

Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
Arrow Hotel - Broken Bow, NE
July 11th – 10:00am

Kathy McKillip began the meeting at 10:00 am.

The following people attended the meeting: Jeff Boeka, Holiday Inn Express of North Platte; Deb Loseke, Columbus/Platte County CVB; Mitch Glidden, Sandhills Motel in Mullen; John Chapo, Lincoln Children's Zoo; Dana Markel, Omaha CVB; Roger Dixon, MECA Omaha; Mike Kesselring, High Plains Homestead of Crawford; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; John Kaatz, Conventions, Sports & Leisure International; Gary Hamer, Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Heather Hogue, Nebraska Tourism Commission.

Welcome

Kathy McKillip welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented the commission's financial report. Mike Kesslering motioned to approve the financial report. John Chapo seconded the motion. Financial report approved.

Strategic Plan Update

John Kaatz presented a draft version of the Strategic Plan to the group. The schedule for the July fly around event to release the plan to the public will be available soon. The commissioners will receive hard copies of the draft to review and comment on. CSL has created a sample mission statement for the commission:

"The Mission of the Nebraska Tourism Commission is to serve as the state's official tourism marketing organization, charged with expanding Nebraska's travel economy by generating increased visitors, resulting visitor expenditures, tax revenue and employment." CSL recommends the commission become the visitor industry leader in the state.

John Kaatz outlined some of the Strategic Plan recommendations including the Tourism Marketing Program to make the state more appealing to potential visitors. Some suggestions include expanding on creating positive impressions and perceptions through aggressive PR campaigns and maintain a consistent vision within the travel guide publication. CSL recommends continued partnerships with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to further promote what the state has to offer to visitors. John Kaatz also reviewed the state's current I-80 Visitor Center Program and Tourism Marketing Grant Program, highlighting the differences between how the current programs are managed vs. how some of the surrounding states' programs are maintained.

Commission Officer Elections

The group discussed electing a chair, vice-chair and treasurer for the Nebraska Tourism Commission. John Chapo made a motion to nominate Mike Kesselring as Chair of the Nebraska Tourism Commission. Mitch Glidden seconded the motion. The group voted in favor of Mike Kesselring to become Chair. No nay votes. Motion passed.

Mike Kesselring called for nominations for the vice-chair position. Dana Markel motioned to nominate Jeff Boeka as Vice-Chair of the Nebraska Tourism Commission. Roger Dixon seconded the motion. The group voted in favor of Jeff Boeka to become Vice-Chair, with Jeff Boeka abstaining from the vote. No nay votes. Motion passed.

Roger Dixon motioned to nominate John Chapo as Treasurer of the Nebraska Tourism Commission. Roger Kuhn seconded the motion. All voted in favor of John Chapo becoming Treasurer. No nay votes. Motion passed.

Commission/staffing updates

Gary Hamer notified the commissioners that the Department of Economic Development is contracting with the Nebraska Tourism Commission from July 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012 to oversee accounting, bill paying and payroll services during the transition to become a commission. Dana Markel motioned to approve the Nebraska Tourism Commission to continue with this contract for the duration. Roger Kuhn seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Gary Hamer requested a verbal approval from the group for the Department of Economic Development to continue use of the Nebraska Possibilities...Endless logo. Roger Dixon motioned to approve. Dana Markel seconded. Motion passed.

The group discussed hiring an executive director of the Nebraska Tourism Commission. The Commission understands the importance of filling the executive director position, but at this time elects to address other immediate priorities to set the ground work for a successful transition into commission status of the agency. Kathy McKillip, currently the Division Administrator of the Nebraska Tourism Commission, will serve as Acting Executive Director until such time the commissioners choose to fill the position.

Commission By-Laws/Meeting Schedules

The group reviewed some sample by-laws and discussed some options of what can be included in the by-laws for the Nebraska Tourism Commission. Kathy McKillip/staff will prepare a draft of the bylaws based on their recommendations and present a draft at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held August 29th from 10:00am to 3:30pm in Hastings, location TBA. The group will meet again at the Nebraska Travel Conference in Gering in October.

Dana Markel motioned to approve the minutes from the previous meeting held June 13th. Roger Dixon seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Meeting adjourned at 3:32 pm. Respectfully submitted by Heather Hogue.