

**Garnett Tourism Committee
Minutes
September 6, 2017**

The Garnett Tourism Committee met on September 6, 2017, in the Commission Room at Garnett City Hall with the following members present: Tom Emerson, Chairman, Susan Caron, Laurel Ladewig, Paula Wallace and Nicole Stevenson. Absent: Travis Wilson and Robert Risch. Also attending: Susan Wettstein, Community Development Director and Desiree Donovan, Administrative Assistant/Chamber Director. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Positive Tourism Observations:

Susan Caron stated that the weather here is “delicious”.

Tom mentioned that he met someone named Chris from an assisted living agency and that person was very interested in learning that Garnett has a dinner theatre.

Susan Wettstein mentioned that we had a “booming” Labor Day weekend with people spending time at our lakes.

Desiree stated that the Barn Sale is this weekend along with City Wide Garage Sales.

Tom stated that there are two dates left with around 20 tickets available for both Saturday showings at the dinner theatre for the current show.

Approval of Minutes:

Nicole moved to approve the minutes as submitted at this meeting, Susan Caron seconded.

Financials:

Susan stated that we received some shirt revenue and the \$1,000 from the county for their donation to Libertyfest. She also stated that with that money from the county we now have \$3,665.87 to go towards Libertyfest for next year.

Susan shared a copy of the Transient Guest Tax Report for August showing that a computer monitor has been deducted from these funds. She is going to speak to the City Manager to see if such expenses can be taken from other city funds rather than TGT.

Tom asked about upcoming TGT funds disbursements from the state and he asked if we know how recent lodging numbers were. Susan stated that when she talked to Chris (City Manager) about this. Chris said that he or the City Clerk should be able to answer that by the next meeting.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Susan mentioned that Desiree and she have been given several assignments that have taken them away from completing the brochures at this time.

Staff Reports:

Susan Wettstein provided a written report by email when sending out the agenda. The following is in addition to that report:

Geocaching – Susan stated that she checked on the Geocaches in Greeley and that she is going to have to replace the one at the bridge because someone has taken it. She also stated that she had to fix the one from the water tower because the papers inside were wet from recent rain.

Welcome Sign – Susan mentioned that Delton Hodgson stopped by her office this week to inform her that the Lions Club is taking on refurbishing the north Highway 59 welcome sign by replacing rotten boards and giving the sign a fresh paint job.

Midwest Sports Planner – Susan informed the committee that she purchased an ad in the Sports Planner for \$175.00. These funds came from the Marketing Budget. This publication is delivered to sporting event organizers from across the nation.

Webinars – Susan stated that she has been listening to several webinars by Roger Brooks lately on The Resurgence of Downtowns. She said she is going to email the information to the committee so they can be fully informed.

Susan informed the Tourism Committee about the Planning Commission's recommendation to repeal a city ordinance that currently does not allow one-hundred percent of a commercial or industrial building to become a residence. This was brought up by Mr. Dane Hicks. If passed, a new ordinance would allow buildings on the square, along our highways and industrial areas to become residential dwellings. There is a provision requiring a special use permit. Susan said she understands Mr. Hick's reasoning but she also believes that once a business building is transformed into a residence it will be too costly to change it back. She stated that we need to think outside the box the correct the issue of working to get businesses in those buildings.

Tom stated that if this change does occur, it needs to be attractive. It needs to make the area presentable. Nicole stated that she does think that they do need to do something. Tom stated that it beats what happened to Denise's (Denise's Country Cafe). Susan agreed and explained that there is a large tax lien on that building that a zoning change will not fix. Susan questions if this would set a precedence whereby zoning would just be thrown out the window and if homes are allowed on the square then businesses would be allowed in residential areas.

Tom stated that this issue needs to be corrected by attracting natural cliental to where businesses are.

Desiree mentioned that Tastes & Talents tickets are on sale now until October 1st for \$20, then prices increase to \$25 until the day of the event. She informed the committee of the five stops on the tour and information about the event is available on the Chamber's website.

There being no further business brought before the committee, Nicole Stevenson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laurel Ladewig seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Desiree Donovan, Administrative Assistant/Chamber Director.