

Visitors Promotion Committee
August 17, 2016
MINUTES

In attendance: Lynne Ireland, Roland Morgan, Dave Wheaton, Amy Dickerson, Trent Fellers, Michelle Waite, Kerry Eagan and Deb Schorr

Staff attending: Derek Feyerherm, Jeff Maul, Kyle Fischer, Ron Kalkwarf, Kathy Dvorak

Call to Order and Introductions:

Lynne Ireland called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m. and introductions were made.

Approval of May and June Minutes:

Ireland asked for a motion to accept the May and June minutes. Dickerson made the motion with the exception of a correction in the June minutes and it was seconded by Wheaton. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of July Financials:

Kalkwarf presented the financials reminding everyone of the fiscal year being July 1 through June 30, consequently the numbers are small as the financials represent one month, July, 2016. Income is \$141,671 which is basically the 1/12th of the Room Tax for the year. Expenses are \$161,757 with big items being Cornhusker State Games and the World TenPin Bowling Tournaments. Net income is (\$20,086). Ireland asked if there were questions regarding the financials. With no questions, Morgan made a motion to accept the financials as presented. The motion was seconded by Wheaton. Motion carried unanimously.

CVB Audit:

Kalkwarf presented the audit report conducted by BKD stating this audit was done in conjunction with the Chamber audit and based on the Chamber's fiscal year. Kalkwarf referred to the Independent Auditor's Report which stated the audit was completed in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States and in their opinion it was a clean audit with no discrepancies. Wheaton asked what "Additional Room Tax" meant under the Statement of Activities with a total of \$215,000. Kalkwarf responded it stood for bid fees. Ireland asked for a motion to accept the audit as presented which was done by Morgan and seconded by Dickerson. Audit report was unanimously accepted.

Directors Report:

Maul stated that previously he stated that 2016 was going to be a big year and that is proving true beginning with the NORCECA Women's Olympic Volley ball qualifier tournament; Dare to Share Youth Ministry; NSAA Championships, Cornhusker Classic Truck and Tractor Pull; FCCLA, FFA, and other Youth Education; Stand Up Tour as well as the Belong Tour (Religious) which is coming next week and expected to bring 10,000 – 12,000 women. This event has been rebranded and restructured and will be even bigger than previous years. Running events continue to grow due to relationship with Pink Gorilla Events. The Lincoln Marathon continues to grow. Other big events are UNL Commencement and the Air Show. Maul thanked Feyerherm for his role in making the air show a huge success. The Cattlemen's Ball was very successful with proceeds going to cancer research at UNMC. Formula SAE and the Thespian Festival also continued their success. The USA Rollersports

Championships were held for the first time at Speedway Village and Maul thanked Fellers for his efforts with the JPA for the required subfloor. This will provide a growth opportunity for next year. Following roller sports was the World Ten Pin Bowling Championships at Sun Valley Lanes with 37 countries represented. In its second year was The Good Guys “Day in the Hay” and numbers were up. The weather did not cooperate, but overall the event was good. Major League Triathlon will be here in August at Holmes Lake and Hawki Futurity and NE Power Farming events will be at the LEC this fall. Lincoln Calling will be held in October and Fischer explained that it will be fashioned after the SXSW events in Austin, TX. Music combined with Technology as well as YPG Week will be the main focus. A UNL component will be demo days and a video game event is being considered with finals to be broadcast on the cube in future years. Sandhills Publishing is hosting their own event a week prior. Maul also reported that the CVB is putting in a bid in November to host the State Games of America in either 2019 or 2021; it will be one or the other, not both. The Be A Tourist campaign wraps up this month. The CVB received a grant from the Nebraska State Tourism to create a video to be used in other cities such as Sioux Falls and Des Moines. Maul is still helping in the search for a new Nebraska Tourism Director and hopes one will be hired in fourth quarter. Staff will be attending the Nebraska Tourism Conference in October in Gering.

Firespring will again handle media buys for 2016-2017; the long-term relationship has been very beneficial. Maul will send out the attraction new construction and renovation/expansion survey for Fall 2016 and with results reported at the November VPC meeting. Work continues on the Solar Eclipse Planning (August 21, 2017) with web development, statewide advertising and Lincoln’s celebration with UNL, LPS and the CVB coordinating. This will be the first day of UNL classes for that semester. The 2017 Visitors Guide is in production with ad space still available. Layout will be the same as this year’s. Maul will be attending the UMCVB Conference in Rapid City, SD in September.

Feyerherm reported on sales leads and proposals with 81 sales leads for 33,666 room nights of which 76% is regional/national and 70% is new business; 19 proposals have been submitted for consideration. There are currently 27 leads pending for 11,749 room nights. Booked Business for 2016 include 66 events booked for 24,498 rooms of which 63% is regional/national and 63% is new business – this is par for this time of the year and anticipate these numbers going up in the fourth quarter. The second half of 2016 is busy tradeshow season and focus will be on multi-year renewals of existing contracts. The sales staff has served on numerous local organizing committees this summer and now will catch up on sales opportunities. Feyerherm attended MeetingsQuest in Bloomington, MN in July along with Paul Tunaken of the Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel. Bombeck will be attending USOC Sportslink in Grapevine, TX August 24 & 25; Feyerherm will attend the Connect Association Conference, August 25 – 27, at the same location with Bombeck attending the Connect Sports Conference August 25 – 27 as well. Bombeck will be attending the S.P.O.R.T.S. Relationship Conference in Overland Park, KS on September 12 – 15 and the CVB plans to submit a bid to host this conference in future years. Tentatively planning along with the Cornhusker Marriott to attend the Aspire Conference in Dayton, OH, but currently the numbers of planners are low so will wait to register. The NASC Market Segment Conference in Indianapolis, IN on October 25 – 26 will be attended as well. Rachel O’Donnell will be attending the Connect Faith conference in Orlando, FL, October 25 – 27. Working with the Cities of the BIG cross promoting between the cities with the focus on football targeting marketing through Facebook and Pandora. By the end of the year, Feyerherm will have conducted one-on-one meetings with all hotel general managers to learn the issues facing them. There are a total of 69 hotels with a new Fairfield near the airport to open on October 2. There have been 22 new hotels in the last eleven

