wish	\$25,000.00	\$0.00
9	Island County Fair Association	\$40,000.00	\$0.00
10	Island Shakespeare Festival	\$25,000.00	\$22,500.00
11	Oak Harbor Main Street - Marketing	\$35,000.00	\$0.00
12	Oak Harbor Music Festival	\$30,500.00	\$27,000.00
13	Pacific Northwest Art School	\$14,600.00	\$0.00
14	Pacific Rim Institute	\$2,925.00	\$0.00
15	RAGNAR - Ragnar Relay Northwest Passage	\$15,085.00	\$0.00
16	Sound Water Stewards - Sound Waters University	\$7,940.00	\$0.00
17	Stanwood Camano Arts Festival - Camano Island Mother's Day Festival	\$9,500.00	\$0.00
18	Whidbey Health Foundation	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
19	Whidbey Island Arts Council - Operations	\$32,000.00	\$28,000.00

20	Whidbey Island Center for the Arts - Powerful Arts Impact	\$43,000.00	\$38,700.00
21	Whidbey Island Grown Co-op - Eat Local Month	\$12,000.00	\$10,800.00
	TOTAL REQUESTS:	TOTAL FUND:	RECOMMENDATION:
	\$399,740.40	\$217,500.00	\$218,967.00

DIFFERENCE: \$1,467.00

CAPITAL FACILITIES REQUESTS

RANK	ORGANIZATION	REQUESTED AMOUNT	Recommended Funding Amount
1	Island County Public Works - Freeland Hall	\$87,000.00	\$85,700
2	Langley Main Street Association - Economic Vitality Placemaking Improvements	\$24,300.00	\$10,000

TOTAL REQUESTS:	TOTAL RECOMMENDATION:
\$111,300.00	\$95,700.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS:	
\$87,000.00	
DIFFERENCE:	
-\$8,700.00	

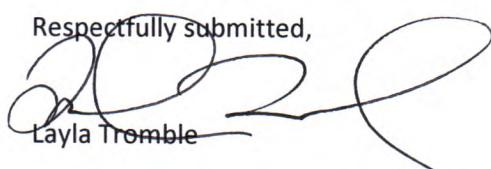
The Committee discussed seeking additional direction from the Board of County Commissioners on the goals and intention of the fund and the Board's direction on more specific requests in the call for proposals in order to reduce the number of applications and require applicants to meet clearer criteria.

Timeline

The timeline was discussed:

- September 17th – LTAC committee recommendations brought forward to Work Session
- October 15th – Tentative date for recommendations to come to a regular meeting for formal approval.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

 Layla Tremble