Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
Agri/Eco Conference – North Platte, NE
February 6, 2013 – 1:30pm

Commission Chair Mike Kesselring called the meeting to order at 1:20 pm.

Commissioners and staff present at the meeting: Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; Mike Kesselring, High Plains Homestead of Crawford; Dana Markel, Greater Omaha CVB; Roger Dixon, MECA of Omaha; Jeff Boeka, Holiday Inn Express North Platte; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Heather Hogue, Nebraska Tourism Commission.

Present via conference call-in: Tony Moody, John Q. Hammons Hotels.

Audience members present: Cat Beekley, Snitily Carr; Karla Niedan-Streeks, Gering CVB; Orla Kitt, Ogallala/Keith County Chamber of Commerce

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Dana Markel motioned for approval of the meeting agenda. Deb Loseke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of January 17, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Dana Markel motioned to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2013 Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting. Roger Kuhn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Update

Kathy McKillip gave a brief agency budget status report, unchanged since the January 17, 2013 meeting.

Strategic Plan Update/Committee Reports

Deb Loseke noted the Best Practices Committee regarding county lodging tax recommendations will be meeting soon. Commissioners hope to review and discuss Best Practices Committee options at March Commission meeting.

Legislative Discussion/LB 215

LB 215 is scheduled to go to committee hearing February 13. The bill would change the wording in regards to county spending of lodging tax dollars from "may" to "may only" be spent towards tourism needs in each county. Tony Moody motioned for the Nebraska Tourism Commission to send a letter of support to the hearing committee in favor of LB 215. Roger Dixon seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:
Commissioner Boeka – in Favor.
Commissioner Chapo – not present.
Commissioner Dixon – in Favor.
Commissioner Glidden – not present.
Commissioner Kesselring – Abstained.
Commissioner Kuhn – in Favor.
Commissioner Loseke – Abstained.
Commissioner Markel – Abstained.
Commissioner Moody – in Favor (via phone).

Motion passed with majority of present Commissioners voting in Favor.

Kathy McKillip thanked the Commissioners for attending the Senator Luncheon event held January 17th.

Director's Report

- The Commission's marketing RFP (request for proposal) is scheduled to post in April of 2013.
- Kathy McKillip distributed handouts from the Denver Stock Show marketing partnership.
- Kathy McKillip recapped the US Skating Championship event held last month in Omaha.
- The Certification Program for the rest area staff is underway. The staffed rest areas will be open from mid-May to September in 2013. The job openings will post in March and applicants will be required to pass a certification exam before being hired. The certification exams will be March 25-27 in Lincoln, Kearney and Ogallala. Mike Kesselring encouraged all Commissioners to support the positive changes as the Tourism Commission moves forward with improving the program.
- The March 2013 Media Tour with Geiger and Associates will be finalized soon.
- Kathy McKillip distributed the draft of facilities participating in the 2013 Nebraska Passport Program.
- A press conference was held Feb 5th to announce the I-80 Signage Program in North Platte.

Development of Commission By-Laws/Governing Principles

Mike Kesselring distributed a draft of Nebraska Tourism Commission Governance Principles and requested all Commissioners review and provide feedback before the next meeting agenda is set. (10 business days prior to the March 27 meeting)

New Business/Community Concerns

Kathy McKillip reviewed a list of Commission meeting dates coming up in 2013. Commissioners will discuss frequency of meetings at the March 27 meeting. Kathy McKillip noted the Commission will not be engaging in any 2014 ad campaign/partnerships until the completion of the Marketing RFP process in spring/summer of 2013.

Roger Dixon motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:40pm. Roger Kuhn seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Hogue.