

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, April 12, 2016, commencing at 7:01 a.m.

Present: Council Member Johnson, Council Member Nakanishi, Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, and Mayor Chandler

Absent: Council Member Mounce

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and City Clerk Ferraiolo

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Year-End Presentation by Visit Lodi! (CLK)

Nancy Beckman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Visit Lodi!, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Visit Lodi!'s 2015 Year-End Report. Specific topics of discussion included transient occupancy tax (TOT), organization, reformed Lodi Tourism Business Improvement District (LTBID), visitor information requests, website, social media, marketing/public relations, community support, Amgen, bike summit, other activities, 2016 highlights, advertising, content creation, and travel impact study.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Ms. Beckman explained that a "session" is a visit to a website, while "page views" are website visits to multiple pages in a single session.

In response to Mayor Chandler, Ms. Beckman stated that Visit Lodi!'s events page on the website receives the most views, with the wineries page receiving second highest. Further, Ms. Beckman confirmed that Visit Lodi! applied for and was accepted to participate in the Sunset Celebration Weekend.

Council Member Johnson stated that many times he has pushed the concept of a reverse train from San Jose on the weekends to encourage bicyclists to come to Lodi, but the idea was not pursued. Ms. Beckman stated she would discuss the notion with Robin Knowlton, member of the Lodi Bicycle Coalition.

Mayor Chandler questioned if media visits are calendared to coincide with other events, to which Ms. Beckman stated that the difficulty in coordinating events is that hotels, which typically donate rooms, must do so at its optimal time, which may not mesh perfectly with a scheduled event. She stated the goal is to schedule the upcoming media tour along with the Sip Savor weekend, but staff is still working out the details with the hotels. In further response, Ms. Beckman stated that rentals through Vacation Rentals By Owner (VRBO) and Air BnB are becoming an increasing trend, stating there are about eight in Lodi; however, they are not significant revenue generators. She stated that Visit Lodi! staff monitors their websites and the City tracks them to ensure these types of rentals are brought into the LTBID to capture their TOT. Deputy City Manager Jordan Ayers added there is a third website, Home Away, that offers the same type of room rentals; most of these rentals are typically listed on all three websites; and only those rentals within the City limits are included in the LTBID, not those in the unincorporated area despite their Lodi address.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Ms. Beckman stated that Visit Lodi!'s total budget is \$758,000; blogs are typically written by staff or guests at no cost, but paid bloggers are compensated in the range of \$150 to \$250; and she is working with a wine and food blogger to write as many as 12 upcoming blogs. Ms. Beckman further explained how Internet radio station,

Pandora, and Visit Lodi!'s audio advertisements work.

Council Member Johnson questioned if there has been a discussion on resurrecting the issue of increasing the TOT, stating his understanding was hotel and motel owners were against the last failed attempt. Ms. Beckman stated that hotel and motel owners were not necessarily opposed to the increase, but were disappointed in the former City Manager's hope that they push the concept, yet no portion of the money was to be returned to promote the hotel and motel industry. Owners were told that, if the TOT does not increase, the City will take more money from them, which left owners feeling negative about the issue and opposed to supporting the measure. In recent years, the hotels and motels have seen an increase of 1.5 percent, which is a pass-through to the visitor. City Manager Schwabauer stated that, in his discussions with hotel and motel owners, they feel the headroom is roughly 12 percent net of both the convention and visitors bureau and City charges, and Lodi is about 1.5 percent away from that today, which would equate to \$200,000 a year.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Schwabauer stated that sales tax is down because gas prices are down, adding that gas-based sales tax is a significant portion of Lodi's overall sales tax. Council Member Nakanishi requested the City Manager provide him with information on other affects on sales tax with the gas sales extrapolated from the equation to ascertain other areas that may be increasing or decreasing.

Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne congratulated Visit Lodi! on its success and growth, stating that it appears the organization is positioned well for continued growth in the coming year.

In response to Mayor Chandler, Ms. Beckman stated that Visit Lodi!'s participation in the wine bloggers conference will consist of obtaining sponsorship opportunities.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

None.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Ferraiolo  
City Clerk