

## CONVENTION AND VISITOR BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Monday, October 21, 2019

The regular meeting of the Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB) Advisory Board was posted Thursday, October 17, 2019, before 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held Monday, October 21, 2019, at Guthrie City Hall in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room.

Members Present: Kailyn Swonger, Mike Sikes, Shaun Davis, Rebecca Pittman. Ex-Officios: Jeff Taylor and Jim Case.

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

Guests Present: Tom Webb, Calvin Hoover, Lisa Hoover, Stephen Sparkman, Jennifer Sparkman, Jerry Casey

**Call to Order:** While waiting for members to come, the group listened to guests talk about their event application, but no formal action was taken or discussed until the quorum was established. The meeting was called to order with a quorum on Monday, October 21, 2019, at 5:59 p.m. by Chairperson Kailyn Swonger. It was discussed that the next meeting would be November 4, 2019, and that meeting is strictly to vote on the proposals for event support. There would be no need to have a regular meeting agenda for that date. It will also be the only meeting in November. Motion was made by Davis, to accept the November 4 date and that only voting on applications would be on the agenda. It was seconded by Sikes, all voted aye.

**Public comments:** none

**Consider approval of minutes from August 19, 2019 meeting.** Sikes motioned to approve, Davis seconded, all voted aye. Discussion

### **Presentation and discussion of Event Support Applications for FY20:**

**Oklahoma's International Bluegrass Festival:** Tom Webb represented the O.I.B.F. and the event support application. He talked about the successes of this year's festival (the 23<sup>rd</sup> year), and anticipation for the years ahead. Next year the dates are October 1, 2, 3. The festival features all day music performances on multiple stages, national and international music artists, youth scholarships and contests, and campground facilities. Anticipated attendance is approximately 5,000, with estimated overnight stays approximately 1,500.

Amount requested for FY20 from CVB: \$2,500

**Military Veterans Rodeo Productions:** Jerry Casey represented Military Veterans Rodeo Productions and the event support application. He will offer rodeo, bull riding and barrel race events at the fairgrounds arena throughout 2020. Some events will help qualify participants for competitions in Las Vegas. He may add other gatherings for sports such as archery, soccer and volleyball. He also offers individual RV camping and use of arena for people coming to Guthrie for Lazy E events. The MVRP is a non-profit, benefitting individual Logan County veterans that need a helping hand. He advertises his events, emphasizing the Guthrie location, in Rodeo News magazine and on Facebook. He plans to also use TV, newspaper and radio to promote events in 2020. The events listed on the application are: MVRP Rodeo/ Bull Riding, Mustache Bash Bull Riding, and Spring Barrel Race.

Amount requested for FY20 from CVB: \$2,500

**Guthrie's Territorial Christmas Celebrations:** Jennifer and Stephen Sparkman represented Guthrie's Territorial Christmas Foundation and the event support application. The dates for 2019 are: November 30 – Opening Night, which includes a nighttime lighted parade, territorial governor inauguration and tree lighting, student choirs, Christmas tree walk, photos with Santa, and food trucks. December 7 – Distinctive Homes Tour, 10-4pm, \$15 ticket for self-guided tour. At 5pm begins the first of two Saturday night Victorian Walks (Dec. 7 and Dec. 14). Walk nights feature live Christmas windows at downtown stores, school choirs and bands,

carolers, carriage rides, Dutch oven food, and reenactors strolling the streets. This annual event has existed for over years, and has increased in attendance the last few years. Anticipated attendance is 14,000 – 16,000. They are hoping for more participation from merchants, volunteers, sponsors, and citizens so that this year is a great success. The Opening Night parade attendance has greatly increased and requires careful plans for safety. The streets will be pedestrian-only on the block west of Division on Oklahoma to First Street, south on First to Harrison Ave, then east on Harrison to Division. Other downtown blocks are included in the Victorian Walk but parking and traffic are allowed there. Pittman asked if crossing guards could be at the Division crossings. Needed are more volunteers for the safety issues.

A commercial about Christmas in Guthrie is airing on Discover Oklahoma program for 13 weeks. Other marketing: Facebook and other social media, newspaper ads. Discussion with Davis about lighting: This is a yearly issue, plans for the future could include more lighting through a partnership with other groups. For now the emphasis is not on the Christmas lights, it is on the Victorian theme and the Christmas shopping opportunities at downtown stores.

Amount requested for FY20 from CVB: \$5,000

**Independence Day Celebration:** Calvin and Lisa Hoover of Fireworkz A’Poppin’ presented their plans for the July 2020 show. It will be on the actual 4<sup>th</sup> of July, instead of after the date as in recent years, and they are planning a bigger and better show. They estimate attendance will be 25,000, based on the 20,000 that came in 2019. They also provide a kids area with inflatables. They market by distributing fliers, Facebook posts, travel channel, t-shirts, banners, and they did an interview with News 4 in 2019. The board discussed with the Hoovers more ideas that could be added to the day and events. The Hoovers invested \$13,796 of their own money for last year’s event. The other revenue included \$6,200 in sponsorships and \$5,000 from City of Guthrie. The total cost was \$24,996.

Amount requested for FY20 from CVB: \$5,000

**89er Days:** The ‘89er Days application was discussed by the board, Bob Dewart (the representative for ‘89er Days) was unable to attend the meeting. The anticipated number of attendees is 15,000, based on last year’s number. They estimate that 300-500 hotel stays result from the week of activities. They advertise on the website, Facebook, TV morning talk shows, newspaper ads. The budget for the upcoming event April 14-18, 2020 is a total cost of \$25,970.

Amount requested for FY20 from CVB: \$3,000

**BCW Pro Wrestling:** The application for event support for BCW was discussed by the board, Tommy Wageman was unable to attend the meeting. The dates for BCW shows at the Logan County Fairgrounds are April 4 and November 28, 2020. Description of the event: “Professional wrestling, bringing some of the top talent in the world to Guthrie. Very family friendly.” Anticipated attendance each show: 400. Projected budget total cost: \$6,900. This is a for-profit organization that advertises with posters and Facebook boost, and charges \$10 at the door.

Amount requested for FY20 from CVB: \$1,000 (\$500 per show)

Director Fortney asked for any questions regarding the applications. Question from Pittman regarding the OIBF profit of \$17,000. Swonger said that with \$140,000 in expenses, the \$17,000 left over was very little. Up-front expenses for set-up for the next year is high and requires a carry-over from the previous year.

Davis mentioned that the total of the applications is \$19,000, and the budget is \$20,000. That leaves \$1,000 in the budget for event support. It is the intention of this board to consider all applications at the present meeting. All events that received funding from CVB last year were notified that this was a one-time application due date for Fiscal Year 2020. The requests are to be considered together at this meeting and will be voted on at the November 4 meeting. The next time to apply for event support will be October 2020, when the Fiscal Year 2021 begins. Last year’s events that did not re-apply this year are: Red Brick Nights, Oklahoma Born and Branded, and the Oklahoma Boer Goat Association.

**Staff comments:** Thanks from Director Fortney to the members of board for the extra time and commitment to attend this long and important meeting.

**Board Comments:** none

**Adjournment:** At 7:15pm Davis motioned for adjournment, all voted aye.

CHAIR: 