

Council Members in Attendance: Suzan Barnes, Kate Goad, Kevin Fern, Karen Hibbard, Shonda Atwater, Jennifer Haugh, Chuck Magerl, Jason Probst, Susie Coleman, Ken Corbet, Bud Estes, Jan Kessinger, Shannon Francis, Bridgette Jobe, Mary Madden, Alex Rice, Diane Robinson, Jeanny Sharp, Mary Ware.

Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism staff in Attendance: Secretary Brad Loveless, Kelli Hilliard, Jordan Hildebrand, Jaimee Salalac.

The meeting was held virtually on Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM by Chair Suzan Barnes

Council members made introductions

There was a motion to approve minutes from December 6, 2019 by Shonda Atwater, Mary Ware seconded. Passed unanimously.

Public Comment. No one was in attendance to provide public comment.

Secretary Loveless reported that Wildlife Parks & Tourism staff worked long hours and overcame many challenges to stay open during the pandemic. The demand for people to get out and explore wide open spaces was phenomenal. Permit sales are high, and campgrounds have been full all spring. Visitors have adapted to new guidelines and restrictions and are cooperative. Executive order 2021 restricting sales of nonresident turkey permits, was not extended at the end of May. Since the order expired, 226 nonresident turkey permits were sold. Nonresident deer permit sales have sold out for the second year in a row.

Bridgette Jobe provided a Director of Tourism report.

- Bridgette reported on the effects the pandemic has had on Kansas Tourism and how the Tourism Division is pivoting their marketing. She provided data from outside measurement tools, Transient Guest Tax and the health of our industry partners.
- She reported that Kansas Tourism will be filling an open position for a PR and Communications Manager with hopes to start the interview process next week. The pandemic has delayed this process.
- The Attraction Development Grant is designed to aid in the development of new tourism attractions or enhancements of an existing attraction within the state. The state statute requires that Kansas Tourism administer the grant, although there is no funding tied to it. The funding for the program is pulled from Kansas Tourism's marketing budget. The Kansas Tourism Division received a record number of 14 applicants that totaled to 1,064,144.48. Brad Loveless, by state statute, appoints a review committee of three people representing the tourism industry to review the applications. The review committee is chaired by the Director of Tourism. The review committee with approval from Brad Loveless has decided and everyone will be informed with a copy of the press release next week. The applications chosen are spread across Kansas with a wide variety of community sizes. Kansas Tourism was able to fund 6 out the 14 applications totaling the funded amount to \$123,471.
- Bridgette explained that after thoughtful and careful consideration, we will not be renewing our contract with the current contractor for International Marketing. Over 22% off the marketing budget was on international travel which only markets to limited countries and focus was on mainly on western heritage and Rt66. International efforts will be done internally with Kansas Tourism staff.
- In response to the pandemic, Kansas Tourism and TIAK have partnered to hold weekly Zoom industry calls that featured speakers to address timely and relevant topics related to the COVID-19 crisis. All Kansas Tourism Industry Partners have been invited to join. These calls created a sense of connection, provided timely updates and conveyed the support of the state tourism division. Due to the success and feedback from the tourism industry Kansas Tourism and TIAK will continue bi-weekly Kansas Tourism Industry Virtual Huddle calls. The focus will now be on the recovery and educating the industry on the best practices for marketing of Kansas moving forward.

- Kansas Tourism Division has developed a new one-year Kansas Tourism Conference grant program. The program was developed to help ease the cost to attend due to drastic budget cuts that the industry has endured. The grant will cover the registration cost to attend the Kansas Tourism Conference in Liberal, KS on October 21-23.
- Bridgette presented the travel awaits video.

Bridgette Jobe introduced Andrea Engstrom and Ronnie Murphy from Bajillion Agency to present the foundation of Kansas Tourism marketing and unveiled for the first time what the new marketing branding, To The Stars. A timeline for unveiling the To The Stars campaign was discussed.

- June 15, 2020- To the Stars Campaign soft launch – updated current TravelKS.com landing page to reflect new look, added gear store, digital marketing campaign, social media post and blogs.
- Oct 2020- Rolling out a conference brand anthem video at the Tourism Conference.
- January 2021- Kansas Day Public Launch- New website launch, To the Stars video series and Kansas Day Celebration.

Council Industry Members updates

- Ken Corbett, Kansas Sport Hunting Association- No report at this time.
- Suzan Barnes, Travel Industry Association of KS- Suzan Barnes reported they had a TIAK board meeting yesterday. Finances are holding steady, but membership is down.
- Susie Coleman, Petroleum Marketing Association- No report at this time.
- Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association-Lodging – Seat open.
- Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association- Restaurants- Chuck Magerl reported that due to the pandemic the restaurant industry has taken a big hit. Those who had drive-thru or pick-up did better. The supply chain challenges also put pressure on the restaurant industry.

Ex-Officio Reports

- Mary Madden, Kansas Historical Society- Reported they have been closed and working to reopen. Office staff to report back on June 8, 2020 and museum is set to open June 22, 2020. Half a million dollars lost in revenue due to pandemic. They are applying for grants. They are sharing resources, creating videos and virtual tours.
- Alex Rice, Kansas Dept of Commerce- Reported they are focused on COVID response and shifting to recovery. The Hire Fund was introduced in early March and distributed 5 million in grants to about 350 businesses in Kansas. An online chat was implemented to help the businesses and industry navigate programs and grants available due to COVID. In September Commerce will be going through a website overhaul to highlight working, living and travel in Kansas. Working with Bridgette to engage youth at an earlier edge.
- Jeanny Sharp, Kansas Dept of Transportation- There was a slight decrease in map request in April but have reported that in May they are returning to normal. Travel on roads and miles traveled have declined but is gradually going back up. A 10-year transportation program called IKE was passed. There are 40 projects in the pipeline.

Suzan Barnes announced the next meeting date is September 4, 2020, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The location will be announced later. Future meeting dates are November 6, 2020, December 4, 2020.

There was a motion to adjourn by Suzan Barnes, Mary Madden seconded. Passed Unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.