

GCTT meeting December 1, 2017
Curtis State Office Building
1000 S Jackson ST
Topeka, KS 66612

Council members present at the meeting were: Rep. Shannon Francis, Suzan Barnes, Jan Stevens, Bridgette Jobe, Shelia Lampe, Lynda Fort, Susie Coleman, Rep. Ken Corbet, Rep. Adam Lusker, Rep. Jan Kessinger Sarah Garten, Linda Craghead, Jennifer Haugh

Members Absent: Senator Julia Lynn, Senator Bud Estes, Senator Tom Holland

Staff & Public present were: Kelli Hilliard, Sue Stringer, Colby Terry, Andrea Etzel, Kris Knight, Vern Swanson, Jim Ogle, Roger Hamm and Connie Hartford

Bridgette brought the meeting to order at 10:03am

Minutes were reviewed. Jan moved to accept the minutes as presented, Rep. Adam Lusker seconded, motion passed.

The Amusement Ride Act was reviewed by Bridgette. The task force had met and talked about concerns regarding unintended issues of the new law. Bridgette passed out the letter written for review. After review, it was decided the letter should be signed by Bridgette as the chairperson of our council. She asked for approval of the letter. Motion to accept letter as written and move forward was provided by Suzan and Sheila seconded. Motion passed.

Linda Craghead gave an update about Little Jerusalem and introduced Kris Knight – Conservation Director for the Nature Conservancy.

Kris gave a report on the partnership between KDWPT and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) with respect to Little Jerusalem. TNC is a nonprofit with over 1 million members and were founded in 1951. They are in all 50 states and work with all local communities. Their mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. He showed several slides and a map of priority conservation areas. Little Jerusalem is adjacent to the Smoky Valley Ranch about 19 miles south of Oakley. The Conservancy is developing an auto tour of Smoky Valley Ranch so people can use their smart devices to learn more about the area. This is a great opportunity for not just Little Jerusalem but all the surrounding towns and areas as well is for tourism. He shared a conceptual public access plan for Little Jerusalem. Kris advised it would probably be at least another year before the area is open to the general public. Jan asked how much funding is still needed but Kris did not have investment numbers yet. Oakley and Scott City will be the most affected. Hotels up and running at this point will be enough lodging for the present time. Vern would like a bike trail in more places in western Kansas. Linda Craghead said no bikes will be allowed in Little Jerusalem proper due to the fragile ecosystem. She does believe more businesses will be needed in the western corridor. Linda suggested a private tour for the Governor's Council. Legislators are going to be asked to name this area as a state park. KDWPT has submitted a supplemental budget request to help with this facility. The video made by Midwest Living Films was shown. This area covers approximately 330 acres and will require approximately \$150,000 annually to keep the park staffed and maintained. Some road work has begun.

Linda gave a review of the annual report for tourism. She also covered the Smith Travel Trend Report, sales tax, transient guest tax, and economic impact in general concerning tourism. She shared there is continued growth for supply. She showed the dashboard numbers and explained how they work.

Numbers are updated in different areas and updated differently by date and time. Some are updated immediately and some are longer time periods. Ken would like more on the wildlife side included in the reports. She asked for everyone's input and suggestions for other dashboards.

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA) report was given by Jim Ogle. FFNHA covers 30,000 acres throughout Kansas and Missouri. Approx. 3 million people live in this area. Created by congress in 2006. They are a 501c3. They tell 3 basic stories the first is settling the frontier – second the Kansas – Missouri war then an enduring struggle for Freedom. They exist to help their partners stay open and tell the stories. There are 29 counties in Kansas and 12 in MO in the designated area. They are trying hard to connect young people with their heritage so student learning is an everyday experience. They offer camps to young people with a partnership with the boys and girls club. They appeal to high school age as well and teach how we came together. They want to be sure the students know about the enduring struggle for freedom and get them to suggest how we proceed from here. They help in different ways with funding for other areas and their projects for a better quality of life. Volunteers make up most of the staff and support for FFNHA. Jim entertained questions. Break for lunch

Reconvene @ 1:02

Suzan Barnes shared the Annual Tourism Conference was one of the best conferences we've had. We had 165 attendees; 28 were sponsorships; 29 were first-timers. 65 people responded people responded to the survey about the conference. BJ and Bubba were MC's and were a big hit. The silent auction and center piece raffle were ok but not the best. She advised the marketing and communications awards need some work. 86% said the conference link is just right. 98% said the cost was just right. Over 90 percent valued and visited the vendors. The theme was diversity in tourism this year. We then showed the year in review tourism video. Linda commented on the potential economic impact of legislation focused on diversity of life choices with respect to individuals and sexual orientation. NCAA tournament is a large event that may be pulled out from under us.

Sue gave a brief update on agritourism business in the state. She shared the USDA gave KS Tourism a grant to upgrade the agritourism manual. She introduced Roger Hamm. He spoke on taxation and agriculture properties. Roger congratulated us on our video. Roger believes there is confusion around zoning and taxes on agritourism properties. Linda reminded us about last meeting and the issues surrounding the KC Pumpkin Patch business. Should they be zoned ag or commercial? KC pumpkin patch is truly an ag business and not commercial. Each zoned county in Kansas has their own zoning policies. Tax purposes do not care about zoning – just how the land/buildings are being used. Taxation guidelines come from the state. Discussion followed about zoning and taxation. Bridgette asked if we should publically support the pumpkin patch owners et all thru this council. Rep. Francis feels we have enough verbiage and laws – but they aren't any good if we can't enforce them. Sheila, Ken and Julia will have a meeting with Derek Schmidt and will go on behalf of this council. Sheila would like Sue to go as well. Linda assured her KDWPT would be involved. Roger was thanked.

Chair Report – we need a tourism funding strategy. This state needs more tourism dollars but perhaps we need to say how we would spend money to benefit local communities before we ask for the money. Bridgette would like to make the increase in money for tourism dollars the subject of upcoming GCTT meetings this year. Decide how to get it second. Rep. Francis agreed we should have a definite process before asking for money.

KS Sport Hunting Assoc. Report - Sports association reported over 30,000 birds were sold to SD. Western Ks has plenty of quail and other birds.

TIAK Report - board meeting in Garden City in conjunction with the conference. They are working on Destination Statehouse and Destination Capitol Hill. Suzan announced the next conference will be in JC. Marketing is moving smoothly but need a little work.

AAA Report - Jennifer Haugh with AAA gave a quick report about the KDWPT bicycle service points. Kansas is the first state in the nation to implement. Jeff Bender (KDWPT) helped a great deal with getting signage up. AAA is trying to replicate these sites in the other 12 counties in their footprint. Jan Stevens asked about SMART cars and charging stations.

KS State Historical Society - Sarah gave her report on the new website for the Kansas Historical Society. The new site should be up this spring. Students can learn much more and more easily now.

Staff Reports:

Kelli gave a report about her NY trip and the article on Irena Sendler.

Andrea gave each person a winter issue of KANSAS!, the Kansas Travel Guide and the 2018 KANSAS! Calendar.

Council elections: Bridgette Jobe elected as Chair. Rep. Ken Corbet elected as Vice-Chair. Suzan Barnes nominated and Shelia Lampe seconded. All members concurred.

Everyone else will remain on the council for now.

Bridgette asked for council members to keep thinking about other topics for future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting will be March 2nd, 2018 at the Curtis State Office Building @ 1000 S Jackson St., Topeka.
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Connie Hartford
KDWPT-Admin. Spec.
Tourism Division