

Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
Thursday, February 23, 2017 – 10:00 a.m.
Cobblestone Hotel & Suites – Broken Bow, Neb.

Commission Chair Deb Loseke called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioners present: Roger Dixon, MECA of Omaha; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Roger Jasnoch, Kearney Visitors Bureau; Lisa Burke, North Platte CVB; Carol Schlegel, Red Willow County Tourism; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Tony Moody, John Q Hammons Hotels & Resorts

Commission staff present: John Ricks, Heather Hogue, Angela Sears, Jenn Gjerde, Erin Wirth, Micheal Collins, Alex Duryea, Bryce Arens and Karen Kollars

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Roger Jasnoch asked that discussion of video teleconferencing for commission meetings be added to the end of the agenda.

Lisa Burke motioned to approve the agenda with Jasnoch's addition. Roger Dixon seconded the motion.

Roll call vote- Commissioners in favor: Burke, Moody, Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Schlegel. Opposed: none. Abstain: none. Motion passed.

Open Comment Period for Items on the Agenda

Deb Loseke, Commission Chair opened the public comment period at 10:02 a.m. Comments presented:

-Brad Mellema with the Grand Island Convention and Visitors Bureau expressed his satisfaction with the Commission's annual media tours.

With no additional members of the public coming forward, Deb Loseke closed the Public Comment Period at 10:04 a.m.

Approval of January 12, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Carol Schlegel motioned to approve meeting minutes from January 12, 2017. Tony Moody seconded.

Roll call vote - Commissioners in favor: Burke, Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Moody, Schlegel. Opposed: none. Motion passed.

Financial Update and Finance Committee Report

Lisa Burke, Commission Treasurer, shared that as of January the Commission had paid out \$151,643.64 from the General Fund Account for Grant Allotments for Marketing and or Community Impact Grants, with a total budget for fiscal 2016-2017 of \$558, 726.41.

Burke added that to date the Commission has spent \$1.9 million from the cash funds, which has a budget for Fiscal 2016-17 of \$6,567,218.63.

Burke gave an update on the lodging tax dollars from 2016, through December 2016, \$5,442,059.86 was collected. That is a difference of \$197,458.84 and increase of 3.8% from 2015.

All of this information was provided in handouts with the meeting packets.

Tony Moody asked that a program cost layout be provided and John Ricks shared that a document laying out all program budgets is in the works

Carol Schlegel motioned to approve financials as presented. Roger Dixon seconded.

Roll call vote - Commissioners in favor: Burke, Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Moody and Schlegel. Opposed: none. Abstained: none. Motion passed.

A. Governor's Executive Budget for agencies FY2017-2019

Lisa Burke, Commission Treasurer, shared that the proposed FY2017-2019 budget would move 250,000 from the general funds to the cash funds, putting the general funds at \$0.

Burke motioned to approve the budget recommendation for the Commissioner FY2017-19 budget and show support at the March 8 hearing. Schlegel seconded.

Roll call vote - Commissioners in favor: Burke, Chapo, Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Moody and Schlegel. Opposed: none. Abstained: none. Motion passed.

B. Discussion of approval process of invoices exceeding \$1,000

Commissioners discussed removing this process implemented while the Commission was without a director and increasing the amount. Roger Dixon, motioned to remove the approval process of invoices exceeding \$1,000 and increase the amount to \$20,000. Roger Kuhn seconded.

Roll call vote - Commissioners in favor: Burke, Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Moody and Schlegel. Opposed: none. Abstained: none. Motion passed.

Commission Chair Report

Deb Loseke thanked Commissioners for going above and beyond since May 2016

Director's Report

To start, John Ricks shared that he's attempting to meet with all 49 Nebraska State Senators.

A. Through My Eyes Co-Op Grant Opportunity

John Ricks gave an overview of his co-op grant idea using Through My Eyes videos (created by destinations) and social media campaigns. Ricks explained that he would like to see this idea utilized when trying to award the rest of the fiscal years grant dollars. Commissioners discussed meeting again when a more thorough plan is ready to be presented. A meeting

was set for March 13 at 11 a.m. at the Nebraska Tourism Commission office, where this co-op idea will be fully presented.

