

Garnett Tourism Committee
Minutes
February 9, 2017

The Garnett Tourism Committee met in the Commission Room at Garnett City Hall with the following members present: Tom Emerson Jr., Chairman, Nicole Stevenson, Paula Wallace, Robert Risch and Travis Wilson, members. Also attending: Joyce Martin, City Manager, Susan Wettstein, Community Development Director. Absent: Desiree Donovan, Administrative Assistant/Chamber Director and Susan Caron, member.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Tom opened the meeting asking the committee if they want to entertain discussion of Transient Guest Tax application requests and forego the full agenda until next month. The Committee was in agreement. Therefore the meeting was conducted as follows:

Approval of Minutes - No action taken.

Financial Report

Tom asked for the balance of uncommitted funds. Joyce presented the Transient Guest Tax Report ending January 1, 2017 showing the total of uncommitted funds as \$24,202.99. This amount is after receipt of the last quarter disbursement of Transient Guest Tax received by the state in the amount of \$8,111.69. Joyce also included a TGT Revenues Report showing disbursements for each quarter beginning in 2013 to present. Susan noted the most recent receipt is the second largest amount received to date. Susan also provided a copy of the 2016 Transient Guest Tax Report providing the amount approved, actual amount reimbursed, expected and attendance for all grants received last year.

TGT Requests: The Committee considered three (3) Transient Guest Tax applications.

The first request was submitted by the Garnett Business and Professional Women (BPW). Tom opened the discussion by sharing with new committee members the policy agreed upon by both the Tourism Advisory Committee and City Commission whereby an organization or entity may only ask for Transient Guest Tax Funds one (1) time per year. There are some organizations, such as BPW, that host more than one event and so this request contains funding for three (3) events.

Susan provided an overview page and attached it to the three requests. The first event BPW is requesting marketing funds for is the March 18, 2017 Women's Fair. Per the application, they are anticipating 375 visitors and are requesting the sum of \$646.35. Last year the request for funding in the amount of \$608.90 for the promotion of this event was denied due to not seeing an effort to increase attendance and no new advertising strategy, but using the same exact strategy as the year before. Susan had inquired following the event and estimated attendance was 275 people. Nicole stated that this year's application is including the addition of a 5K event which they hope will bring in more visitors. Different than in years past is the inclusion of social media advertising. The percentage of local advertising is 18% and under the maximum allowed of 30%.

BPW is also asking for \$1,447.75 to advertise the 45th Annual Square Fair to be held on May 13, 2017. They anticipate 875-900 attendees. Last year's request was for \$1,322.70 in which they were reimbursed for \$1,315.20. This year's request reflects an overall increase costs by publications and radio stations. The percentage of local advertising is 8% of the total and under the required maximum of 30%.

The last request by BPW is for the Holiday Boutique to be held December 3, 2017 in conjunction with the Friends of the Library Holiday Homes Tour. They are requesting \$500.50 to bring in approximately 300+ visitors. Last year's request was for \$309.50 in which actual reimbursement was \$264.50. Last year's attendance was estimated at 200 people. Susan explained that she had visited with Jenny Myers, who

submitted the application on behalf of Helen Norman, who was recently hospitalized, and that like her conversation with the Friends of the Library, BPW was looking to advertise the event earlier this year than in the past so that the advance marketing might allow more people time to plan to attend. They are also planning to run "share" contests on Facebook with the funds included in this request.

The total amount of Transient Guest Tax Funds for BPW's requests is \$2,594.60. Tom asked if Susan had any further information regarding this request. She responded that all three of these events are being coordinated and marketed by different people; some are new members, giving fresh ideas to some repeat events. Discussion was held on investment verses attendance value and the applicant's desire to seek improvement. A motion was made by Nicole Stevenson and seconded by Travis Wilson to recommend to the City Commission to approve the request for \$2,594.60 as written. The motion passed unanimously.

The second Transient Guest Tax Application to be brought before the committee is from The Chamber Players Community Theatre to promote the calendar year 2017 productions. The amount of the request is \$3,144 in which anticipated attendance is 2,750 people. Tom presented the request, saying this is the seventh year the CPCT has received funding. Prior to ever receiving these funds the theatre had on average 450 to 500 attendees per production. Upon utilizing the Transient Guest Tax Program the average attendance is now 700 people per show production. The theatre is asking for funds to advertise in the Lawrence Journal-World and Miami County Republican. The theatre will be absorbing the cost to advertise in the Linn County and Ottawa Herald newspapers on their own. Last year, they were awarded \$2,600.28, of which \$1,649.82 was reimbursed. They experienced a sold-out show prior to advertising and therefore did not spend the entire amount they were awarded. Their request does not include local advertising. Please see the narrative of their marketing plan found on the last page of their application.

A motion was made by Nicole Stevenson to recommend the City Commission approve of The Chamber Players request as presented. Robert Risch seconded the motion. Recorded votes: 4 Yeses, 1 Abstention (Tom Emerson, Jr.). Motion passed.

The third Transient Guest Tax Application was received from the Walker Art Committee. The request was for \$1,666.00 to advertise the 3rd Annual National Multi-Media Juried Art Exhibition with an anticipated attendance of more than 500 people. The art exhibition runs April 3 to May 28 with an artists' reception on April 8. The request includes the distribution of 23,000 full color flyers in newspapers located in Lawrence, Miami County and Garnett. The inserts will not only promote the art show but highlight upcoming art related events in our community. This is the first request by the WAC who started this exhibition through the Arts and Creative Community Building Grant a couple of years ago and is seeking to expand its audience. The portion of local expenditures would be \$478 of the \$1,666 or 28%.

A motion was made by Travis Wilson and seconded by Paula Wallace to recommend ask the City Commission to fund the Walker Art Committee's application in the amount of \$1,666.00. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Nicole Stevenson to defer the rest of the agenda to the next meeting. Robert Risch seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Tom Emerson, Jr. adjourned the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Susan Wettstein.