

Council Members in Attendance: Karen Hibbard, Janet McRae, Donna Price, Susie Santo, Suzan Barnes, Susie Coleman, Rob Bergquist, Chuck Magerl, Rep Jason Goetz, Bridgette Jobe, and Patrick Zollner

Kansas Tourism staff in Attendance: Babette Dixon, Andrea Etzel, and Jordan Roemerman

Guests in Attendance: Alexis Radil, and Cori Sherman North

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

Susie Santo moved to approve the minutes from February 7, 2025. Susie Coleman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

There were no requests to make public comments.

Bridgette Jobe presented the Directors Report.

- House Bill 2037, "tourism clean-up bill" which adds 3 seats to the Council on Travel and Tourism, revises for-profit percentages for Attraction development grants, and updates language from when Tourism was at Wildlife and Parks passed.
- Budget update
  - Kansas Tourism did request additional funding for World Cup marketing, Mobile Visitor Center, Sunflower Summer, and KANSAS! Kids issue. Of these requests, only Sunflower Summer was given funding. \$24,398 decrease from previous year.
  - There was discussion on World Cup 2026. Without funding for advertising for World Cup, the Spring/Summer Marketing Campaign will be shifted to coincide with World Cup schedule.
  - Sunflower Summer is a heavy load on the staff and the 2025 dollars used toward staffing had to be taken back to be used for updates to the Sunflower Summer app. Some dollars will be used towards staffing this summer if available. If program goes over budget it has to come out of Tourism budget.
  - One staff position was lost during the budget. The Byways and Signage Manager left during the budget and the position was not approved for restaffing.
  - FEE funds can no longer be held over to the next year as a cushion. It will have to be spent down every year or lost.
  - Discussion on World Cup funds given to KC26 and uses of those funds. More discussion on
- Sunflower Summer has changes. Legislature requirements include only one adult per group will be reimbursed and Non-Admission attractions in counties with populations over 15,000 will not be reimbursed but can participate in the program. Due to budget restrictions, the program has been shortened and will run July 13<sup>th</sup> through August 3<sup>rd</sup>. The other change to help relieve staff, there will only be one reimbursement payment instead of a weekly reimbursement. The app is open but will not announce attractions until June and will not go live until start date.
- Received eTSY award for Best Local Impact Campaign for the Sunflower Summer Program.
- The Fiscal Manager left in February and have started interviewing for the position. The Fiscal Manager was also handling the grants but Babette is handling those now.
- The 2nd round of Attraction Development grants for State Fiscal Year 2025 recently closed with 44 applications requesting 3.5 million.
- The Tourism Office will be moving to the Docking Building in late Summer. The guest entrance area will have a video wall and two 50' interactive screens. Tourism is providing content for these displays.
- Monthly reports for January, February, and March were provided in the packet. These reports include hotel information, transient guest taxes collected, TravelKS.com performance and monthly highlights.

Jordan Roemerman, Deputy Director, presented on the Spring/Summer Visitor Marketing Campaign. The same markets will still be targeted. The digital flight schedule is April through June and the broadcast schedule is 6 weeks May through June. This year there will be print ads in select publications with each publication having their own trackable QR code. Going along with To The Stars, the visitor campaign is Kansas Constellations and offers pre-planned itineraries. The digital ads cover six topics including Quicky, Underground, History, Sky & Space, Unique Animals and Rocks. Online on TravelKS.com there will be more niche markets such as quilting and antiques. Early reports from the website show the campaign is already performing well. Jordan displayed the print ads and played the two broadcast spots.

Past issues of KANSAS! Magazine were passed out and Bridgette talked about the award winning publication. There are currently 14,108 print subscribers and the digital issues sold are up 36%. Subscribers receive five issues, the special Kids! Issue and a wall calendar. There was discussion on increasing the subscription from \$20 to \$25.

Karen provided an update on Symphony in the Flinthills and asked everyone to fill out the survey.

Cori Sherman North and Alexis Radil with Kansas Museums Association gave a presentation on their association. The KMA was started 56 years ago and Kansas has 444 museums. The KMA board has reps from three areas including West, Central and East Kansas, along with other reps.

#### Council Industry Members updates

- Suzan Barnes, Travel Industry Association of Kansas. Suzan spoke on the upcoming Education seminar, and the Kansas Tourism Conference to be held October 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> in Manhattan. They are also working on redoing their bylaws.
- Susie Coleman, Fuel Marketing Association. Susie gave an update on Governor Kelly's state of emergency due to pipeline failure and lack of supply.
- Rob Bergquist – Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association – Lodging. Rob reported corporate travel is down, but government travel is up. He reported they haven't been hit with tariffs yet but spoke on linen being an expensive item for them. He reported labor is good and they are filling positions with quality people.
- Chuck Magerl – Kansas Restaurant & Hospitality Association – Restaurants. Chuck reports revenue on food service is up 1.9% but doesn't factor in inflation and menu price increases. Real restaurant sales are flat.

#### Ex-Officio Members provided updates

- Patrick Zollner, Kansas Historical Society. Patrick reported that 2025 marks the 150-year anniversary for the Historical Society. The current timeline for opening of the museum is November of 2025. They have closed on Curtis House and will try to be open this summer.

Karen announced the next meeting is August 1, 2025. There was a motion to adjourn the meeting by Susie Coleman, Rep Jason Goetz seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 AM CST.