B. Future Co-Op Advertising

John Ricks shared that he would like to incentivize more participation in the co-op program and changes can be made to the co-op program in the future, including narrowing down the number of publications that are utilized.

C. Data analysis/research

John Ricks shared that research efforts for the Commission are up and coming and may require the RFP process for bidders.

D. Status of Commission draft RFP's

John Ricks shared that currently three RFP's are being drafted and will be ready for commissioners to see soon.

1. Advertising/Media Plan
2. PR/Social
3. Content- Travel Guide and Website

Commission Committee Reports

A. Tourism Conference Committee

Lisa Burke reminded Commissioners that the next Nebraska Tourism Conference is set for October 17-19 in LaVista. Then shared that the bids are currently out for the 2018 and 2019 conference.

B. Policy and Procedures Committee

Roger Kuhn shared that recently the Attorney General's office suggested that the committee get rules and regulations recommendations from industry partners. Recently, the committee provided some industry partners with the current draft of the Commission's Rules and Regulations and is requesting feedback from them.

C. Tourism Marker Committee

Roger Jasnoch shared that the committee is working with state purchasing on an invitation to bid (1 year) for the signs and is partnering with the Historical Society to solicit those that might be interested in bidding. A mockup of the markers was provided in the meeting packet. The bids should be wrapped up by the May meeting where the committee will share their recommendations to Commissioners.

Roger Kuhn motioned to approve proceeding with the invitation to bid. Lisa Burke seconded.

Roll call vote - Commissioners in favor: Burke, Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Moody and Schlegel. Opposed: none. Abstained: none. Motion passed.

D. Marketing Committee

Roger Dixon shared that the Marketing Committee met via teleconference the week of February 13, the handed the presentation over to marketing manager, Angela Sears. Angela Sears went through a handout provided with the meeting packet, highlighting the Through My Eyes campaign.

8. NETA Legislative Update

Roger Jasnoch shared that LB 222 advance out of committee with unknown edits and that the bill is

waiting to be prioritized by a senator. Roger Dixon asked that commissioners also monitor LB97, which would effect MECA and the riverfront district. John Ricks summarized two bills that would utilize Commission funds for music festivals and the Willa Cather Foundation.

9. 2017 Staffed Visitor Centers/Travel Counselor Program recommendations

Micheal Collins went through a handout in the meeting picketing giving an overview of the 2016 Visitor Centers and recommended some changes for 2017. Collins asked that Commissioners consider moving the York Eastbound counselors to the Blue River Eastbound rest stop and add a travel counselor to the Corps of Discovery Welcome Center.

Roger Jasnoch motioned to approve the recommended changes. Roger Kuhn seconded.

Roll call vote - Commissioners in favor: Dixon, Jasnoch, Kuhn, Loseke, Moody and Schlegel.

Opposed: none. Abstained: Burke. Motion passed.

10. ABA Conference in Omaha

Micheal Collins gave an explanation of ABA to the group and spoke about the programs connections to group operators. He shared that Visit Omaha is looking to bid on the event to be held in Omaha January 23-28 of 2020 and is seeking support in the form of \$200,000. The group discussed, wouldn't commit funds but will draft a letter of support to host the event.

11. 2017 Passport Program

Erin Wirth presented to Commissioners, covering Passport topics in a handout included in the meeting packet. Wirth discussed results of the 2016 program, 2017 goals, the 80 2017 stops, program budget and some program marketing.

12. New Buisness

A. Upcoming Commission Meetings

March 13: Lincoln (11 a.m.)

May 2: Norfolk (1 p.m.)

August 22: Kearney (10 a.m.)

October 17: LaVista (1 p.m.)

Added Agenda Item. Teleconferencing Meetings

Roger Jasnoch shared that he's been looking teleconferencing for some commission meetings but the budget, restrictions and equipment needed is still in question. Commissioners tasked staff with looking into this possibility with the Attorney General's office to see how it can be done.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Gjerde.