

## MINUTES

### WNTC Membership Meeting

May 16, 2023 – North Platte – Visit North Platte Offices

Attendance: Karla Niedan-Streeks (Gering Visitors Bureau), Brenda Leisy (Scotts Bluff Area Visitors Bureau), Bev Wellnitz (Sheridan County Tourism), Lisa Burke (Visit North Platte), Karen Kollars (Nebraska Tourism), Kerri Rempp (Discover Northwest Nebraska), Kimberly Martin (Golden Spike Tower), Kendra Mitchell (Cheyenne County Tourism) and Amanda Connick (Visit North Platte).

Chairman Kerri Rempp called the May WNTC meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Attendees made self-introductions and gave community updates.

Consent Agenda: It was M/Lisa Burke, 2/Kendra Mitchell to approve the May Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Education: Karla from the Gering Visitors Bureau shared information on how the Gering Visitors Bureau utilizes the Destination Western Nebraska Travel Guide to promote our region locally. Some of Gering-Scottsbluff hotels distribute copies in rooms and in lobby areas; others do not cite “corporate policies”. Destination magazines are included in ALL convention/meeting welcome bags, distributed to all advertisers and attractions in Gering-Scottsbluff. Primary distribution is thru fulfillment requests in Gering-Scottsbluff and in visitor information centers in Gering. Other members in attendance shared distribution at hotels, restaurants, quick trips and other tourism outlets in their cities/areas.

Election of Officers: The WNTC Secretary and Treasurer officer terms are up as of the May 2023 meeting. Kirsten Parker serves as the WNTC Treasurer, and Karla Niedan-Streeks currently serves as the WNTC Secretary. Nominations from the floor were opened. It was M/Kendra Mitchell, 2/Lisa Burke to cease nominations; and to appoint Kirsten Parker to serve another term as Treasurer and to appoint Karla Niedan-Streeks to serve another term as Secretary. Motion carried.

Budget: Treasurer Kirsten Parker presented financial reports and new budget in the packet emailed to the membership prior to the meeting. Invoices for the 2023-2024 WNTC Membership Dues will go out in June; first issue of invoices via email and if needed a second issue of invoices by snail mail. Following discussions on the 2023-2024 WNTC Budget; it was M/Karla Niedan-Streeks, 2/Bev Wellnitz to adopt the budget as presented. Motion carried.

By-Laws: WNTC membership in attendance approved the recommended by-law changes in March 2023; Amended bylaws were emailed out with March meeting minutes following membership approval. Following discussion; it was M/Kendra Mitchell, 2/Lisa Burke to accept and officially adopt by-laws as amended at the March meeting. Motion carried.

Marketing Committee: Marketing Chairman Lisa Burke presented information on the marketing plans for next year; including a new Pay to Play marketing option that will mirror a social media blitz format similar to what Nebraska Tourism Commission offers. The opportunity will give members more benefits; raise additional marketing funds for WNTC. The campaign is very inexpensive; gives WNTC members opportunity to advertise and WNTC will run the social media ad for a week for a \$250.00 cost and impressions and click thru' s

guaranteed. Can spend twice as much and get a lot more impressions and click-thrus. Sign up on WNTC website; select a week; it goes away from sign-up calendar. Can't do more than one entity a week. Complete details of the new marketing opportunity will be mailed to WNTC Members who can sign-up to participate.

Website: Webmaster Kendra shared analytics from the website. Golfing in April was moved up list for pages, #3. Kendra will continue to work on getting the site updated and correcting errors on pages; Website committee will make another plea to membership to go to the site and get their information updated and corrected for the coming season.

Facebook: Kerri did not pull the stats; committee will get an actual calendar put together again for the members of the committee post on specified dates. Content from members and their area should be submitted to the Facebook committee.

Destination 2023: Quantities on hand reported at this meeting: Kendra has a lot, Karla has 6 boxes, take some to Pine Bluffs, Kerri has 85-90 boxes, Brenda has 21 boxes. Contract with Omaha Magazine is up. Following discussion, it was M/Karla, 2/Lisa to negotiate a one-year contract with Omaha Magazine to produce the 2024 Destination Western Nebraska Travel Guide. Karla will get new ad schedule from Omaha magazine; let Visitors Bureaus know when they are coming, they can inform their members so that ad sales can be better for Omaha magazine. Need Omaha Magazine to develop and provide an ad sales schedule and utilize an in-person sales effort for 2024.

Bags for NWSS: WNTC will produce red cloth bags to distribute information at the 2024 National Western Stock Show. On the bags; there is room for 10-12 partners; WNTC logo on one side and other side will be the 10-12 partners. Kendra will spearhead development of the 2024 bags; Kim will email her vendor source options. Total quantity; produce 2000, 2500 get quotes. Communities signing up at the May meeting to participate in the bags are: Sidney, North Platte, Spike, Chadron, Gering, Scotts Bluff County. Deadline for participation; August 15, 2023.

Brochure Swap: Today after the meeting all will go to the storage unit to load and transport boxes to Kearney. Arrangements have been made to unload them at the Kearney swap location today.

Membership Update: All shared some humorous thoughts about Mike Kesselring looking down from heaven and chuckling as WNTC needs to find a new Membership Chairman. Karla will serve as acting Membership Chairman; efforts underway to find a new permanent chairman.

Tourism Commission Update: Recruitment of Dave Wolf was successful; his application to serve as the Western Region representative on the Commission is in the Governor's que for appointment. Starr Lehl is not seeking another term on the commission. It is not known when the Governor will make the appointments to the Commission; NTC will get notice from the Governor's office of when he intends to appointment the new terms.

Karen Kollars shared lodging tax continues to grow; March broke all records. 10 of last 12w months have been record breaking months. Applied for national byway grant; did not receive the grant. DOT is doing a debriefing to see why Nebraska wasn't accepted. Another cycle in 2023; will find out why they did not approve Nebraska's application. \$20 million already approved for 2023; Nebraska will apply again for additional funds from 2023 cycle. Video series or show with all the byways; each byway could take segments and use in their own area.

Displays to take to shows; not a minimum of \$500,000 in this round. Jared Walker with DOT will coordinate and is very supportive and very interested in moving forward on second application. NTC summer campaign kicked off May 8, Denver, KC, Sioux Fall, Chicago, Milwaukee, Wichita; after kick off, averaging 4-5 thousand hits on website. The Tourism Commission meeting today at 3:00 pm; May 17 travel counselor season starts. October Tourism Conference will be held in Gering October 17-19, 2023.

WNTC Meeting locations: Brenda will host September meeting in Gering-Scottsbluff, November WNTC meeting will be by Zoom, January 2024 meeting in Sidney and March 2024 meeting will be via Zoom.

Other business. Professionals Services contract is due; Executive Committee will work on new RFP and submit to the membership by mid-June at the latest. WNTC will send a nice arrangement for Mike Kesselring's funeral; Kerri will coordinate and invoice WNTC for the costs.

Support Services: Changed the newsletter going out monthly in the middle of the month; leads go out 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of month. Marketing facts will go out and Lisa will coordinate with Maly Marketing; Karla will get things on membership for the newsletter.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:07 CST.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karla Niedan-Streeks, Secretary  
May 16, 2023