years equating to a 44% increase. Enhancements have been made to the Lincoln.org website to include making the site more responsive; sports facilities filters and adding social media to all profiles. Bombeck will receive his CSEE (Certified Sports Event Executive) designation in September from the National Association of Sports Commissions. It is a four year process in which Bombeck finished in three. O'Donnell is serving on the faculty search committee for the HRTM (Hospitality Restaurant Tourism Management) Program at UNL. Two of the three CVB sales people have graduated from this program. Schorr asked if Bombeck could be recognized at the County Board next Tuesday and Maul stated that the entire staff should be present so the Commissioners can get to know them. Eagan suggested Maul contact his office to set this up.

VPC Committee Vacancy:

Maul reviewed the Voting Member VPC Committee members stating the year their term ends; Ireland's term ends in 2019, Perrett – 2020; Morgan – 2020; Dickerson – 2018 unless she accepts an additional term; Wheaton – 2018; and Wear – 2017; leaving the position formerly held by Lattimer vacant. Member can serve two consecutive four year terms. Maul stated he visited with Ireland regarding possible candidates. Based on requirements for this committee, this vacancy does not need to be filled from the retail sector; however, it is nice to have that perspective. During their discussion one name kept coming up: Jeff Cunningham of the Haymarket Development Corporation who also owns Burlington Antiques and is involved with the Farmer's Market. Cunningham has applied for a grant to this group for assistance with a revised Haymarket waking tour and understands the other side of grant requests and would be a good fit. Another name mentioned was Ann Ringlein of the Lincoln Running Company. Maul and Eagan have talked and would like to have the recommendation presented to the County Board and accepted by the November VPC meeting. Waite stated while she agreed someone from the retail sector was important, were there any other individuals being considered. Maul said they considered Jim Ballard, but since he is running for office is no longer a candidate and Tom Lorenz would like to serve again. Dickerson asked if anyone from Gateway was ever considered and Feyerherm stated that until the last month or so, no one has been engaged with the CVB. Maul asked if they should move forward and talk to Cunningham and if he declines, ask Ringlein. Ireland asked for a motion and Dickerson made the motion to ask Cunningham if he would agree to serve on the VPC Committee and if he declines to ask Ringlein as an alternate; then presenting that name to the County Board for approval. Wheaton seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

New Business:

Deb Schorr wondered about the status of the grant request for the Children's Zoo since there is controversy over the bridge. Schorr asked if the approved grant was specific for the walking bridge or could the funds be used for other needs as long as it fell within our requirements. Maul stated that the zoo has reached out to the County Board members to confirm support. Eagan stated that he talked to Nick Cusick and discussed that if the walking bridge does not happen, to come back to the County Board and the grant request will be modified.

Waite stated she knows the CVB reaches out to the Big Ten cities; but do you reach out to other cities of big games such as the Oregon game will be a big game this year. Feyerherm stated that they do reach out to cities other than in the Big Ten.

Wheaton said that high school volley ball tournaments is the same week as the Minnesota and he is hearing concerns at the hotels when people ask why they can't cancel the second and third night if their team loses. Maul stated that we have always had these issues. Wheaton stated that the football game

is at 7:00 p.m. while the volleyball games should be done by the time football fans arrive. Feyerherm stated that if fans show a football ticket, they will get a discount at the volleyball game. This is something the NSAA has done in the past.

Maul stated that he would like to have a committee formed to look at the grant guidelines – to be sure it fits the statutes and timelines. Looking for a volunteer or two to review these guidelines in the next six months. Dickerson volunteered to review the guidelines since she has been on both sides of the process. She will join Eagan, Maul and Ireland to review.

Dickerson gave an update on the Lancaster County Super Fair stating that while the exact numbers are not in yet, the overall sense is that numbers were up even with events being cancelled due to storms. Dickerson also stated that LEC has been selected as a finalist for the NHSFR finals. The \$3M grant was important to prove credibility and prove what a strong story Lincoln is and Nebraska. Springfield was sent away since they had backed out of a previous bid. Dickerson saw the event and is confident LEC can do it and even saw ways to improve it. The NHSFR committee will be here in September for a site visit and the voting will be in January. Dickerson thanked the committee for their support.

Dickerson asked about an update on the baseball and softball fields. Maul stated that discussions are continuing, but the money is not out there right now. Maul continues to keep it front and center. Schorr asked what the price point would be on an 8 – 12 field complex. Maul stated that it would be \$15-20M to provide all the necessary items needed such as lights, turf and buildings. Dickerson stated that York is opening an 8-plex and that Lincoln is already ahead of what Omaha has to offer. Feyerherm stated LaVista is opening a huge facility. Maul stated that the Slump Buster Tournament is always held in Omaha, Council Bluffs and Fremont as Lincoln is not able to free-up any fields for this tournament.

Adjourn: There being no further discussion Ireland asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dickerson made the motion to adjourn and Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.