Report of Museum Performance

May 1 to Sept. 30, 2018 and 2019

Over the last couple of weeks, Ethan Doty has assisted me in gathering and compiling attendance and sales data for the 5 months (May – Sept) that the Museum has been open 7 days a week in 2018 and 2019, using the daily summaries generated by the employees in the WP Store. We acquired the daily income from admissions (as an indication of attendance), as well as daily total sales, to see if any trends could be identified. Here's some of what was found:

There are 153 days in the period from May 1 to September 30 each year. I used a figure of $200 per day as the cost to have the Museum open (mostly employee wages, also fractional cost of utilities). On 32 days in 2018 and 34 days in 2019, total sales were less than this amount, indicating it may have cost us money to be open. The interesting thing is that these low-income days were spread out throughout the 7 days of the week, although most were on Monday through Thursday. Saturdays, and especially Sundays, prior to Memorial Day in May, and after Labor Day in September, also contributed to this count. All Saturdays and Sundays between the Memorial Day and Labor Day holidays covered the cost of being open, although some of these days were marginal, as well. The one thing that became abundantly clear in looking at these numbers is that on most days when there were no RAL's, it was not cost effective to be open. Train ride ticket income had little effect on total daily sales, in most cases; higher admission income usually led to higher train ride ticket income on some weekends. There were also exceptions to the trends observed due to special events, such as tour groups, and the WP Celebration in 2019.

This is how the days of the week rank, listed from lowest to highest by average admissions income (number in parentheses is the number of days total income was less than $200).

2018: Tues (4)/Mon (5)/Thur (6)/Wed (6)/Fri (5)/Sat (3)/Sun (3)

2019: Wed (3)/Thur (7)/Tues (6)/Fri (5)/Mon (8)/Sun (4)/Sat (1)

I have several spreadsheets (16) we generated with the numbers we compiled arranged by various parameters, which I will have available for anyone who has questions, or wants more data. I chose to not scan/copy or include them with this report for sake of space and volume, but I will retain them.

While not as clear-cut as I had suspected, there are trends that did confirm some of our suspicions. For instance, there were three days (a Tuesday in 2018, and a Monday and a Thursday in 2019), that had zero admissions income. Every day of the week had very low admissions income at one time or another. Also, most days without RAL's, as I previously indicated, were marginal or negative on total income.

Hopefully this information will be helpful in determining days and hours of operation for the Museum in 2021 and beyond.

Steve Habeck (PT/VP)

1/7/2021