

RED WILLOW COUNTY VISITORS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 5, 2024

1:00 p.m.

2nd Floor Boardroom, Keystone Business Center

Minutes

- Presiding:** Daniel Stramel
- Present:** Kerri Unger, Andrea Harms and Carol Schlegel
- Absent:**
- Guests:** Sarah Schneider and McCook OG Media
- Call to Order:** **Daniel Stramel** called the Red Willow County Visitors Committee (RWCVC) meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.
- Open Meeting Act:** Open Meeting Act was available for review.
This meeting was rescheduled from the original Tuesday, March 4, 2025. The original meeting was postponed due to a snowstorm that made it impossible for Kerri Unger and Carol Schlegel to attend. This resulted in a quorum not being present.
- Minutes:** There was a motion made by **Kerri** and seconded by **Andrea** to approve the February 4, 2025 minutes. Motion carried 3/0.
- Financial Status:**
- | | | |
|---|----|------------|
| Balance in Promotion Fund as of February 28, 2025 = | \$ | 63,469.39 |
| Balance in Improvement Fund as of February 28, 2025 = | \$ | 217,734.80 |
| Balance in Promotion Fund Budget as of Feb 28, 2025 = | \$ | 83,170.92 |
| Balance in Improvement Fund Budget as of Feb 28, 2025 = | \$ | 239,204.94 |
| Petty Cash Fund Balance | \$ | 66.04 |
- Old Business:**
- Explore McCook App** – **Carol** presented analytics on the app usage to date. **Sarah Schneider** expressed frustration at the unequal workload of promoting and developing the app. An agreement to increase communication through emails was reached to resolve the issue.
- McCook Brand** – **Carol** has been participating to establish a McCook brand that is being spearheaded by the Creative District. A concept has been presented but is not ready for release.
- YMCA Construction Schedule** – **Carol** distributed a timeline for the construction project at the YMCA.
- TravelStorys – Website Plugin** – There is now a plugin on VisitMcCook.com for the historic walking tour. The plugin is located under the “History” tab.
- Visit Nebraska Marketing Grant** – The Visitors Bureau applied for a Visit Nebraska Marketing Grant and was successful in being awarded \$7,500.00. The grant funds will be used to promote the “Explore McCook” app through ads in the 2026 Visit Nebraska Travel Guide, Destination Nebraska E-Newsletter and quarterly banner ad on VisitNebraska.com. In addition, the grant funds will be to promote two of our premier events, Buffalo Commons Storytelling & Music Festival and Heritage Days, with ads in the Destination Nebraska E-Newsletter and Social Media Blitzes.
- MPCC Rodeo Team Banquet / Sponsorship** – **Daniel and Leslie Stramel** and **Mike and Carol Schlegel** attended the MPCC Rodeo Team Banquet in North Platte on March 1, 2025. Carol reported that there has

been a change in how MPCC is handling the sponsorships in that previous sponsors will be invoiced in September for the year. The Committee can then make a decision on the sponsorship. The MPCC Rodeo Team Fundraiser Rodeo will be held on March 7-8, 2025 at the Kiplinger Arena.

Director's Report: **Nebraska Travel Conference** – Due to weather issues, **Carol** attended all of the Travel Conference with the exception of the Awards Banquet. She attended sessions on AI and Digital Accessibility that will require more in-depth study to determine how to best utilize them to our best advantage. **Opposition to LB261 – Nebraska Tourism Association (NETA)** is requesting opposition to LB261 which proposes reduction of roughly \$3 million in spending authority for Tourism Promotion over the next two years. **Staffing Changes – Kaya Kinne**, the graphic designer we shared with the Chamber and MEDC, is no longer working with the group. Angela Allen has left her position with the MEDC and Billie McKinney has been hired as the Office Manager. **Prairie Chicken Dance Tours** – The first tour is scheduled for March 12-13. **Carol** asked for drivers for tours scheduled on Saturday, April 12 and Tuesday, April 22. **Daniel** is available on April 12 and **Kerri** on April 22. **Nebraska Life – Ariella Nardizzi**, a free lance writer for **Nebraska Life** magazine visited McCook and met with **Carol** to introduce herself and get ideas for future articles. She also met with **Sarah** and **Ronda Graff**. **National Versatility Ranch Horse Association Finals – October 2025-2026-2027** – **Carol** met with **Ann Goebel**, who has contracted to hold their **Versatility Ranch Horse Association Finals** at the Kiplinger Arena for the next three (3) years. **Carol** provided her with “**Explore McCook**” posters and cards to display and distribute at their events leading up to the October finals.

New Business: **2025 USA Today Midwest** – After discussion a motion was made by **Andrea** and seconded by **Kerri** to place a ¼ page ad in the **2025 USA Today Midwest** publication. Motion carried 3/0. The ad will feature the “**Explore McCook**” app.

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

Claim Summary – Promotion Fund 0990 879

Visa Statement

• 2-1751 NE Travel Conference Registration	250.00	
• 2-1700 Travel Expenses – Travel Conference	597.29	
• 2-1751 Adobe Subscription	64.49	
• 2-6050 Freeman Corporation – Omaha Show	<u>98.44</u>	1,010.21
2-1751 HonorboundIT Service Plan		<u>25.00</u>
		1,035.21

A motion was made by **Kerri** to pay the claims as presented on the agenda and was seconded by **Andrea**. Motion carried 3/0

Claim Summary – Promotion Fund 0990 879

2-6000 February Wages 4,296.25

A motion was made by **Andrea** to pay the claims as presented and was seconded by **Kerri**. Motion carried 3/0

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Schlegel