

## Garnett Tourism Committee

### Minutes

June 1, 2016

The Garnett Tourism Committee met at the Chamber Players Community Theatre on June 1, 2016 with the following members present: Tom Emerson Jr., Chairman, Cecilia Lamb, Vice Chairman, Susan Caron, Nicole Stevenson, Paula Wallace and Travis Wilson, members. Also attending: Melanie Wallace, Guest; Joyce Martin, City Manager, Susan Wettstein, Community Development Director and Desiree Donovan, Administrative Assistant/GACC Director. Absent: Scott Rogers.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Introductions were made welcoming new members to the committee.

Positive Tourism Observations: Tom reported that "Southern Fried Murder" has become the second highest selling show in the theatre's history with over 600 tickets sold. The next season of shows are to be announced soon. The theatre is also working on group tours to possible destinations such as Chicago, Washington D.C. and London. The theatre took information out to campsites over the past weekend to share with those staying in Garnett in hopes to encourage their attendance to the theatre where there were a few seats left. That idea proved successful as a few campers attended shows.

Cecilia reported that the newly painted playground equipment at the tot lot in the North Park was a great improvement. Joyce shared with the committee that a new handicap chair swing and a baby/momma swing are soon to be added to the park, thanks to the Garnett Community Foundation. There is also a rock sculpture at the Legion Field that Joyce encouraged everyone to see.

Susan Caron wished to say that no one has been griping lately, as a positive observation. Tom also noted that the ceremony on the courthouse lawn celebrating the honorees of the patriotic banners was very nice and well organized.

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Cecilia Lamb to approve the minutes of May 4, 2016 as written. Travis Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Financial Report

Joyce presented the Transient Guest Tax Report. The balance of uncommitted funds as of May 31, 2016 is \$12,235.39. Joyce also presented a 5-Year Financial Report showing the Transient Guest Tax receipts for each quarter. Upon the 1% increase in 2015 for salary of administrative assistant, Joyce's report shows the amount divided between funds.

Old Business - None.

New Business

New TGT Requests: None.

Reports: Reports by Susan Wettstein and Desiree Donovan were sent by email to the committee prior to the meeting and are hereto attached to the original copy of these minutes. Desiree mentioned upcoming events, including Legion Tournament, Second Saturdays, and GACC Golf Tournament. Refined Recherished is working hard to get musical entertainment and vendors to build upon Second Saturdays. It was mentioned that it would be good to provide welcome bags to coaches at ball tournaments.

There being no further items to discuss, a motion was made by Cecilia Lamb to adjourn the meeting so that the adventure in geocaching can commence. Travis Wilson seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Susan Wettstein.

Reports: (See next page)

Susan's Report for June 1, 2016

Please join me in welcoming Nicole Stevenson and Paula Wallace as the newest members of the Garnett Tourism Advisory Committee. I am very excited to have them join your committee. Nicole and Paula were appointed by the City Commission following our last meeting.

Kansas Sampler Festival: Winfield reported 8,251 people in attendance and 140 communities being represented with booths at this year's KSF. My records from last year show that Wamego reported 12,054 people attended and there were 153 communities represented with booths there. While Sunday was almost a rain-out, I am not so sure that rain can totally be blamed for the lower turnout. I was a little disappointed by the quality of people that attended. What I mean by that is that many visitors to our booth seemed to just be looking for free stuff, but not really looking for that destination to explore or upcoming vacation spot. This was very different from the eager to experience Kansas-kind of visitors we had at Wamego. Something significant will have to happen for me to want to return to the Kansas Sampler Festival at Winfield next year. 2017 is the last year for the Kansas Sampler Festival. Plans by the Kansas Sampler Foundation are to develop a "Road Show" that would feature communities along a route. Details of how that will work successfully are yet to be announced.

The good thing though is we do have these retractable banners that we had made for our booth display. One is on display in the front office at City Hall. I am checking into having the other one placed either at the library or perhaps the recreation center for a while. Then we can rotate them to other venues.

Campers Here During Square Fair/Air Fair: I received a nice note from the Flatlanders RV camping group saying they had a great time and everyone treated them very well. They appreciated everything we did to make their visit wonderful.

I asked Gary Ecclefield how Air Fair went and he reported this: "We had a very nice day this year Susan, with a great turnout. A lot of people took rides and all of our local pilots had their planes on the ramp for display. The CAF PT- 19 was on display and gave several rides. Mission Air had their Twin Aztech on display. Pence Aerial Services had their big Air Tractor spray plane on display. Fifty-one people took rides. Great day for Aviation. I heard the square Fair had a "HUGE" turnout also. Good day for Garnett."

