

Governor's Council on Travel & Tourism
Minutes: September 6, 2019 – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Board of Regents, Curtis Office Building, 5th Floor

Council Members in Attendance: Suzan Barnes, Ken Corbet, Susie Coleman, Bud Estes, Bridgette Jobe, Jan Kessinger, Mary Ware, Bud Estes. Tourism Staff in Attendance: Kelli Hilliard, Logan Hildebrand
Invitees: Bajillion Agency, WSU Community Engagement Institute

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by Chair Suzan Barnes.

Council Members made introductions.

There was a motion to approve the minutes from September 2019 by Jan Kessinger, Ken Corbet second. Passed unanimously.

There was a call for Public Comment. No one asked to speak.

Bridgette Jobe provided a Director of Tourism report. She reported that she is settling into her new role, is spending time reviewing all tourism projects and holding meeting within the agency to find ways to better collaborate.

Bridgette Jobe introduced the new marketing agency for KDWPT, Bajillion Agency. President Andrea Engstrom provided an introduction to the agency and staff and shared videos and examples of work they have done for other clients. They shared the process that the Tourism staff and the Bajillion staff have undertaken over the last couple months in working to develop a new brand for Kansas Tourism. Bajillion shared some of the interim advertising that we have placed and results that have shown boosted performance. There was general praise for the vision that was being created for marketing Kansas to visitors. There was discussion on the percentage of budget that will be spent on in-state vs out-of-state placement, with the clarification that we are still working on future budget breakdown. There was a suggestion that we should look at something similar to the Discover Oklahoma TV channel. There was also discussion on how the Wizard of Oz stigma can work both for and against Kansas. It was mentioned that it works very well Internationally. It was suggested that future marketing should include the arts more extensively.

Suzan Barnes introduced Lucy Petroucheva and Danny Barrera with the WSU Community Engagement Institute who will be assisting Kansas Tourism with the new strategic plan over the next few months. Bridgette Jobe discussed the importance of having a strategic plan to provide a road map for what the division does. Today's session with the GCTT is the first step in creating input for the strategic plan, future GCTT meetings and the Tourism Conference in October will also be times to gather input.

Lucy presented on what strategic planning is and how the agency will be moving forward Danny reviewed previous drafts of strategic plans and asked for discussion on the following questions. What is out of the scope of what Kansas Tourism should be doing? What is still relevant for our organization today?

It was pointed out that the task of developing attractions could be out of scope for what Kansas Tourism should be doing. There was discussion that we need to identify opportunities but allow the local communities to do the brick and mortar.

When discussing what is still relevant from previous plans, there was discussion on Travel Information Centers in Kansas and that one does not exist on the eastern side or in Flint Hills. Ken Corbet mentioned looking for options that already exist that can be transformed or added to and that there needs to be numbers to support this. He also added that the council should get analytics from the Travel Information Centers. Mary Ware would like to have new video ads showing on a loop in TICs. Susie Coleman mentioned the new TV options at gas stations as an option. Bridgette Jobe agreed that these are options that we can investigate for the future. Mary Ware suggested that we have a stronger focus in our marketing on the Arts.

Suzan Barnes spoke on the development on past strategic plans and stressed the importance of the Council being kept updated on progress in the future. Ken Corbet stated that he wants tourism to grow, but not intrude on private business. Bud Estes spoke on the successes that Dodge City has had in developing tourism and the number of visitors they see. Bridgette mentioned needing to add grants as a piece of the strategic plan. The Council agreed.

Danny explained that there will be facilitated breakout sessions at the upcoming Kansas Tourism Conference where we will be asking the tourism industry for their input. He asked what are some data pieces that the council needs to hear from the Conference session? Suggestions included:

- How to measure success?
- What other markets should tourism focus on based on what they are seeing coming from Kansas? (currently Leisure and Consumptive)
- Demographics & research from DMOs based on where they are placing budget and advertising
- What other traveler opportunities should we be looking at in order to get them to travel, stop, and spend here? How does Kansas become a destination?
- If we did have more money, what should we do with it?

- Where do they see us when it comes to marketing in-state and out-of-state?
- Excluding budget, what does the tourism industry see as greatest challenges for tourism as an agency and as a whole?

Ken Corbett mentioned that he would like to see a map and data on where hunters come from. Bridgette will put this on the agenda for a future meeting. Ken wondered if the best place for tourism is in Wildlife & Parks. Bridgette says that council will have to address that in the future. Bridgette invited council members to attend the Kansas Tourism Conference. Next steps for the strategic plan will be at the December GCTT meeting. Ken inquired about the need for additional tourism funding. Bridgette stated that getting this strategic plan in place is the first step in making that request in the future.

Kelli Hillard provided a presentation on the Kansas Tourism International Marketing Program. The current partnership program with Oklahoma was formed in 2001 in order to share costs. Lisa Weigt is the contractor who manages the program for Kansas and Oklahoma. Germany, UK, and Ireland are the main markets. The partnership has two contractors that live in-country that promote the program year-round and in other languages. Through the combined Kansas and Oklahoma budget for International Marketing, we create a lure brochure, co-op marketing opportunities, websites, attend IPW, host FAM tours, and attend an international Marketing Mission. We also conduct research to show international tourism economic impact. The typical international traveler is looking for unique history, will spend 10- 21 days exploring a region in one trip, and will use a travel agent to book. Kelli mentioned that there are marketing opportunities for business who are interested in the international market by contacting Lisa. There were suggestions that we make sure that western history and the Eisenhower Museum are both included in our International program, which Kelli assured are both big parts of that marketing.

Industry member provided updates:

- Ken Corbett, Kansas Sport Hunting Assn. – Weather could provide a tough hunting season this year.
- Suzan Barnes, Travel Industry Association of KS – There will be an e-mail meeting in August. Kansas Tourism Conference will be held in Mulvane in Oct. 2019. Destination Statehouse is February 5, 2020.
- Susie Coleman, Petroleum Marketing Assn – The annual convention will be held Salina. Issues being discussed will be KHP distracted driving, FBI skimming at pumps, leadership skills, raising money for serenity house, concerns and increases in taxes.
- Suzan Barnes mentioned that the Kansas Restaurant and Hospitality has agreed to submit names for the lodging and restaurant member seats on this council.

Shonda Atwater made an announcement that the Eisenhower library is averaging 2,000 visitors a week

Suzan Barnes announced the next meeting date is Dec 6, 2019, 9 AM – Noon. The location will be announced at a later date. There was a motion to adjourn by Jan Kessinger, Ken Corbet seconded. Passed Unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.