

## **MINUTES**

### **Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition (WNTC) Membership Meeting via Zoom Thursday, September 16, 2021**

In attendance: Kerri Rempp (Dawes County/Northwest NE), Karla Niedan-Streeks (Gering Visitors Bureau), Kirsten Parker (Golden Spike Tower), Brenda Leisy (Scotts Bluff Area Visitors Bureau), Katlyn Norris (City of Alliance/Box Butte Development Corporation-Tourism), Jeni Mattern (City of Terrytown), Jessica Rocha (Kimball County Visitors Committee), Tara Spencer (Omaha Magazine), Gil Cohen (Omaha Magazine), Derek Joy (Omaha Magazine), Dusty Barner (Dusty Trails LLC), Kevin Howard (Cheyenne County/Sidney Visitors Bureau), Karen Kollars (Nebraska Tourism), Regin Osburn (Cherry County/Valentine Tourism) and Susan Unzicker (Alliance Chamber of Commerce).

**Call to Order:** Chairman Kerri Rempp called the September WNTC meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Self-introductions were made by those in attendance and community updates shared with all.

**Approval of Agenda:** It was M/Kevin Howard, 2/Jessica Rocha to approve the agenda for the September 16, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes:** It was M/Karla Niedan-Streeks, 2/Dusty Barner to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2021 WNTC meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Financial Reports:** Treasurer Kirsten Parker presented the financial reports for WNTC; reports sent out in the meeting packet were transactions through July 2021 and she received reports from Oregon Trail Community Foundation prior to the meeting that reflect financial activity through August 2021. Following discussion; WNTC financial reports presented in the meeting packet were approved to file for record pending audit.

**Support Services:** Kirsten Parker, WNTC Support Services Contractor reported 102 packets sent out in July, 31 packets in August and to date in September 21 packets out. Only 2 phone calls on the 800 number; Brenda reported 8/10 calls on the 800 number while housed at her offices. Membership thanked Kirsten for the Membership Updates which were good information and communication for our members as well as reminders of upcoming important events and dates.

#### **Marketing Committee Report:**

Website: Kevin Howard reported Regina is doing a great job as webmaster; updating all new and renewal members information. Regina stated she is needing some key photography for the site; she will provide a list of those needs and Karla/Kirsten will communicate the needed photography to the membership.

Facebook: Kirsten stated with change in personnel in Alliance and Ogallala; the committee needs another person to serve on the committee. They post 4 posts each month; each committee member takes one week to post information on WNTC area/member information. Top post recently was post on Oshkosh.

Destination Western Nebraska Magazine: Chairman Karla Niedan-Streeks reported the staffs at Omaha Magazine attending the meeting to proceed on timeline for production of the new 2022 Destination Travel Guide to include presentations today on cover options, advertising schedules and the "lottery" drawing process for the premier advertising locations in the 2022 publication.

- Derek Joy presented three cover options for consideration and discussion; versions 1 and 2 stayed with theme of multiple photos showing activity in the region and version 3 was a single photo option. Members in attendance agreed multiple photos better represented the entire region; recommendation was to switch the “badlands photo” from version 1 into the center of version 2.
- Version 2 with the photo change was the favorite cover option; Derek was asked to clean-up the speckles in the title font so printing shows up much better. All like the top 1/3 of version 2 as it would appear in a brochure rack that wouldn’t just be plain blue sky.
- Concerns that the bottom tanks in version 2 look too cropped in; Derek will contact Steve at Maly Marketing who took the original photo and make improvements to eliminate the cropped in look of those tanks.
- Asked Derek what deadline would be to make decision on whether or not to remove 800 number from cover; first week of November.
- Brenda Leisy commented she liked the cycling photo from the first version as this activity is popular in all as of WNTC; group agreed but felt the photo was too similar to the 2020 guide.

Derek will make the tweaks to Cover Option #2 as requested; it was M/Kevin Howard, 2/Jessica Rocha to allow the WNTC Executive Committee to approve the final version (version #2 with revisions) for the 2022 Destination Travel Guide cover. Motion carried unanimously. As soon as the final version is ready and approved by the Executive Committee; the cover will be sent out to the WNTC membership.

Karla reported that she has a complete file that has been submitted by members of changes, revisions, new additions for the internal content of the guide and she will send that file to Derek.

