

CONVENTION AND VISITOR BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Monday, August 19, 2019

The regular meeting of the Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB) Advisory Board was posted Thursday, August 15, 2019, before 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held Monday, August 19, 2019, at Guthrie City Hall in the 3rd Floor Conference Room.

Members Present: Kailyn Swonger, Tommy Wageman, Mike Sikes, Kristen Dahlin, Shaun Davis, Rebecca Pittman, Ex-Officio Jeff Taylor

Staff Present: Justin Fortney, Tourism Director; Verla Raines Cline, Tourism Assistant

Guests Present: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order with a quorum on Monday, August 19, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. by Chairperson Kailyn Swonger. Swonger welcomed new board members Shaun Davis and Mike Sikes.

Public comments: none

Minutes from June 17, 2019 meeting. Dahlin motioned to approve, Wageman seconded, all voted aye.

Discussion and possible action on event support application for BCW Wrestling: Director Fortney gave background information: Wageman's original event support application, early in the year, was for two events, one of which would occur in the next budget year. The amount granted (\$500) was for one show (half of what was asked). The second event was later changed to a date within the current year. Today, Wageman is asking for the same amount to be granted for the second event, scheduled for September 28 (the current fiscal year). Fortney said that Wageman was allowed to answer questions, but because he is a board member he will exit when the board votes on this particular event support application. In addition, after the CVB Board votes, the city manager wants to have the city attorney look over the application to determine if there is conflict of interest since Wageman is a board member and the event organizer.

Wageman said that due to the flooding in May, the Fairgrounds, where his events are held, have required much work and repairs to be useable again. He is hoping that all will be ready for events this fall. The date again could change for his event because of ongoing repairs, but the board can vote on funding regardless of the possible change. Wageman left the room for the board discussion and vote. Davis motioned to approve the requested \$500, Dahlin seconded, all voted in favor.

Discussion and possible action on changes to event support application process: Director Fortney presented to the board the idea of having one due date for all event support applications. For instance, by the beginning of October, (October 1 is the first day of the new budget in the new fiscal year), all organizers of events are to submit their applications for event support. This would make it easier on the board to see the year ahead in one meeting, and appropriately allocate the funds to each event that will occur that fiscal year. The budget for event support has been decreased for this upcoming year, (\$10,000 less than last fiscal year). Fortney said that this reduction, as well as use of board meeting time, seems to necessitate this change in the process. The board can consider all applications at the same time, therefore allowing them to make the best recommendations possible to staff.

Swonger mentioned possibly there could be an "emergency fund" that could be held out for events or things that may come up throughout the year. There was discussion regarding the two budget categories – Event Support and Marketing & Supplies (Advertising) to determine which category applies to requests. The new budget (2019-2020) is \$20,000 for Event Support and \$35,000 for Marketing. Some requests could be moved to Marketing that were previously Event Support, and that would require consideration of Marketing needs. Swonger also mentioned that the post-event report for events would be expected to be the more accurate reflection of where the money was spent, rather than the estimates presented with the applications on October 7.

Good records would be important and required to show where the funding was spent. With that information, decisions could be made about future requests.

Swonger asked the board if there were questions regarding the proposal to change the application date for all event support. Discussion followed regarding the allocation of funds, use of the two categories (Event Support & Marketing), and possible semi-annual deadlines or a January deadline. Swonger asked if the board should consider voting tonight to accept the proposed new plan of deadline on October 7. Details were discussed and proposed:

All applications be submitted by Monday, October 7, 2019. The board members would have two weeks to look at the applications. On Monday, October 21, 2019, those applications will be formally presented to the Convention and Visitors Board. Each applicant will need to send a representative to the Oct 21 meeting to answer questions the board might have. On Monday, November 4, 2019, the Convention & Visitors Advisory Board will make recommendations to city staff regarding the approval and funding levels for the Event Support Applications for the year.

Motion to approve changing the application due date process: Sikes made the motion, Davis seconded, all voted aye, motion passed.

Fortney mentioned that the future advisory board meetings that would have been used for funding decisions could now be freed up to allow creative ideas and suggestions from the board, in order to increase and enhance Guthrie Tourism.

Budget update: Fortney had already mentioned the budget decrease in the earlier discussion. Sikes asked for background information about the funding of the CVB. Two-thirds of the hotel/motel tax for the city of Guthrie funds the Tourism budget, one-third of the tax goes to Parks Department.

Staff comments: Tourism Assistant Cline reported that a group of disabled veterans has inquired and may be interested in having a convention in Guthrie in 2020. It would require a meeting place for at least 150, overnight accommodations couples and individuals, a dining facility, a plan for accommodating those with disabilities and a suggested itinerary for experiencing Guthrie. She asked for “brainstorming” and input from the board in future meetings, to help with a “package” to offer to this group to make it possible for their convention and possibly other yearly meetings.

Tourism Director Fortney reported on media outreach on behalf of Tourism:

“Hit The Bricks” podcast and video interview/conversations are recorded weekly to spotlight Guthrie citizens, events and Guthrie’s unique offerings to visitors. These are shared as audio podcasts, videos on YouTube and Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Content can be used in the original entirety, or in excerpts, used multiple times in various forms. Blog Posts, on Tourism’s website, www.guthrieok.com and all social media, feature video and printed information with links to destinations and events in Guthrie.

“Tiny Town Concerts” is a video series of various musicians filmed at Hoboken Coffee Roasters. Hoboken funds the filming and editing, Fortney books the artists, and KOSU radio does promotion of the videos, reaching a wide audience and procuring underwriters to be sponsors. These videos promote the music artists, which in turn promotes Guthrie, as the series is shared in many places.

“Your Guthrie Getaway” is a series of 30-second videos that feature a place to stay, a place to eat and a place to see or do something enjoyable in Guthrie. Aaron Ryburn shoots and edits the videos. The videos are being shared on social media, and can be used for a certain demographic at different times. For instance, Wichita or Stillwater or Dallas could be targeted for viewing “Your Guthrie Getaway” spots that are customized for particular areas or audiences.

Board comments: Davis asked about a previous discussion of Air BnBs in Guthrie, and the taxes that could be assessed. Fortney said that that would be a city council question to consider, and not up to our board to come up with an answer.

Wageman said that the Fairgrounds will be a more viable event place now that it has been remodeled, and he is hoping people can find out about it so that more events could occur there. Fortney remarked that Tourism is an information hub for event places available in Guthrie. The website, email and phone call inquiries are ways people find out about what Guthrie has to offer. We could look for ways to be more proactive in sharing the info with event planners and the public.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by vote at 6:47pm.

CHAIR: 