

Visitors Promotion Committee
November 14, 2018
MINUTES

In attendance: Lynne Ireland, Amy Dickerson, Becky Perrett, Aaron Stitt, Susan Madsen, Carl Eskridge, Michelle Waite, Nicole Fleck-Tooze, and Kerry Eagan

Staff attending: Jeff Maul, Derek Feyerherm, Ron Kalkwarf, Justine Petsch, Chris Whitney and Diane Pryor

Guests attending: Tara Knuth, Maggi Thorne, and Alyssa Thege

Call to Order and Introductions:

Lynne Ireland called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. and introductions were made.

Lincoln Children's Museum Grant Request:

Prior to hearing the grant request, Eagan gave an update of the improvement fund balance and said there are plenty of funds to support a \$10,000 grant to the Museum. Being no questions, Ireland welcomed the presenters.

Tara Knuth and Maggi Thorne presented to the group their model of a kid's version of the American Ninja Warrior interactive course they want to be constructed in their Discovery Gallery exhibit at the Museum. Lincoln Children's Museum, in collaboration with Thorne and other community partners, are hoping to have this exhibit built and open by March 2019. They would run with this until September 2019, when they plan to rotate to other fitness ideas, including Husker themed sports activities. The \$10,000 would include planning, designing and construction, Knuth said. She said they have talked to Clark Enerson, Haussman Construction and are also planning on doing some of the work in-house. Knuth said they have been doing some recruiting with the Girl Scouts to get people talking about this and excited to come give it a try. This is the only one of its kind in the area, they said and Thorne, a Ninja Warrior participant herself, has become involved to give access to other participants, which will help market the exhibit and get notoriety.

Ireland opened the floor to questions by the VPC members. Fleck-Tooze asked if they had looked into insurance. Knuth said they had been checking on that and it would be similar to the insurance they have on the rest of the exhibits. Stitt asked for a breakdown of the plans for the project. Knuth said Clark Enerson won't need to do everything, some of the items and materials needed are already there and everything fits in well. Dickerson asked what it would be used for after the nine months are up. The presenters said that some items will be integrated into the Husker sports exhibit including items with a fitness focus. Madsen then asked how many kids can use the exhibit at a time. They said 100 could go through in one hour's time. They can keep the flow moving because there are so many different things they can be doing, including the warped wall, hanging bar challenge, button at the end and the display allowing kids to pretend they are the announcer. Madsen had them do a walk-through on their model and show the committee the different parts. Dickers was wondering if it turned out to be a big hit if they would ever bring it back through their rotation in the Discovery Center. They said, yes, they would consider that. Dickerson questioned a loss on their profit/loss statement submitted as part of the grant. Knuth noted that the number in question was depreciated assets and not an operational loss.

There being no further questions the presenters were excused, and further discussion ensued. Perrett said she supported the project. Waite questioned that the \$10,000 was being used for design services and not construction. Ireland asked for Eagan's opinion on this to which he responded that planning and developing of an exhibit is allowed. Madsen made the motion to approve the grant request of \$10,000 to the Lincoln Children's Museum. Perrett seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Ireland called for a vote. Perrett, Madsen, Stitt, Dickerson and Ireland voted yes. Cunningham and Morgan were absent. Motion carried.

Approval of August Minutes:

Ireland asked for approval of the August minutes. Perrett made a motion to approve the August minutes. Stitt seconded the motion. There being no discussion or corrections, Ireland called for a vote. Perrett, Madsen, Stitt, Dickerson and Ireland voted yes. Cunningham and Morgan were absent. Motion carried.

Approval of October Financials:

Kalkwarf reminded everyone that the CVB budget coincides with Lancaster County's and runs from July through June. The financials presented are for the first four months of the CVB fiscal year and cover the months of July through October. Kalkwarf reported that total income was \$616,724 with total expenses of \$753,456 and a net loss of \$136,732. This net loss was primarily due to sports event promotion and will be addressed in a later agenda item. Ireland asked if there were any questions and without any, asked for a motion to accept the financials. Dickerson made a motion to accept the November financials as presented. Perrett seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Ireland called for a vote. Perrett, Madsen, Stitt, Dickerson and Ireland voted yes. Cunningham and Morgan were absent. Motion carried.

CVB Annual Audit:

Kalkwarf presented the annual audit, completed by RSM, to the committee. He told them the audit was performed on a calendar year even though the CVB financials are kept on a fiscal year. With that challenge, along with this being the first year working with RSM, the audit came back clean. The opinion from RSM was the best that a company can receive. Maul mentioned it is a challenge for Kalkwarf and his team to work with RSM and convert everything to numbers they can use and gave praise to the team. Ireland asked if there were any questions and without any, asked for a motion. Madsen made a motion to accept the audit as presented. Dickerson seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Ireland called for a vote. Perrett, Madsen, Stitt, Dickerson and Ireland voted yes. Cunningham and Morgan were absent. Motion carried.

