

Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 – 1:00 p.m.

Dawson County Opportunity Center – Lexington, Neb.

Commission Chair Deb Loseke called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

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

Commission staff present: John Ricks, Heather Hogue, Jenn Gjerde, Alex Duryea, Karen Kollars and Erin Lenz

1. Approval of Meeting Agenda

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

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Sortum, Stavas.
Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

2. Open Comment Period for Items on the Agenda

Loseke opened the public comment period at 1:04 p.m.

With no members of the public coming forward, Loseke closed the Public Comment Period at 1:04 p.m.

3. Approval of March 8, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Stavas motioned to approve the meeting minutes from March 8, 2018. Barner seconded.

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Sortum, Stavas.
Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

4. Financial Update and Finance Committee Report

Jasnoch shared that the finance committee met on May 2. He provided handouts and reviewed the lodging tax report, the program summary showing the remaining balance YTD on programs area's and the revenue summary. At the end of March, the commissions overall balance was \$4,259,626.94.

Jasnoch motioned that the commission approve the finance report. Kuhn seconded the motion.

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Sortum, Stavas.
Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

5. Commission Chair Report

A. Commission Bylaws Report

Loseke reviewed the new bylaws with commissioners. Handout provided.

McFarland motioned to approve the draft bylaws with revisions to change teleconferencing to videoconferencing on page 4 and change the name and date on 5. Sortum seconded.

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Sortum, Stavas. Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

6. Director's Report

A. Commission Budget and upcoming Biennial Budget Request for FY 2019-2021

Ricks discussed that ahead of preparing the biennial budget, he will be attending a training on June 6, and that the finance committee will hold extra meetings this summer to discuss and plan the Biennial Budget request. The full Commission will review the budget request at the August 29, 2018 meeting.

B. Staffing

Ricks shared that the Commission has two new staff members, Alisha Simonson, Accountant II and Erin Lenz, Public Information Officer II. The Commission also hired two new interns, Becca Schrack and Josie Meister, both are students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

C. Tourism Promotional Cash Fund Status

Ricks explained the account is officially set up, thanks for the passage of the legislature's 2018 budget bill. The account currently has approximately \$39,000 and will continue to grow with advertising sales.

D. Plains Safari

Ricks shared that 330 people attended the conference and that it helped plant a seed as identifying the Great Plains as its own tourism destination. Alex Duryea also gave an overview of the conference.

E. Denver Stock Show

Ricks shared that he and staff are currently reviewing sponsorship options for the 2019 event.

F. IPW Conference

Ricks told commissioners that him and staff member, Micheal Collins, will be attending IPW in Denver, May 19-23, along with the Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau and North Platte/Lincoln County Visitor Center. IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace.

7. Commission Committee Reports

A. Policy & Procedures

I. Rules & Regulations

Kuhn shared that regulations adopted at a hearing in January are still awaiting approval from the Governor's Policy and Research office. The regulations were for Nebraska Tourism Commission, Title 266, Chapter 1, Grants.

Kuhn added that the committee will soon be meeting again to discuss additional regulations to the grant and tourism marker programs. With a goal to present new regulations for approval to the group in August.

B. Tourism Marker

Jasnoch shared that the marker committee has no current applications.

C. Marketing

Ricks distributed and walked commissioners through a packet with marketing updates; including Sandhill Crane campaign results, the Spring/Summer campaign plan, Passport program highlights, social media blitz results, new campaign development and 2018 media tours.

8. NETA Legislative Update

Jasnoch shared that LB 802 for the promotional cash fund passed with the budget bill. That LB 940, regarding historic districts passed. That LB 379, allowing Willa Cather foundation to use CCC funds, passed. That LB 1067, regarding business improvement districts did not make it through this year.

9. 2018 Tourism Conference Schedule and Budget Review

Kollars provided commissioners with a handout reviewing the conferences working budget. Kollars and commissioners discussed registration fees, speaker fees and staff expenses.

Sortum motioned to approve the 2018 Tourism Conference budget with recommendations of increasing the registration price to \$225 for Convention and Visitor Bureau's, increase of banquet only attendees, and \$25,000 for the overall budget. McFarland seconded.

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Barner, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Sortum, Stavas. Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

12. New Business

- A.** August 29, 2018 in Grand Island, The Chocolate Bar
October 16, 2018 in Nebraska City

Adjourn

Just after 3 p.m. Sortum motioned to adjourn. Barner seconded.

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Barner, Kuhn, Loseke, McFarland, Sortum, Stavas. Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Gjerde.