I received a call from the Sri Chinmoy Oneness Home Peace Run requesting community involvement in the peace run that was coming through Garnett on May 17th. Their route was on US 59 from Ottawa heading toward Iola, so I suggested they contact Krista Hedrick at Garnett Elementary. The Peace Run organizers like to involve schools and it became a great event for the students, thanks to the due diligence of the GES principal. City Mayor Greg Gwin and City Manager Joyce Martin also attended the event at the school. We provided extensive promotion through news releases, social media and information on our website. We received a lot of positive feedback and positive working relationship building with the school through this event.

The launch of [www.simplygarnett.com](http://www.simplygarnett.com) was held on May 2nd. It is still a work in progress but we have received a lot of compliments on it. We (Desiree and I) are still working to fix features to make it more mobile friendly. It has a community calendar and a bulletin board feature on it also. Still, there is a lot of work to do but we are headed in the right direction and hope to discard the old sites permanently within the next month, or maybe two. We have linked social media posts to the new website. As of today, in 24 days it has had 5,747 visitors with 68% of the traffic coming from Facebook, 8% from Google and the remaining from others. If you have not viewed the website please do and provide us feedback. I welcome any critiques, grammar or misspellings found, etc. We have a survey on the homepage for the public to provide us feedback as well.

Travel Guide Listings: The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism had a promotional period in which 2017 Kansas Travel Guide listings could be renewed at a discounted rate saving \$5 off. Regular listings are \$85 (\$80), highlighted listings are \$125 (\$120). I sent information out to everyone who purchased listings last year as well as new first time potential shopping, dining, and attraction listings. Everyone who purchased last year, with the exception of the Anderson County Courthouse, renewed their listing. Even though the deadline for the discount rate there is still time for new listings to come on board before the next deadline. New for 2017 is that special events can be listed too. I have sent an email to our special events coordinators letting them know this.

Chamber Ambassadors have been helpful in making welcome bags for us. The motels would like us to provide those for their guests. We have taken 20 out to each motel and will continue replenishing for a while to see if we can see a return on that investment. They are mainly giving them out to reunions and group travelers.

The 2017 Southeast Kansas Day Trips & Adventures Guide is out. We can show you a copy. Southeast Kansas Tourism Region has decided to charge for boxes for distribution at the cost of \$120 per box of 100. We will receive one (1) box as a part of our SEKTR membership. At this point I do not plan to purchase any.

The task of keeping the Santa Fe Depot, library, rec center and kiosks stocked with tourism information has kept us busy. I have not checked brochure racks of businesses and this is something we will work on next.

Activity has been strong on the "Project: Garnett Remembers" patriotic pole banner project. We currently have 36 banners representing 39 people on display around Garnett. We have taken in another 17 sponsor forms so far with more expected before the June 1 deadline. Wednesday night the City hosted a Celebration of Service ceremony commemorating the opening of this banner project. The Community Band performed and the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, VFW and area Legion Riders all helped make for a great evening. Our sincere appreciation and thanks go to Joyce for allowing us to pursue this project and embracing this as a community development project. The Electric Department is to be commended. While this project adds more work for them they have shown great pride and enthusiasm.

The next issue of Town Talk is around the corner. If the committee has a topic or a viewpoint you feel we need to include as an article in the quarterly newsletter please let me know.

Since we will not be having discussion at our meeting Wednesday, I just want to point out that our next major events will be Libertyfest on Saturday, July 2nd and the Anderson County Fair's tractor pull on July 16th. We hope that you will join us this Monday, however, for the 10:00 a.m. Memorial Day ceremony at the Garnett Municipal Cemetery. It is quite an impressive event with over 300 American flags flying.

See you Wednesday. Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes! Paula's going to take us out and show us how much fun geocaching is and how we might utilize this outdoor hobby to attract more visitors.

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# Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce

## Office Report

June 2016

- **MEMBERSHIP**

NEW MEMBERS

- Jordan Feuerborn – Individual

- **AMBASSADORS**

- Will meet 06/09/16 8:30 a.m. @ Yoder's Country Store
- Discussing office coverage, event planning and computer updates.
- Welcome Wagon going well - new list given to them
- New Login and email for this group

- **PAST EVENTS**

- **OUTREACH**

- Coalition Meeting
- Tourism Advisory

- **UPCOMING**

- Golf Tournament 06/11/2016
- Libertyfest 07/02/2016
- American Pride Run & Ride
- Tastes & Talents – October 8, 2016
- Ladies Night Out - October

- **OTHER**

- New Computer and software working great, thank you!
- New email [director@garnettchamber.org](mailto:director@garnettchamber.org)

The next Chamber Board meeting will be on June 9, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at Dornes Insurance.  
*All members are welcome to come and provide ideas or give feedback at meetings from 5-5:30.*