

Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting  
Fox Center Event Space  
424 Central Avenue  
Nebraska City, NE  
February 25, 2020 at 3:00pm CST

**Chairman of the Meeting: Commissioner Roger Kuhn, Chair**

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Commission Chair Roger Kuhn called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

Commissioners present: Darrin Barner, Heritage Homes of Nebraska; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Ashley Olson, Willa Cather Foundation; Jeanna Stavas, Whispering Pines Bed and Breakfast; Barry McFarland, Mac's Creek Vineyards and Winery; Roger Jasnoch, Kearney Visitors Bureau; Robert Sabin, Hilton Omaha; Sarah Sortum, Calamus Outfitters.

Commissioner absent: Starr Lehl, Scottsbluff Economic Development; John Chapo, Lincoln Children's Zoo

Commission staff present: John Ricks, Jenn Gjerde, Michael Collins, Erin Lenz, Callie Austad, Jenna Bartja, Karen Kollars, Shirley Wichman

**1. Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Commission Chair Kuhn welcomed commissioners and asked for motion to approve agenda.

Barner motioned to approve the agenda. McFarland seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.  
Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

**2. Community Engagement Presentation – Nebraska City Representative**

Jeanna Stavas – Welcome to Nebraska City

**3. Opened Comment Period for Items on the Agenda**

Kuhn opened up the public comment period at 3:07pm.

With no members of the public coming forward, Kuhn closed the Public Comment Period at 3:08pm.

**4. Approval of January 27, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Sortum motioned to approve the meeting minutes from January 27, 2020. Loseke seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.  
Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

**5. Financial Update and Finance Committee Report – Commissioner Stavas**

Stavas went through spreadsheets that were previously distributed. Director Ricks spoke about the budget spreadsheet, budget narratives, and record lodging-tax money. Commissioners discussed various elements including marketing dollars spent. Kuhn suggested numbering the financial pages making it easier to follow.

Motion to accept status review as presented by Loseke. McFarland seconded the motion

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.

Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

## **6. Commission Chair Report – Commissioner Kuhn**

- a. Gave thank you comments to Nebraska City and attractions.
- b. Gave remarks on crowds at the Omaha Boat/Sports/Travel show over the weekend
- c. Comments that cranes have arrived. Discussion on water fowl viewing and the impact on lodging tax numbers.
- d. Mentioned the Crane Trust is sponsoring an event on Thursday evening.

## **7. Director's Report and NTC Project Updates – John Ricks and NTC staff**

- a. Lodging Tax Performance – Ricks gave update
- b. Strategic Plan – Industry Survey
  - i. Survey has been sent out to industry and other related industries.
  - ii. Discussion of the process starting in May
  - iii. Comments on impact that can be made throughout the industry with this plan
- c. Update on 2020 Travel Counselor locations \* - Collins gave update

Motion to accept the change/addition in travel counselor locations across the state made by Barner. Seconded by Jasnoch.

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.

Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

## **8. Commission Committee Reports**

- a. Legislative Committee/NETA Legislative Update – Commissioner Jasnoch
  - i. Presented update on Priority Bills. Following bills LB187; LB461; and LB1056. Also LR282 Tin Roof Sundae making official sundae of the state.
  - ii. Presented update on luncheon. Discussion on partnership with other organizations including joint reception. Suggestion on salute to Senators at travel conference. Will continue looking for options to make event better attended.
- b. Marketing Committee Report – Commission Chapo  
John Ricks gave updates in Chapo's absence.
  - i. Went through presentation on markets and brand ratings.
  - ii. Updates on economic impact of travel.
  - iii. Crane promotion marketing update
  - iv. Web traffic monitor update

## **9. New Business**

- a. **Tourism Marker Program Contract Renewal – Commissioner Jasnoch**

Jasnoch gave update on program. This is the first one year renewal option on the contract. Discussion on publicizing the program on NEBTour.

Motion to approve the one year renewal option of contract made by Barner. Seconded by Stavas.

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.  
Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

**b. Upcoming meetings:**

May 12 – Grand Island, possible morning meeting from 10-noon with SWOT planning meeting in afternoon from 1:30 – 4pm

August – Scottsbluff dates of 6-8 to be voted on

Review of dates and activities information sent ahead of meeting to commissioners. Discussion by commissioners on August 6-8 dates.

Motion to approve dates of Aug 6-8 made by McFarland. Seconded by Loseke.

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.  
Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

October 20 – Grand Island Travel Conference, time TBA

**10. Adjourn**

At 4:42 Loseke motioned to adjourn. Barner seconded the motion.

Roll call vote – Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Olson, Sabin, Stavas.  
Opposed: none. Absent: Chapo, Lehl. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Shirley Wichman