

**Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting
Winestyles Meeting Room, Hastings, NE
August 29, 2012 – 10:00am**

Commission Chair Mike Kesselring called the meeting to order 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; Mike Kesselring, High Plains Homestead of Crawford; Roger Kuhn, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; Gary Hamer, Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Kathy McKillip, Nebraska Tourism Commission; Heather Hogue, Nebraska Tourism Commission. Also in attendance: Roger Jasnoch, Kearney Visitors Bureau; Renee Seifert, Grand Island/Hall County CVB; Carol Schlegel, McCook/Red Willow County Tourism

Approval of Agenda

John Chapo motioned for approval of the meeting agenda. Roger Kuhn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of July 11, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Jeff Boeka motioned to approve the minutes from the July 11, 2012 Nebraska Tourism Commission Meeting. Mitch Glidden seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Report – Budget Discussion

Kathy McKillip presented the group with the Budget Status Report, prepared for each state agency by the Department of Administrative Services.

Strategic Plan Update

LB 685 was an agenda item, but that bill has been postponed indefinitely. LB 684 requirements are addressed within the Strategic Plan Executive Summary. Kathy McKillip noted that the full plan will be available soon at www.VisitNebraska.com. Group discussed creating guidelines for all counties regarding the spending of lodging tax dollars. Gary Hamer recommended the commissioners create a "Best Practices" outline and present it to the Director of County Officials. The commissioners will evaluate the Strategic Plan and prioritize the implementation process to promote cohesiveness throughout the state. John Chapo motioned to approve the Strategic Plan Executive Summary. Mitch Glidden seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Director's Report

Kathy McKillip updated the group on the office move of the Tourism Commission. The office will relocate to the first floor of the Nebraska State Office Building in early September. Kathy McKillip circulated the itinerary for the upcoming Metro Region Media Tour coming up in September. Kathy McKillip described the partnership opportunities between the Tourism Commission and the University of Nebraska's Hospitality Program. John Chapo motioned to approve moving forward with the partnership with the Hospitality Program. Deb Loseke seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The commissioners discussed the possibilities of international marketing partnerships with surrounding states. Dana Markel motioned to develop a collaborative plan with

surrounding states to promote tourism using one central theme. Roger Kuhn seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Kathy McKillip noted the Tourism Commission submitted an application to become DMAI Certified, and if accepted we will be one of two states admitted into the program so far. Kathy McKillip has been meeting with state senators to offer updates regarding the Strategic Plan and answer any questions they may have regarding the transition of the office to a stand-alone government agency. Kathy McKillip distributed examples of the improvements to the Road Sign Project. Deb Loseke motioned to move forward with replacing and repairing the road signs as planned using the design proposed. Mitch Glidden seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The future of the Travel Conference was discussed briefly. Dana Markel motioned to continue holding the conference in the fall and to seek bids for the 2014 conference. John Chapo seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The future of the Tourism Marketing Grant Program was discussed briefly. Dana Markel motioned to keep application requirements as is for the next round of grants (2013-2014 applications). Mitch Glidden seconded. Motion passed.

Review of Director's Position

Nebraska Tourism Commission staff exited the meeting on request of an Executive Session from the commissioners at 2:00pm. Roger Kuhn began recording minutes at this time. Minutes as verbalized to Heather Hogue:

The Executive Committee will bring a recommendation to the September Commission Meeting. John Chapo motioned for Commissioners to decide Interim Director's job description details and salary recommendations at the next Commission Meeting in September. Salary will be recommended to be retroactive dating back to July 1, 2012. Dana Markel seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor. Motion passed. Executive session adjourned at 2:20pm.

Development of Commission – Mission Statement

Several ideas for a mission statement were discussed. One draft suggestion:
The mission of the Nebraska Tourism Commission is to expand Nebraska's travel economy by creating awareness, attracting increased visitors which results in increased tourism revenue and economic gain throughout the state.

Development of Commission – By-laws

A code of conduct for commissioners was presented. John Chapo motioned to create the by-laws in a format similar to that of the Nebraska Innovation Zone Commission by-laws. Dana Markel seconded the motion. Motion passed.

New Business

The commissioners discussed upcoming meeting options. Deb Loseke motioned for the Tourism Commission to hold monthly meetings, with the exception of December. Dana Markel seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Roger Kuhn motioned to hold a public comment period at the October meeting at the Nebraska Travel Conference in Gering. Dana Markel seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The tentative meeting schedule for the remainder of 2012 is:

September 26, 2012 at Ponca State Park

October 23, 2012 at the Gering Civic Center

November 28, 2012 in Ogallala

Commissioner Roundtable and Community Concerns

The Commission has submitted a letter to Governor Heineman to report the vacant seat on the Commission. The vacant seat is for “one representative of a business that derives a majority of its revenue from out-of-state visitors. This position would be eligible to serve a 4-year appointment.”

Dana Markel read a letter from the NACVB Executive Board regarding their concerns of the Strategic Plan implementation and it’s relation to LB 684.

Meeting Adjourned

John Chapo motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dana Markel seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm. Respectfully submitted by Heather Hogue.