

Governor's Council on Travel and Tourism
Minutes November 4, 2022, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Kansas State Capitol, Auditorium 4-N

Council Members in Attendance: Karen Hibbard, Bridgette Jobe, Janet McRae, Donna Price, Susie Coleman, Suzan Barnes, Charlotte Esau, Shannon Francis, Nadia Marji, Ken Corbet

Wildlife & Parks stall in Attendance: Secretary Brad Loveless

Kansas Tourism staff in Attendance: Jaimee Salalac, Colby Sharples-Terry, Lisa Hecker, Andrea Etzel

The meeting was held in person. The meeting was called to order at 9:06 AM by Bridgette Jobe in Chairman Kevin Fern's absence.

There was a motion to approve minutes from August 5, 2022, by Suzan Barnes, Janet McRae seconded. Passed unanimously

Council members made introductions

There was no one in attendance who requested to make public comments.

Rachel Willis, Kansas Department of Commerce, Director of Legislative Affairs presented on House Bill 2749, the Film tax credit. Enacting the Kansas film production industry act, providing a tax credit and a sales tax exemption to incentivize film, video and digital production in Kansas and establishing a program to be administered by the secretary of commerce for the purpose of developing such production in Kansas. The bill will be introduced in March or April. A handout on the bill was given to council. There was great discussion between Rachel and the Council. Suzan Barnes will take this information to TIAK to see if they want to add on to the Legislative Board.

Secretary Brad Loveless presented the 2022 RAISE Grant (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity). Wildlife and Parks was awarded 24.8 million made possible by the US Department of Transportation. to help make infrastructure improvements on 40.5 miles of the trail and open 27 new miles on the trail from Council Grove to Herington. The funding provided for the Flint Hills Trail State Park will specifically invest in drainage improvements, pipes, culverts, bridges, base improvements, limestone surfacing, fences and gates, bollards, safety improvements and signage. Improvements will open the full length of the Flint Hills Trail's 118 miles, making it part of 186 miles of directly connected trails in Eastern Kansas. On October 29, 2022, there was an official awards ceremony to commemorate this achievement. Future trail construction phases will include Osage City to Vassar, Ottawa east through Rantoul to Osawatomie, and from Council Grove to Herington. The next construction phase will take place west of Ottawa. Great Discussion was held between Brad and council.

Nadia Marji, Wildlife and Parks presented on Kansas Historic License Trends with hopes that Kansas will become a fishing trophy state. Kansas Kids Lifetime Hunting & Fishing license is available for purchase as of October 14th, 2022. They will be grandfathering in for this year but as of January 1, 2023, you will need to be within the age requirements. As of October 14, 2023, 428 applications have been received for a Kids' Lifetime Hunting & Fishing License. Handouts were passed out on Historic License Trends and the Kids' Lifetime Hunting & Fishing License.

Colby Sharples- Terry, Kansas Tourism, PR & Communications Manager gave an update on travel media, 2022 FAMS, 2022 Media event, Influencers, and In-state media presence.

Lisa Hecker, Kansas Byways and Signage Manager, presented on The National Scenic Byway Program, how to start a new byway, Heartland Byways Conference, and Interpretive Panel Replacement Project. The Heartland Byways Conference is the only National Byways Conference in the US and was hosted in Leavenworth on May 3-5, 2022. There was 90 people in attendance. 81 Interpretative Panels will be replaced in FY24 due to peeling and weathered signs.

Bridgette Jobe, Tourism Director presented to the council the new regional branding for the six regions in Kansas. This is how Kansas Tourism will market their region. A regional roundtable is hosted 4 times a year in Topeka with 2 representatives from each region where each regions shares updates, challenges, and needs.

Bridgette reported that Kansas Tourism received 39 applications for the Attraction Development Grants with total request over \$1.9 million dollars, with a total project budget over \$18 million dollars. Kansas Tourism was able to fund 11 projects totaling \$251,000. The awardees were announced in May at an event held in Colby. Since 2019 Kansas Tourism has increased funding of the Attraction Development Grant by 234%.

In fall 2022, 15 Marketing Grant applications requesting over \$133,000 to assist with first -time or new local marketing projects were received. Kansas Tourism was able to award all 15 applicants but did have to cut down some of the requests as they cannot fund more than \$10,000 per applicant. With these types of grants being a priority, the 2022 award amounts are up 242% over 2019 for Marketing Grants. Marketing Grant award checks were presented to the 15 different communities.

Kansas Tourism received \$1.5 Million in ARPA EDA Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation state grants for 2022 TASK grant and partnered with Patterson Family Foundation for an additional \$462,000 for rural communities expanding the ability to grant over \$1.9 Million. Kansas Tourism received 52 applicants, from 28 counties, applying for over \$9 million dollars. Announcement was made last week at Strataca in Hutchinson to award 8 projects.

In 2022 Kansas Tourism was able to provide 2.3 million dollars to local communities to assist in the development of attractions or in the marketing of attractions and events.

Bridgette reported on the initial response results to NYC Mayor disparaging comment about Kansas and no branding. Over 265,000 people watched the Kansas video over three days changing the perception of Kansas.

Council Industry Members updates

- Ken Corbett, Kansas Sport Hunting Association- Ken reported he is hosting hunters from Illinois and Nebraska.
- Suzan Barnes, Travel Industry Association of KS- TIAK- Suzan reported on the Kansas Tourism Conference. TIAK board meeting was held in Wichita, October 17, 2022. The 2023 Kansas Tourism will be held in Dodge City. Destination Statehouse will be held on February 8, 2023.
- Susie Coleman, World Fuel Services- Susie gave a report on the Fuel Market report and energy updates.
- Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association-Lodging – Seat open.

Ex-Officio Reports

- Kansas Historical Society – Seat open
- Nadia Reimer, Wildlife & Parks- See notes from Presentation.
- Kansas Dept of Transportation- Seat open

Bridgette announced the next meeting dates are February 3, 2023, May 5, 2023, August 4, 2023, and November 3, 2023. The location will be announced at a later date.

Suzan Barnes made the motion to adjourn, Susie Coleman seconded. The meeting was adjourned.