

RED WILLOW COUNTY VISITORS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

3:00 p.m.

2nd Floor Boardroom, Keystone Business Center

Minutes

Presiding: Daniel Stramel
Present: Tyler Loop, Bill Lesko, Kerri Unger, Andrea Harms and Carol Schlegel
Absent:
Guest: MPCC Rodeo Team Members - Whitney Jennings, Maggie Underhill and Jace Richter

Call to Order: **Daniel Stramel** called the Red Willow County Visitors Committee (RWCVC) meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Open Meeting Act: Open Meeting Act was available for review.

The agenda was suspended to hear from MPCC Rodeo Team members.

New Business: Sponsorship Request

- MPCC Fundraiser Rodeo
Dates: March 8-9, 2024 Amount Requested: \$ 2,000.00
Whitney Jennings, Maggie Underhill and Jace Richter concerning a sponsorship request for the MPCC Fundraiser Rodeo to be held at the Kiplinger Arena on March 8-9, 2024. The amount requested was \$2,000.00 which would include tickets for the Committee and banner displayed at the rodeo. After discussion a motion was made by **Kerri** and seconded by **Bill** to approve the requested \$2,000.00 sponsorship. Motion carried 5/0.

Following the departure of the MPCC Rodeo Team members, the agenda was resumed.

Minutes: There was a motion made by **Bill** and seconded by **Kerri** to approve the February 6, 2024 minutes. Motion carried 4/0.

Financial Status: Balance in Promotion Fund as of February 29, 2024 = \$ 54,754.39
Balance in Improvement Fund as of February 29, 2024 = \$ 258,388.99
Balance in Promotion Fund Budget as of Feb 29, 2024 = \$ 82,868.63
Balance in Improvement Fund Budget as of Feb 29, 2024 = \$ 280,623.00

Old Business: **LB 1067 – Eliminate the inheritance tax, adopt the State Prisoner Reimbursement Act, and change the authorized uses of certain county funds** – LB 1067 moved out of committee with an amendment to allow the County Commissioners the discretion to use 50% of the collected promotion and improvement fund lodging taxes. While on the floor or debate, Senator Clements introduced an amendment that eliminated the use of lodging taxes at the discretion of the Commissioners. While the underlying bill has been filibustered, the amendment passed so the lodging tax funds are safe and we can proceed as usual.
Revisions to Improvement Fund Grant Application – Carol presented

revisions to the grant application as follows:

- Change match from 50/50% to 25/75%.
- Include the hardship clause: NOTE: Nonprofit organizations who cannot meet the match requirement can qualify for grant funds by including hardship financial documentation in their application describing their financial situation and budget.
- Make allowances for payment at the end of the fiscal year (June) and/or calendar year for multi-year projects.

After discussion a motion was made by **Tyler** and seconded by **Bill** to approve these revisions to the grant application. The motion passed 5/0. **Carol** also brought it to the Committee's attention that already included in the grant guidelines is that, with prior arrangements, a grantee can submit invoices to the Committee and then the vendor is paid directly from through the claim process instead of the grantee being reimbursed.

Improvement Fund Grant Follow Up

- Community Hospital and the City of McCook
Second Disc Golf Course Design Amount Approved: \$ 5,000.00
The City Council has approved the design for the disc golf course to be developed at Barnett Park and Community Hospital has submitted an invoice from Disc Golf Distribution for reimbursement. The reporting is sufficient to process the reimbursement.

Director's Report: LB 624 – Change the provisions relating to Nebraska Tourism – This legislation would put the Commission back under the umbrella of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. This would give DED the authority to hire the executive director and determine direction of the tourism marketing campaigns.

- **AM688** – Amendment to LB 624 allows for the Commission to remain independent of DED but expands the number of Commissions to thirteen (13). This would include eleven (11) members representing geographic districts, one member representing a state chamber of commerce and the Director of Economic Development.

Commissioners would also be limited to two (2) consecutive terms. AM688 was adopted so the Commission will remain independent. This has not been debated on the floor and there is some concern that it will be further amended. The NETA lobbyist has been keeping the membership informed of any developments and when contact needs to be made with our senators.

Prairie Chicken Dance Tours – **Carol** distributed a revised calendar for the tours. Reservations are still being made and while Trina McPherson has agreed to drive for three of the tours, since bookings are still coming in, **Carol** may still need more drivers. She will keep everyone informed.

Pure Nebraska – March 11-12, 2024 – Grace McDonald – Pure Nebraska is going to be in McCook on March 11-12 to do several stories on the Creative District. **Carol** is making arrangements for her to talk with people connected with the 6th Floor Project and Art Bank. **Grace**

will also be going out to see the Prairie Chickens on Tuesday, March 12.

Carol invited anyone on the Committee to join them.

Nebraska Passport Stop – The Scoop Ice Cream Shop has been selected as a stop on the 2024 Nebraska Passport. Carol will be meeting with the Chamber of Commerce on Thursday to discuss options for capitalizing on the increased traffic to McCook.

New Business:

Pacer.AI – Carol presented information about Pacer.AI, a data mining company that tracks cell phones and app usage to develop research as to visitations for specific locations and events. After discussion the Committee agreed that the cost was too high for the benefits.

USA Today – ¼ page - \$1,500.00 – After discussion a motion was made by **Tyler** and seconded by **Kerri** to continue our ad placement in the Midwest edition of the USA Today Travel. Motion carried 5/0.

Approval of Claims: The following claims were submitted for payment:

Claim Summary – Promotion Fund 0990 879

Visa Statement

• 2-6030 Facebook – PCDT	38.93	
• 2-1751 Adobe Subscription	64.49	103.42
2-1012 MEDC – Printing/Copies		103.10
2-1751 HonorboundIT Service Plan		25.00
2-6000 February Wages		4,091.67
Flagship Publishing		
• 2-6030 2024 NE Traveler 1/3 page ad	1,600.00	
• 2-6030 Colorado Life 1/3 page ad	615.00	2,215.00
2-6030 Bison Alumni Newsletter-Spring 2024 ½ pg ad		400.00
2-6070 MPCC Fundraiser Rodeo Sponsorship		<u>2,000.00</u>
		8,938.19

A motion was made by **Kerri** to pay the claims as presented with the inclusion of the MPCC Fundraiser Rodeo Sponsorship that was approved previously during the meeting. The motion was seconded by **Bill**. Motion carried 5/0

Claim Summary – Improvement Fund 0995 879

2-6070 Community Hospital – Second Disc Golf Course Design 5,000.00

A motion was made by **Andrea** and seconded by **Tyler** to pay the claim as presented. Motion carried 5/0.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Carol Schlegel