Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
Lake McConaughy Visitor/Water Interpretive Center, Ogallala, NE
November 28, 2012 – 10:00am

Commission Chair Mike Kesselring called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Commissioners and staff present at the meeting: Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Mitch Glidden, Sandhills Motel in Mullen; Mike Kesselring, High Plains Homestead of Crawford; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; Dana Markel, Greater Omaha CVB; Roger Dixon, MECA of Omaha; Tony Moody, John Q. Hammons Hotels; Jeff Boeka, Holiday Inn Express North Platte; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Heather Hogue, Nebraska Tourism Commission. Attending via conference call: John Chapo, Lincoln Children's Zoo.

Audience members present: Starr Lehl, Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Orla Kitt, Ogallala/Keith County Chamber of Commerce.

Approval of Agenda

Roger Dixon motioned for approval of the meeting agenda. Tony Moody seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of October 23, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Dana Markel motioned to approve the minutes from the October 23, 2012 Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting. Mitch Glidden seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Update

Kathy McKillip distributed the current agency budget status report. Tony Moody motioned to accept the financial report as presented. Jeff Boeka seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Strategic Plan Update/Committee Reports

Kathy McKillip noted that implementation has already begun regarding some of the Strategic Plan recommendations including the undertaking of the Inter State 80 Road Sign project and the coordination of media tours around the state. Mike Kesselring also noted the Commissioners are currently focusing on the development of Commission By-Laws, reviewing the Executive Director's position and implementing a Lodging Tax "Best Practices" Committee to recommend lodging tax program allocations. The Commission's intent is to complete the above items and begin to focus on additional Strategic Plan recommendations by the end of this fiscal year (June 30, 2013). Tony Moody will also be joining the "Best Practices" Committee consisting of Deb Loseke (Committee Chair), Mitch Glidden and Dana Markel. The "Best Practices" Committee will present their draft of recommendations to the Commission at the January 17th meeting in Lincoln, with intent to approve and finalize their recommendations at the March 2013 meeting.

Review of Executive Director's Position

Roger Kuhn motioned to enter into an Executive Session to discuss the Executive Director's position. Jeff Boeka seconded. Motion passed at 11:28 am. Audience members and Commission staff exited. Dana Markel motioned to end executive session at 12:40 pm. Roger Kuhn seconded. Motion passed.

Development of Commission By-Laws

Development of the by-laws will be discussed at the January Commission meeting.

Director's Report

Kathy McKillip reviewed upcoming Commission projects and distributed a Director's Report regarding:

- Media Tour will be hosted by Geiger and Associates in central Nebraska in March of 2013
- Have applied to exhibit at the Rapid City Stock Show in 2013
- 2013 Nebraska Passport Program
- I-80 road sign project
- Tourism Think Tank open house on November 27th
- Final changes are being submitted for the Travel Consultant Certification Program through the US Travel Association
- Tourism Cares Initiative (TCI) kicks off in 2013 – potential partnerships are being considered between NEMA, AmeriCorps, UNL and Nebraska Historical Society
- Sponsorship of US Figure Skating Championships coming up January 20-27, 2013
- 2012 Nebraska Travel Conference Attendee Survey Summary

Kathy McKillip advised the group of the sponsorship opportunities at the Denver Stock Show in 2013. The Commission's sponsorship will include a new ad campaign "Nebraska, it's not what you'd expect" to appeal to all travelers. A partnership with the Game & Parks Commission and Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition also aided in a creation of a five-day vacation giveaway at the Stock Show.

Kathy McKillip will prepare the Commission's Marketing Request for Proposal and have it available for review at the February 2013 meeting. Mike Kesselring encouraged all Commissioners to review the promotional campaigns of surrounding states. This RFP will include the 3 marketing components (PR, website, marketing) currently contracted to Snitily Carr. The contract with Snitily Carr ends 6-30-2012. The current fulfillment center contract and toll-free call center contract also expire 6-30-2012, those RFPs will also be available in early 2013.

New Business

Kathy McKillip stated the Senator Luncheon will be held in Lincoln on January 17th, 2013. The 2013 Agri/Eco-Tourism Conference will be held in North Platte on February 5-6. A Commission meeting will be held at both of these events.

Mike Kesselring discussed protocol options when a member of the Commission receives inquiries/invites to other meetings to discuss Commission business. The consensus of the group was to bring the invitation to the attention of the Commission and each request will be reviewed on an individual basis. Invites/inquiries in writing are preferred, that way they can be presented to the group without the possibility of misinterpretation.

Community Concern Discussions

The Commission received an inquiry from the Kearney Visitors Bureau and Grand Island CVB regarding the Melia Hill WB and Ogallala EB staffed rest areas along I-80 opening for Sandhill Crane migration season in spring of 2013. This discussion will be added as an agenda item at the January 17th meeting.

Dana Markel motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:38pm. Roger Kuhn seconded. Motion passed. Respectfully submitted by Heather Hogue.