

Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
January 15, 2015 – 1:30 pm
Nebraska Tourism Commission Conference Room - Lincoln

Commission Chair John Chapo called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm.

Commissioners and staff present at the meeting: John Chapo, Lincoln Children's Zoo; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Roger Jasnoch, Kearney Visitors Bureau; Lisa Burke, North Platte CVB; Carol Schlegel, Red Willow County Tourism; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Angela White, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Heather Hogue, Nebraska Tourism Commission.

Audience members signed-in:

Rich Claussen, Matt Emodi, Jill Heggen, Dave Wegener, Doug Samuelson, Brad Mellema, Diane Krajicek, Kyle Fischer and Robin Kilgore.

A quorum (two-thirds majority of the Commissioners) was not present, so voting actions were not taken at this meeting.

Approval of Meeting Agenda – not possible, quorum not present.

Approval of October 21, 2014 Meeting Minutes – not possible, quorum not present.

Financial Report

Deb Loseke, Commission Treasurer, presented the current budget report. Spending is on task for mid-fiscal year. The next biennial budget was submitted for approval in the fall of 2014 which will apply July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

Chairman's Report

John Chapo noted the Commission is receiving positive feedback and continuing to move forward with many projects. John Chapo welcomed new Commissioner Carol Schlegel aboard and explained the basic communication process of the Commission.

Commission Committee Reports

Lisa Burke provided a follow-up report from the 2014 Nebraska Tourism Conference created by conference coordinator Micheal Collins. The conference committee will meet to make recommendations for the 2015 conference involving speakers and budget increases. Deb Loseke noted the Best Practices and Guiding Principles Committee has nothing new to report at this time.

Marketing Update/Interactive Web Review

Dave Wegener of Swanson Russell outlined the upcoming 2015 media tour schedules:

- March 22-26 will bring writers to Central Nebraska to view the Sandhill Cranes
- May 18-23 will bring writers to the Highway 83 towns of McCook, Valentine, North Platte, Mullen and the Nebraska Sandhills region
- June 14-19 will bring writers to Western Nebraska
- Fall (September or October) will be Metro area

General agreement around the table is that the tours are an invaluable asset and a great marketing tool for the Commission. Swanson Russell and the Commission will be reviewing the program to find additional effective ways to share feedback from the tours and evaluate costs for the Commission and communities. Rich Claussen and Diane Krajicek from Bailey Lauerman provided a presentation regarding potential

research options for the Commission. Group discussions regarding how to build more comparisons and results to increase the research that is already being done, as well as new research options. John Chapo asked that February's agenda include an action item to have the Commission Marketing Committee discuss and evaluate the need for a study.

Director's Report

Kathy McKillip noted the desk audit results will be available soon and should be available to review at the February meeting. The Senator Luncheon went well earlier today, VisitNice packets were available for all senators with Commission marketing materials. Kathy McKillip outlined the Commission's current policy regarding posting the minutes, which is to post minutes once they are approved at VisitNebraska.com on the Industry pages. Currently the website provides a good outlet to post the minutes, agendas and meeting notices to interested parties. John Chapo noted that all Commission meetings are open to the public, and attendees and Commissioners can discuss all meeting topics with constituents anytime. It is important for each Commissioner to share and provide feedback to constituents regarding Commission projects. Kathy McKillip also provided a handout outlining current Commission projects including:

- The 2015 designated staffed visitor centers, currently 42 positions open for Travel Counselors.
- Partnerships with the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission
- 2015 Nebraska Passport Program season kicks off May 1
- Media Tour dates for 2015

The Nebraska Game & Parks Commission currently uses Gov.delivery as a form of communication, the Commission will be researching options like this one.

Marketing Grant Updates

Heather Hogue noted the 2015-2016 Nebraska Tourism Marketing Grant applications are now available, the deadline is January 22nd of 2015. Community Impact Grant applications will be available the first of February.

New Business

Scheduling public comment periods will be added to the February meeting agenda.

The dates for upcoming Commission meetings will be February 23 at the Agri/Eco-Tourism Conference in Kearney, May location is TBA, August 26th in Grand Island at the State Fair, and October 20th at the Tourism Conference in Columbus. John Chapo has requested the May meeting be in a location the Commission has not yet met, off the I-80 corridor, in order to encourage Commissioners to visit new sites.

Meeting adjourned at 3:36pm. Respectfully submitted by Heather Hogue.