Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
January 16, 2014 - 1:00pm
Room 1023 – State Capitol Building, Lincoln

Commissioner John Chapo called the meeting to order at 1:29pm.

Commissioners and staff present at the meeting: John Chapo, Lincoln Children's Zoo; Mike Kesselring, High Plains Homestead of Crawford; Mitch Glidden, Sandhills Motel & Glidden Canoe Rental of Mullen; Roger Dixon, MECA of Omaha; Dana Markel, Greater Omaha CVB; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Angela White, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Taylor Cruse, Nebraska Tourism Commission.

Audience members present: Rich Claussen, Bailey Lauerman; Kelly Tyrell, Swanson Russell; Dave Wegener, Swanson Russell; Brad Mellama, Grand Island; Douglas Yarvel (sp?), Omaha.

Approval of Agenda
Mike Kesselring motioned for approval of the meeting agenda. Deb Loseke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of October 22, 2013 Meeting Minutes
Motioned to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2013 Nebraska Tourism Commission meeting. Roger Dixon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Update
Kathy Mckillip reviewed the current agency budget status report. Discussion had been made about budget regarding transparency and communication of budget allocations. Mike Kesselring and Dana Markel requested more explanation and communication regarding the budgeting process and spending. Deb Loseke motioned to approve the Financial Update. Mitch Glidden seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Chairman's Report
John Chapo welcomed everyone to the 2014 Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting and requested the Commissioners, staff and audience members introduce themselves to the group.

The upcoming 2014 Commission Meeting Schedule will be:
February 5, 2014 at the Agri/Eco-Conference in Kearney
May 7, 2014 in Mullen
August 27, 2014 in Grand Island at the State Fair

Commission Committee Reports

Mike Kesselring also requested to have more frequent public comment periods at meetings. He requested to have one at a spring meeting and one at a fall meeting. He suggested twice a year at the Travel Conference and at the Agri/Eco-Conference regardless of location. Mike Kesselring made the motion. Dana Markel seconded motion. Motion passed.

Commission Leadership & Vision Strategies

John Chapo welcomed Rich Claussen of Bailey Lauerman to the meeting. Rich Claussen noted Bailey Lauerman and Believable Brands are wrapping up research the will help produce the new Nebraska Tourism brand. There were thousands of respondents to the surveys and commissioners have received reports on the results. Bailey Lauerman and Kathy McKillip will be meeting with the Governor at the end of January to discuss findings. Next review will be concerning the creative approach and brand launch details. After the new brand is determined Nebraska Tourism Commission and the Governor will then have 30 days to announce. The newly designed website will come after decision is made.

Nebraska Tourism Commission, Bailey Lauerman and Swanson Russell's personnel will release the marketing and PR plan in May 2014. The team wants to come up with a long lasting brand using the strategic plan and survey results as a guide. Dave Wegener from Swanson Russell spoke about Swanson Russell's State Your Pride corporate relation initiative. Further branding and PR issues will be discussed at the commissioners' next meeting.

Director's Report

Kathy McKillip discussed current projects including:

- National Western Stock Show sponsorship January 11-26, 2014
- NACO Conference results
- 2013 Rest Area/Travel Counselor Certification Program
- Partnerships for the upcoming Nebraska 150th Celebration
- Upcoming media tours
- Branding Initiative through Bailey Lauerman/Believable Brands
- 2013 Nebraska Passport Program results/surveys

New Business

Kathy McKillip noted the following grants and deadlines:

- Tourism Marketing Grant- Deadline January 22, 2014
- Community Impact Grant- Opening January 31, 2014-Deadline February 28, 2014

John Chapo motioned to adjourn meeting at 3:07pm. There was no quorum to motion, due to only 5 Commissioners being present at the end of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Taylor Cruse