

Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
October 22, 2013 – 1:00 pm
Divots Conference Center, Norfolk

Commission Chair Jeff Boeka called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

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; Jeff Boeka, Holiday Inn Express North Platte; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; Roger Dixon, MECA of Omaha; Tony Moody, John Q. Hammonds Hotels; Dana Markel, Greater Omaha CVB; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Heather Hogue, Nebraska Tourism Commission.

Audience members present: Rich Claussen, Bailey Lauerman; Bryce Arens, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Angela White, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Karla Niedan-Streeks, Gering CVB; Jane Gustafson, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; Kim Kwapnioski, Norfolk Visitors Bureau; Carol Schlegel, McCook/Red Willow County Tourism; Kevin Howard, Alliance Visitors Bureau; David Hendee, Omaha World Herald; Lisa Burke, North Platte CVB.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Roger Dixon motioned for approval of the meeting agenda. Tony Moody seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of August 28, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Mike Kesselring motioned to approve the minutes from the August 28, 2013 Nebraska Tourism Commission meeting, with a request that the May 7, 2014 meeting be held in Mullen. Dana Markel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman's Report

Jeff Boeka welcomed everyone to the 2013 Nebraska Travel Conference and requested the Commissioners, staff and audience members introduce themselves to the group. The Executive Board recognized Mike Kesselring as serving as Commission Chair and presented him with an ostrich egg to represent his hard work and dedication as a "good egg" over the past year. The upcoming 2014 Commission Meeting Schedule will be:

January 16, 2014 from 11:00am-3:00pm in Lincoln at the Capitol

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

Deb Loseke presented the draft of County Improvement Fund Grant Application created by the Best Practices Committee. Tony Moody motioned to approve the draft. Mike Kesselring added an addendum to the motion, to include the wording "as referenced in the Nebraska Tourism Commission Strategic Plan." John Chapo seconded the motion. Motion carried. The grant application created by the Best Practices Committee will be promoted at the NACO conference in December.

Mike Kesselring noted he would like to serve on a sub-committee regarding the development of a new model for evaluating the value and performance of Nebraska

Tourism. Roger Kuhn and Mitch Glidden will also be on the sub-committee. Some research will be done by this sub-committee, to define tourism and the measurements of tourism's economic impact. The sub-committee hopes to research over the winter months, and present findings to the group in 2014 meetings.

Director's Report

Kathy McKillip discussed current projects including:

- National Western Stock Show sponsorship coming up January 11-26, 2014
- NACO Conference December 11-13, 2013 in Omaha
- 2013 Rest Area/Travel Counselor Certification Program
- Partnerships for the upcoming Nebraska 150th Celebration
- Husker Sports Network – pregame shows and interviews
- Upcoming media tours, Holiday Metro in 2013, Birding/Western trips in 2014
- Branding Initiative through Bailey Lauerman/Believable Brands
- 2013 Nebraska Passport Program results/surveys

Jeff Boeka welcomed Rich Claussen of Bailey Lauerman to the meeting. Rich Claussen noted Bailey Lauerman is holding focus groups to produce the new Nebraska tourism brand. Resident and non-resident surveys are available, as well as surveys for stakeholders. The marketing plan will be released in spring of 2014, to follow upcoming PR strategies and brand development.

New Business

Heather Hogue presented the Tourism Marketing Grant application to the group, with reminders of how competitive the program is as well as the deadlines.

Financial Update

Kathy McKillip reviewed the current agency budget status report. Kathy noted that additional PSL has been requested for the Nebraska Tourism Commission, in hopes of attaining four additional full time staff members (IT, research, marketing manager and field staff). The request will be sent through the legislative process, approval or denial won't be known until 2014 legislative session. John Chapo motioned to approve the deficit request issue for 2014. Roger Dixon seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jeff Boeka motioned to adjourn at 2:46pm. Mike Kesselring seconded the motion. Motion passed. Respectfully submitted by Heather Hogue.