

## MINUTES

### Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition Membership Meeting

Thursday, November 18, 2021 – Valentine

**In Attendance:** Karla Scott (Keith County Chamber), Karla Niedan-Streeks (Gering Visitors Bureau), Steve Maly (Maly Marketing), Bill Burdett (Horizons Without Bounds, LLC), Breanna Wirth (Valentine Economic Development), Mike Burge (Valentine Economic Development), Dean Jacobs (Valentine Chamber), Kyle Argan Bright (Mayor of Valentine), Natasha Smith (Golden Spike Tower), Lisa Burke (North Platte Visitors Bureau), Kirsten Parker (Golden Spike Tower), Jane Kuchta (Golden Spike Tower), Karen Kollars (Nebraska Tourism Commission), Regina Osburn (Cherry County Tourism), Kerri Rempp (Northwest NE Tourism), Kevin Howard (Sidney/Cheyenne County Tourism) and Jessica Rocha (Kimball Area Tourism).

**Call to Order:** Chairman Kerri Rempp called the November meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. Self-introductions were made by the WNTC membership in attendance; welcome and information presented by community representatives and the City of Valentine.

**Approval of Agenda:** It was M/Kevin Howard, 2/Jessica Rocha to approve the agenda for the November 18, 2021 meeting. Motion carried.

**Minutes:** Secretary Karla Niedan-Streeks presented the minutes; correction made on the spelling of Regina Osburn's name in the September minutes. It was M/Karla Niedan-Streeks, 2/Kirsten Parker to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2021 meeting as amended. Motion carried.

**Financial Reports:** Treasurer Kirsten Parker presented the financial reports for WNTC; reports were sent out to the membership in the meeting packet and reflected activity through September 2021. Immediately prior to today's meeting; Kirsten received the October financial reports from OTCF which are to be reconciled. Current fund balance for WNTC as of today's meeting is \$39,448.40. Following discussion; WNTC Financial Reports presented in the meeting packet were filed for record pending audit.

**Support Services:** Golden Spike Tower, contract of services for WNTC, staffs were introduced to the membership. Jane Kuchta will lead the support services efforts at Golden Spike. Kirsten explained the 800 number still is monitored by Scotts Bluff County; nominal calls have come in on the 800 number. January's meeting agenda will include action to release and no longer market with an 800 number for WNTC. Packet requests have slowed down since the last meeting; total of 31.

**Marketing Committee:** Marketing Committee Chair Lisa Burke reported on the Marketing Committee meeting held prior to today's WNTC meeting. Steve Maly-Maly Marketing outlined in detail the results of the Coalition's recent marketing efforts in television, social media and print which generated impressive results of over 900,000 overall impressions for a \$11,200 marketing spend. A copy of the Maly Marketing campaign results is attached to these minutes.

Lisa said WNTC will submit an application for a State Marketing grant prior to the December 10, 2021 submission deadline for a ½ page ad in the 2023 NE Travel Guide, 6-month banner ads on the state website and additional \$4,000 for upgrades to the WNTC website. At the March 2022 WNTC Meeting; Maly Marketing will present the advertising plan for the 2022 marketing campaign.

Regina Osburn reported some member updates have been made to the WNTC website; important that we send additional communication to our members to check their listings on the site and get revisions-corrections to Regina. Suggested that at the January meeting we include agenda item to pull up the site and show members specific areas on the site to check their information and relay changes.

Kirsten reported the Facebook committee members continue to work on WNTC posts; posting duties is divided up between members of the committee (Kirsten, Jessica, Kerri and Regina) and important for the membership to send the committee content on upcoming events, etc. for future scheduled posts. The committee has started "Membership Monday's" as a membership perk for WNTC to highlight members and their services for followers.

Karla reported that Omaha Magazine is working on all the submitted revisions for the 2022 Destination Western Nebraska Travel Guide as submitted by the members and county representatives. Publication is on a narrow timeline; when Omaha Magazine gets the proofs submitted, they will go out to County representatives "TO PROOF" and make final corrections for print. Karla is expecting those proofs from Omaha Magazine within the next week; the 2022 final cover has been approved by the Executive Committee and the 800 number has been removed from the front of the guide.

**Destination Magazine Inventory:** By cases; the following are the 2020-2021 Destination Magazine inventories as of today's meeting: Chadron-14, North Platte-45, Gering-6, Ogallala-0, Sidney-5, Kimball-18. All were in agreement when the new 2022 Destinations are received; locations are asked to dispose of/recycle all the old publications.

**Stock Show Reimbursements:** Membership was reminded to sign-up to work the 2022 National Western Stock Show; WNTC provides a membership incentive to work the show. Any WNTC member in good standing who works the Stock Show for a minimum of two-shifts over two days will receive a \$125.00 reimbursement stipend per day for a maximum reimbursement of \$250.00 for working the show. One reimbursement is allowed per membership in the Coalition.

**WNTC Membership Committee:** Karla Niedan-Streeks as acting WNTC Membership Chairman reported 2021-2022 dues payments have been coming in well. To date; only Hooker and Thomas County dues are outstanding and approximately 14 private member dues still outstanding. Membership Committee will provide a list of outstanding dues to all county representatives to ask for their assistance in contacting members to encourage payment of dues; and reminding members of the membership benefits. At the January meeting of WNTC; action will be taken to write-off any unpaid memberships and remove membership benefits on the website and other marketing efforts. The Membership Committee requests additional volunteers and a permanent chairman to lead the committee in 2022.

**Nominating Committee:** Kevin Howard as Chairman of the Nominating Committee presented to the membership the slate of officers for Chairman and Vice Chairman; Kerri Rempp has agreed to serve a second term as Chairman and Jessica Rocha has agreed to serve a second term as Vice-Chairman. It was M/Kirsten Parker, 2/Lisa Burke to elect Kerri and Jessica to second terms. Motion carried unanimously.

**Nebraska Tourism Commission Update:** Karen Kollars reminded all that Marketing Grant applications are due by December 10; Game and Parks Commission has also announced Watchable Wildlife grant opportunities. Karen shared numbers about another successful Passport Campaign; and 160 industry professionals attended the 2021 Tourism Conference in Grand Island. The 2022 Tourism Conference

dates are October 25-27, 2022 in South Sioux City. National Western Stock Show dates are January 8-23, 2022; a block of rooms is held at Holiday Inn East and there are many slots open for volunteers to man the booth in Denver. Karen explained that the Commission's contract for sponsoring National Western Stock Show is up for renewal in 2022; John Ricks will make the recommendations to the Commission during their February meeting for future sponsorships of NWSS by the state. Sponsoring the NWSS booth can only happen with assistance of volunteers to work the booth. It is imperative that the WNTC members continue to provide the majority of volunteerism in the booth and that WNTC shows our support of this important marketing effort for our area and the entire state.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates & Locations:** The January 6, 2022 meeting is scheduled for Sidney; location in Sidney to be announced. Discussion and clarification on WNTC's policy on the WNTC meeting time; depending on the previously established 10:00 time start; with cities in our region in two different time zones it creates issues for members traveling long distances to make the 10:00 am start time.

Following discussion; it was M/Kevin Howard, 2/Kirsten Parker to establish a new standing policy that the WNTC Membership Meetings will be held at 11:00 a.m. in the designated city of each meeting; depending on location within the Coalition's region the 11:00 meeting time may be 11:00 am Mountain Time or 11:00 am Central Time. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the November WNTC meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karla Niedan-Streeks – WNTC Secretary  
November 18, 2021