½% CVB/Event Promotion Fund Request:

Maul presented the committee with a memo requesting an additional ½% lodging tax of \$182,000 to help fund the 2018 USA Roller Sports Championships. He let them know how important the event is to the Lincoln economy and talked about the proposal the CVB has with them to come back in two-year stints over the next several years. Dickerson made a motion that the VPC deems the facilities in Lancaster County as adequate and approves the use of improvement fund dollars for promotion as presented by the CVB. Eagan asked for an amendment to her motion, Amy accepted the amendment. Perrett seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Ireland called for a vote. Perrett, Madsen, Stitt, Dickerson and Ireland voted yes. Cunningham and Morgan were absent. Motion carried.

Directors Report:

Maul stated that the 2019 Visitors Guide is currently under production and will be available in late December or early January. He said CVB is working on a testimonial video that is nearing completion and is being done pro bono by Jacob Imaging. Jeff went on to share the CVB's many 2018 accolades, including being #2 city with the best work-life balance, #5 best city to raise a family and even #15 best place to trick-or-treat. He talked about how Lincoln is driving the craft beer scene in Nebraska with numerous breweries and craft beer distributors and how this was shared through a recent travel writer visit to our city. Maul mentioned the Downtown Lincoln Comprehensive Master Plan and the need for convention center space, saying it needs to be in downtown and a true convention space. A discussion ensued with Madsen thinking Pershing would be a good location. Stitt suggested the Post Office in the Haymarket next to Pinnacle Bank Arena and Maul noted others have brought up the possibility of 84th and Havelock near the Event Center. Maul touched on the new gas-powered trolleys that will be a transportation option. Stitt asked if it will run on Sundays. Maul thought they were working on that along with running late into the night possibly. Next, Maul told everyone about the visitor from Thailand, Pro who was part of the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) exchange. He was here for two weeks and learned about Lincoln. Maul listed the different trips his team will go on and the conferences they will attend. Jeff also listed the November/December high school activities coming up and let everyone know the 2019 meeting dates are in their packets.

He asked Chris Whitney to show the group the visuals that were prepared for the Re-Imagine Lincoln campaign. Whitney talked about the project with everyone saying there has been a very positive response to what has done so far. The campaign highlights the clock tower in the Haymarket, Tower Square at 13th and P Streets, Robbers Cave, and other tourist attractions in our city. The campaign is designed to create excitement, through work, leisure and play, in hopes of bringing visitors, students and businesses to our community.

Feyerherm reported that the CVB sales team has issued 154 sales leads for 121,919 hotel room nights. Of these leads, 59% were either regional/national/international in nature, with 17% being new business. Feyerherm noted that the percentage of new business was down due to several multi-year contract renewals occurring in 2018. There were an additional 16 proposals submitted for consideration and currently there are 36 sales leads pending decisions for 12,928 hotel room nights. Regarding definite bookings, Feyerherm said 108 events have been booked for 108,919 hotel room nights, with 57% being regional/national/international events. As with sales leads issued, the percentage of new business booked is down due to the multi-year contract renewals. Feyerherm noted there are ongoing conversations with the national governing bodies under the US Olympic Committee. The CVB presented their bid proposal for the next five years of USA Roller Sports and said that USA Wrestling and USA Volleyball are interested in returning to Lincoln. Feyerherm stated that Kelsey Meyer has been successful in booking group tours as a result of the fam tours through the Nebraska Tourism Commission. Sales missions to cities such as Chicago, Washington, D.C., Colorado Springs and Indianapolis are being planned for the spring and the CVB team will reach out to create partnerships with hotels or other organizations to attend these trips as well. Feyerherm gave an update on the tradeshow that the sales team attended in the fall and those scheduled for the next few months. The updates to Lincoln.org have been made and will be going live that will allow for shareholders to make their own updates and will create enhanced listings. Feyerherm noted that the CVB will be exhibiting at the Nebraska Association of County Officials Convention in December and has invited downtown hotels to attend. The CVB, through Rachel Martin has hosted several events at UNL to educate departments of the services the organization can provide them and this has resulted in

more leads from the university. Feyerherm also noted that he has been in communication with the Lincoln Airport Authority about the effects the Offutt runway project will have on events in Airpark. He complimented the efforts of Dave Haring and Bob McNally with the Airport Authority in protecting the events contracted there.

Feyerherm asked if there were questions for himself or Maul. There were none.

New Business:

Ireland asked if there was new business anyone wanted to bring up. Waite brought up the dedication of the new veteran plaques at the University. They were dedicated in a ceremony on Sunday, November 11, Veteran's Day. Ireland acknowledged that Carl Eskridge will not be seeking another term on the city council. The committee thanked him for his service.

Adjourn:

Being no further business, Ireland asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Madsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dickerson seconded the motion. Being no further discussion, Ireland called for a vote. Perrett, Madsen, Stitt, Dickerson and Ireland voted yes. Cunningham and Morgan were absent. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:43pm.