

## MINUTES

### Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition Membership Meeting September 21, 2023 – Midwest Theater – Scottsbluff

In Attendance: Lisa Burke (Visit North Platte), Steve Maly (Maly Marketing), Desiree Drane-Davison (Riverside Discovery Center), Hal Enevoldsen (Point of Rocks Motel & Campground), Trevor Teichroeb (YMCA of Scottsbluff), Kendra Mitchell (Cheyenne County Tourism), Kerri Rempp (Discover NW Nebraska), Brenda Leisy (Scotts Bluff Area Visitors Bureau), Natasha McFaul (Kimball County Visitors Center), Tina Worthman (Midwest Theater) and Karla Niedan-Streeks (Gering Visitors Bureau).

Chairman Kerri Rempp called the meeting to order at 11:04 am. Self-introductions and community updates were shared.

Consent Agenda: Kerri Rempp stated the agenda for today's meeting needs to be revised to include discussions on the Treasurer's appointment. It was M/Lisa Burke, 2/Brenda Leisy to approve the consent agenda and amended meeting agenda. Motion carried.

Education: Nebraska Tourism Commission's Madison Johnson and Heather Hogue joined the meeting via Zoom. Madison shared information on the 2024 Nebraska Passport application. The on-line application is simple and those applying should not be intimidated by the questions that ask the who, what, where and why an attraction desires to be on the Passport. Requirement that the attraction be open during the week and a minimum of one day on the weekend. The more passion and excitement defined in the application goes a long way for the consideration of selections. Outdoor attractions are good; and can be paired with near-by attractions as stamping locations. The application for the 2024 Passport stops is open until the end of November; 70 locations will be selected for the 2024 Passport.

Heather Hogue described the upcoming Nebraska Tourism Commission Marketing Grant Cycle which opens on October 16, 2023 to apply; deadline for applications is December 8, 2023 with the goal of having grant awards announced by February 1, 2024. Timeline of projects for this grant cycle are those taking place between February 1, 2024 thru May 2025. The Tourism Marketing funds are ideal for smaller budget for profit and non-profit entities; need to have a federal id number and these funds can assist with all types of general marketing efforts. Up to \$25,000 max applications with a 25% matching funds and a portion of the matching funds can be in-kind services. These funds cannot be used for advertising locally but are to be used for outside of the area marketing.

Community Impact Grant funds are for large scale national or international events to recruit visitors from out of state to get national or international press coverage. Anything pertaining to marketing and mass media plans can apply; grant fund amounts range from \$25,000 up to \$250,000 and this fund is a dollar-for-dollar match. Tips on what makes a good application: Group or regional marketing projects are favorable with a number of different entities collaborating on a marketing effort (this tends to score higher with the judges), new projects that haven't been tried before and new target areas of marketing.

Elections: The Executive Committee informed the membership that Kirsten Parker currently serving as Treasurer of WNTC has communicated her desire to relinquish her duties in this capacity. WNTC

also needs to fill the Vice Chairman unexpired term held by Mike Kesselring. The Executive Committee recommendation is to nominate Hal Enevoldsen to fill the term of Vice Chairman. Following discussion; it was M/Karla Niedan-Streeks, 2/Lisa Burke to appoint Hal to the Vice Chairman office. Motion carried unanimously. The Executive Committee recommends appointment of Kendra Mitchell to fill the term of Treasurer; it was M/Hal Enevoldsen, 2/Lisa Burke to appoint Kendra to Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously. The Executive Committee will work with Hal and Kendra to orient them into their new Executive Committee positions and Hal and Kendra were congratulated and thanked by the membership for their service.

Marketing Committee: Lisa Burke, Chairman of the Marketing Committee introduced Steve Maly to present a recap of the 2023 Marketing Plan and results. A copy of the Marketing review is attached to these minutes.

Lisa/Kerri gave an overview of the Facebook Committee posts over the summer; the group will begin an aggressive social media posting schedule for this fall.

Karla Niedan-Streeks presented information to the membership on the 2024 Destination Western Nebraska Travel Guide. Omaha Magazine is producing the 2024 publication; and their sales staffs are making calls to advertisers for ad renewals and new advertising sales. All County representatives and members were asked to review their sections of the 2023 publication; contact Karla ([karla@visitgering.com](mailto:karla@visitgering.com)) within the next week of any changes, revisions and/or new photography for their areas/sections of the publication. **The production schedule from Omaha Magazine that was approved by the Executive Committee is as follows: Content revisions deadline of September 25, Proof 1 review on October 25, Proof 2 review on November 6, Proof 3 review on November 20, Final sign-off before print on December 1.** Omaha Magazine will present front cover options to the Executive Committee the first of October; the Executive Committee will narrow to 2-3 options and present to the membership for their review, input and selection.

Members gave their current inventories of 2023 guides on hand: North Platte-30 boxes, Chadron-4 boxes, Gering-2 boxes, Scotts Bluff County-7 boxes, YMCA-1 box, Sidney-19 boxes. North Platte and/or Sidney will bring supplies to the Travel Conference in Gering in October for distribution.

Kendra updated the group on the bags for Stock Show 2024; WNTC will purchase 2,500 red cloth bags to use at Stock Show. Currently there are 7 entities signed up to pay \$540.00 to have their logo on the bags: Gering, NW Nebraska, Visit North Platte, Scotts Bluff County, Sidney/Cheyenne County and Golden Spike Tower and Kimball. **TWO MORE PARTNERS ARE NEEDED for the bags; contact Kendra at [director@visitsidneyne.com](mailto:director@visitsidneyne.com) if you are interested in this great advertising opportunity!**

Lisa Burke shared information on the WNTC coop-advertising opportunity and membership benefit. When the initial information went out; it wasn't presented to the members as desired and June was the wrong timeframe as it is the busiest time for our members. One member did participate; Trailside Museum and Steve Maly shared the success of their coop partnership. Lisa stated that new information will go out to the members via Constant Contact; this opportunity will be for members only. A copy of the coop advertising opportunity outline is attached to these minutes.

WNTC Membership: Karla has been serving as interim Marketing Committee Chairman; she and Kerri will work with Hal as our new Vice Chairman and in that capacity will serve as our WNTC Marketing Chairman.

Nebraska Tourism Commission Report: Karen Kollars was unable to attend today's meeting; her written report is attached to these minutes. The 2024 Nebraska Stock Show Work Schedule is also attached to these minutes; **room block for those working the show is at the Doubletree by Hilton; \$109.00 per room and December 17, 2023 is the deadline for this room block.**

Starr Lehl; Western Nebraska representative on the Tourism Commission Board was unable to attend. Members requested that our representative submit a written report from the Commission in the future if they are unable to attend the WNTC meetings.

2023-2024 Meeting Locations: Our November 16, 2023 WNTC meeting will be held via Zoom. The January meeting will be held in Sidney immediately before the start of Stock Show; January 4, 2024 meeting will be held in Sidney at a location to be determined. Members working the stock show the first weekend will take red cloth bag supplies with them from this meeting in Sidney.

There being no further business, the September WNTC meeting adjourned at 12:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karla Niedan-Streeks, Secretary  
September 21, 2023