

Governor's Council on Travel and Tourism  
Minutes Feb 2, 2024  
Kansas State Capitol, Room 152-S

Council Members in Attendance: Karen Hibbard, Bridgette Jobe, Janet McRae, Donna Price, Suzan Barnes, Rep Jason Goetz, Rep Jason Probst, Patrick Zollner, Chuck Magerl

Kansas Tourism staff in Attendance: Babette Dixon, Kelli Orender, Jordan Roemerman, Adam Roorbach

Public in Attendance: Sarah Moreland, Ronnie Murphy

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Chair Karen Hibbard.

Council members made introductions.

There was a motion to approve minutes from December 8, 2023, by Suzan Barnes, Donna Price seconded. Passed unanimously.

There were none in attendance who requested to make public comments.

Katherine Holland presented virtually about the KC26 FIFA World Cup. The World Cup is hosted every 4 years and was last hosted by the United States in 1994. She shared Economic Impact studies, possible training facilities and funding requests. There was discussion over hosting international visitors, and how we can market Kansas to World Cup visitors. The match schedule will be unveiled during a special live broadcast on February 4, 2024.

Bridgette Jobe presented the Directors Report.

- She shared the Reclaim Your Vacation in Kansas video and preliminary results from the Kansas Day Celebration. This idea of reclaiming your vacation will be the theme of the spring and summer marketing campaigns.
- Next, she provided an update on the Sunflower Summer program. The newly updated logo was shared. The season will run May 25<sup>th</sup> – August 11<sup>th</sup> and will include admission based and non-admission-based attractions. The new SunflowerSummer.org website will launch soon. There is also an opportunity for hotels, restaurants, and other tourism venues to place discount coupons on the website for free.
- She also talked about media plans to host 6 familiarization tours in 2024, one in each tourism region. Three will be hosted in the spring and three in the fall.
- Attraction Development grant applications open on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and \$500,000 will be awarded this spring.
- The bill to add additional members to the Council on Travel and Tourism and to adjust the percentages for the Attraction Development grants HB2611 has been recommended to be passed by Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development.
- November and December 2023 monthly reports were provided.

Karen Hibbard thanked the Tourism staff and Mammoth for all their marketing efforts and gave the floor back to Bridgette to announce a new tourism project.

Bridgette provided a presentation on a new project. She gave a brief history of the Travel Information Centers in Kansas and then announced the new project of adding a Mobile Visitor Center. This will be a partnership with KDOT. It will include an upfitted and wrapped vehicle and trailer that will be deployed at large events both in and out of state. The goal is to unveil it at the Kansas State Fair. There was enthusiastic feedback from Council members.

Council Industry Members updates

- Suzan Barnes, Travel Industry Association of Kansas - The last TIAK board meeting was held December 14<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. An educational seminar will be hosted on April 14, 2024, in Hays and will cover weather insurance and emergency planning. Destination Statehouse will be held February 7, 2024. The scholarship fund will now also cover Destination Statehouse. TIAK is working on their scope of work and the 2025 RFP for the Tourism Conference. In 2024, the Kansas Tourism Conference will be in Olathe. The next board meeting is February 15, 2024.
- Chuck Magerl, Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association-. National restaurant trends are showing 51% of restaurants reporting the same growth rates in December which is problematic. Customer accounts report 9 months of declining in a

row. The trend covers all forms from fast food to full service. Statewide is showing a softening in sales tax. He reported 65% of the business are small enough to report quarterly. He is seeing a reduction in inflation on food cost. Workforce continues to be a major challenge. A newer trend they are seeing is some restaurants adding a credit card fee. Tips are down and more people going to fast food or conserving their money.

Ex-Officio Members provided updates

- Patrick Zollner, Kansas Historical Society – Patrick did not have anything to report.

Karen announced the next meeting is May 3, 2024. There was a motion to adjourn the meeting by Suzan Barnes, Janet McRae seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:59.