

## **Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting**

**Thursday, October 19, 2017 – 10:00 a.m.**

**La Vista Conference Center – La Vista, Neb.**

Commission Chair Deb Loseke called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and allowed commissioners time to introduce themselves.

Commissioners present: Darrin Barner, Heritage Homes of Nebraska; Roger Dixon, MECA of Omaha; Roger Jasnoch, Kearney Visitors Bureau; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Starr Lehl, Scottsbluff Economic Development Director; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Barry McFarland, Mac's Creek Winery; Ashley Olson, Willa Cather Foundation; Sarah Sortum, Calamus Outfitters; Jeanna Stavas, Whispering Pines Bed and Breakfast

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

### **1. Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Dixon motioned to approve the agenda. Kuhn seconded the motion.

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

### **2. Open Comment Period for Items on the Agenda**

Loseke opened the public comment period at 10:09 a.m.

Comments presented: None.

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

### **3. Approval of August 31, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

Dixon motioned to approve the meeting minutes from August 31, 2017. Jasnoch seconded.

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

### **4. Financial Update and Finance Committee Report**

Loseke shared the Commission's Cash Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18 is \$6,530,577.00. The amount of funds encumbered from the previous fiscal year was \$1,785,665.09 with \$271,656.42 of that being state-aid (grant funds previously awarded).

As of 9-30-2017, which is 25.21% of the budget year, we have spent \$1,825,397.52 of cash funds.

The total state-aid budget available to award FY 2017-2018 via the Tourism Marketing and Community Impact Grant Programs is \$852,600 in cash funds.

Lodging Tax Figures are up overall compared to last year:

Through August 2017: \$3,860,248.37

Through August 2016: \$3,819,227.76

A difference of \$41,020.61 or a 1.07% change.

McFarland motioned that the commission approve the finance report and update. Kuhn seconded the motion.

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

## **5. Commission Chair Report**

Loseke started by thanking all former commissioners and congratulating Roger Jasnoch and the Glidden's for their awards won at the 2017 Awards Banquet.

### **A. Election of Executive Officers**

Loseke explained officer positions and recommended the following:

Chair: Deb Loseke

Past Chair: John Chapo

Vice Chair: Roger Kuhn

Treasurer: Roger Dixon

At Large: Roger Jasnoch

Lehl nominated Roger Jasnoch as treasurer and Dixon forfeited the position.

Dixon motioned to approve the following executive officers:

Chair: Deb Loseke

Past Chair: John Chapo

Vice Chair: Roger Kuhn

Treasurer: Roger Jasnoch

At Large: Roger Dixon

Lehl seconded the motion.

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

### **B. Committee reviews and nominations**

Loseke named committee chairs:

Finance: Jasnoch

Best Practice: Loseke

Marketing: Dixon

Conference: *Open*

Marker: Jasnoch

Policy & Procedures: Kuhn

Loseke then asked new commissioners to contact her about what committees they would like to serve on. Stavas requested finance and Lehl requested marketing. Loseke said that committee's will be finalized in the near future and will include folks from outside the commission as well.

Loseke concluded her report by sharing that Director John Ricks has an upcoming Job Performance Review. Kuhn met with the state October 11 to clarify procedure. At the January meeting the commission will give a performance review and decide on a new salary. This will be a partial closed session.

## **6. Director's Report**

### **A. Denver Stock Show**

Ricks explained what the Denver Stock Show is to new commissioners.

Shared that the Commission changed its sponsorship for 2018 to a \$33,000 package.

Asked that if anyone can volunteer January 6 – 21, that would be very helpful.

### **B. Japan Trade Mission Report**

Ricks gave a PowerPoint presentation recapping his time in Japan with Governor Pete Ricketts.

Explained that the same event will be held in Omaha next year and that he is hoping to catch the eye of some Japanese travel operators for the trip. Ricks also shared one of the Nebraska videos that was shown to the Japanese on the Trade Mission.

### **C. Research Efforts**

Ricks reviewed a study done by Brand Lever and shared that the staff will continue to work with the company to research Nebraska's image. He also shared that Dean Runyan Associates is conducting a visitors study.

### **D. Status of Commission RFPs**

Ricks announced that the RFP's are complete and that the contracts have been reviewed by the Department of Administrative Services and posted online. Commissioners had a short discussion about how to handle the RFP process in the future, planning ahead and cost.

Dixon motioned to approve the contracts with Turner PR and Vladimir Jones. McFarland seconded the motion.

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

### **E. Introduction of Marketing Partners**

Ricks introduced the new agencies that Nebraska Tourism will be working with: Miles Partnership, Turner PR and Vladimir Jones.

**F. Advertising Sales Cash Fund Creation Status**

Ricks explained that this will hopefully be a legislative bill in 2018. If passed it would allow the Commission to create an account for advertising dollars to go in to, that can then be used to offset the cost of advertising items.

**G. Eclipse Impact Study**

Ricks shared some of the data collected in a study done by Dean Runyan Associates and Destination Analysts, Inc. Ricks is still analyzing the complete report. He also shared that staff will be working on some remarketing with pixel collected by Maly Marketing. Jasnoch asked if cities have access to the study; Ricks is looking into it.

**7. Commission Committee Reports**

**A. Tourism Conference Committee**

Karen Kollars announced that around 230 people attended the 2017 Conference. There were 27 speakers and 23 sponsors. Kollars stated she would have more to share at a later date. Next year's Conference is in Nebraska City.

**B. Policy & Procedures**

**I. Rules & Regulations**

Kuhn shared that in compliance with 2017 LB222, rules and regulations for Nebraska Tourism are being drafted. A public hearing on the topic will be held after the draft is complete.

**C. Tourism Marker Committee**

Jasnoch shared that a breakout session highlighting the Tourism Marker program was held at the 2017 Conference, with 75 people attending. He also explained to new commissioners the history of the program, the regulations regarding them and that they have to vote on all marker applications. He shared that there is a lot of interest.

**D. Marketing Committee**

Angela Sears told commissioners she will be sending them the report that she presented at the 2017 Nebraska Tourism Conference. The presentation highlights current marketing efforts.

**8. 2017 State Fair Results Report**

Commissioners were provided with a handout. Alex Duryea presented information on the handout. Commissioners discussed booth and sponsorship options. Asked that staff come back with recommendations at the January meeting.

**9. 2017 Travel Counselor Program Report**

Commissioners were provided with a handout. Deb Loseke recapped the information and explained the travel counselor program to new commissioners.

**10. 2017 Passport Program Report**

Erin Wirth recapped the 2017 Passport program information that was presented at the 2017 Nebraska Tourism Conference.

### **11. NETA Legislative Update**

Jasnoch thanked lobbyist Andy Pollock for his hard work, invited everyone to a weekly conference call during session, explained the work behind LB 222, talked about a possible 2018 bill that would create taxable Tourism Improvement Districts and reminded commissioners of the senators luncheon on January 16, 2018.

### **12. New Business**

#### **A. Upcoming Commission Meetings**

January 16: Lincoln

Feb/March: TBD

### **Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Gjerde.