Lottery for Premier Placements in 2022 Guide: Karla explained the process for lottery drawing for the premier placements in the guide; member destination marketing organizations are eligible to have their names included in the drawing for one or more of the premier placements. Kirsten explained the DMO’s are the only entities eligible; they represent an “area” for premier spaces in the guide and these premier spaces help pay for the guide (primarily the shipping costs) and provide for some funds coming back to the Coalition as proceeds for the publication. Gil Cohen from Omaha Magazine presented the list and pricing of the 2022 guide premier spaces (9 total premier spaces):

- Inside Front Cover (pages 2 & 3) - \$3,225.00 each page
- Inside Back Cover and adjacent page (last 2 pages of guide) - \$3,195.00 each
- Back Cover - \$3,995.00
- Lead pages into the 4 different regions - \$3,095.00 each for Pine Ridge, Trails West, Wild West and Sandhills & Scenic Rivers sections

Coalition will print 50,000 copies of the 2022 guide; which comes to less than 8 cents per copy for the #1 premier space (back cover) for return on investment for that winning advertiser. Rate sheets for all advertising will be completed by Omaha Magazine and emailed to the membership early next week. Kirsten/Karla/Gil will coordinate the Lottery Drawing process and timeframe to be determined for interested DMO’s to have their names entered into the drawing for premier spots(s) and communicate to all member DMO’s.

Confirmed that Omaha Magazine will also sell the website leader boards; that will be an addendum to the rate sheet that will be sent to the membership after Omaha Magazine talks with Maly Marketing about those website placements and costs.

Black Hills Sports Show: Membership discussed whether or not to participate in the 2022 Black Hills Outdoor Expo; discussion on who would be able to go to Rapid City and set-up and man the booth. The Coalition does pay a daily stipend for members to attend/man the booth; however, have had

some difficulty in the past getting people to go. Regina attends the show for Valentine; takes the Destination Magazines and provides good representation for the Coalition in her booth. Following discussion; it was M/Karla Niedan-Streeks, 2/Kirsten Parker for WNTC not to have a booth at the 2022 Show; and to talk with Regina from Valentine to see if WNTC could provide some financial assistance to her to ship the Destination Magazine as she is providing the service to WNTC. Motion carried unanimously. Any members who might be interested in assisting Regina in working the Valentine booth at the Black Hills Show were asked to contact her directly.

**Destination Magazine Inventory Counts:** Members shared the following boxes of Destination Magazines they currently have at their locations. Sidney-21, Kimball-23, Gering-3, Scotts Bluff County-45, Terrytown-0, Golden Spike-0, Ogallala-a few, Valentine-22, Alliance 1 and Alliance Chamber 4 boxes.

**Membership Committee:** Chairman Kerri Rempp stated the Membership Committee is still needing a permanent Committee Chairman and additional members. Acting Committee Chairman Karla Niedan-Streeks presented a Membership of New Members and Membership Renewals. Rocky Hollow Buffalo Company-Kimball, Double L Country Store-Harrisburg and Roadside Inn-Thedford were welcomed as the newest members of the Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition. A copy of the Membership Report is attached to these minutes.

**Nominating Committee:** Officer positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman are up for renewal; a Nominating Committee was assembled to present a slate to the Membership at the November meeting. Serving on the Nominating Committee are: Kevin Howard-Sidney, Brenda Leisy-Scotts Bluff County and Suzan Unzicker-Alliance Chamber of Commerce.

**Nebraska Tourism Commission Report:** Karen Kollars reported the State has reserved their same booth/location for the 2022 National Western Stock Show in Denver January 8-23, 2022; a block of rooms for those working the show has been reserved at the Holiday Inn Denver East in Denver. Karen will provide the sign-up list for WNTC members volunteering to work the show; that information along with the WNTC travel reimbursement amounts/policies will be sent to the membership for all to get signed up to work in Denver. The 2021 Nebraska Tourism Conference will be held in Grand Island in October; room block at Ramada Grand Island for lodging for the conference. The 2022 Passport Program applications are out; deadline to submit applications is November 30, 2021.

**2021-2022 WNTC Meeting Locations:** The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 10:00 am (MST) and this in-person meeting will be held in Valentine. The January meeting date which will coincide with those traveling to work the first weekend of the Stock Show in Denver will be held on January 6, 2022 in Sidney.

There being no further business, the September WNTC membership meeting via Zoom adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karla Niedan-Streeks – WNTC Secretary