

Garnett Tourism Committee
Minutes
March 1, 2017

The Garnett Tourism Committee met in the Commission Room at Garnett City Hall with the following members present: Tom Emerson Jr., Chairman, Susan Caron, Nicole Stevenson, Paula Wallace, Robert Risch (arriving later) and Travis Wilson, members. Also attending: Joyce Martin, City Manager, 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

Tom reported that "Rose and Walsh" opens this week. There are still tickets available for some of the show nights. The Advocate has a very nice article about Geocaching in which they interviewed committee member Paula Wallace.

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Travis Wilson and seconded by Nicole Stevenson to approve the minutes of February 9, 2017 as written. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

Joyce presented the Transient Guest Tax Fund Report for February showing a balance of uncommitted funds to be \$16,456.89. The next tax distribution should be coming in April.

Old Business

Susan shared the types of geocaching containers she had purchased. Paula Wallace brought a container too, and instruction slips to be included in the containers. Discussion was held on the three (3) locations in the Greeley area Susan and Desiree scoped out to plant new caches. Susan told the committee the plan was to have a webpage about geocaching on our website within the next week so that we can start pointing people to it via our social media. With the nice weather people are checking out geocaching. Tom asked if Munzees could be put on our geocach containers. Paula responded yes.

The Committee went over the Review of the 2016 Tourism Marketing Action Plan. Susan shared the highlights of accomplishments for last year. Those include the launch of the new www.SimplyGarnett.com website in May, partnering with the Chamber to provide welcome bags to several class and family reunions, meetings and special events; hosting the Social Media Symposium in which 30 people representing businesses, attractions and organizations attended to learn how to promote themselves through Facebook. The promotion of healthy lifestyles, particularly the farmers market and Prairie Spirit Trail were the focus in 2016. Susan Wettstein, representing the City of Garnett, and Karen Wood, representing Anderson County Hospital, hosted a webinar for the Healthy Kansas Hospitals through the Kansas Hospitals Association on the topic of community partnerships. Phil Bures accompanied Susan to the SEKTR and SportsKS meeting in Emporia to learn about disc golf. Efforts continued through 2016 on promoting local special events. Work began in 2016 and continues on a sports facilities guide as a part of the SportsKS initiative. In talking about 4.4.B(1), the promotion of Kansas At Your Service Hospitality (www.kansasatyourservice.com) training program, Nicole reported that her students took the online program during class. However, because their class time is only 20 minutes they were unable to finish it together. The students enjoyed it and she felt it very useful. She also requested a listing of historical places she can share with the history teacher so that they might take a local field trip. Susan had sent an email to Nicole back in January with suggested tour itineraries and our latest brochure, but said when the history brochure is finished she will be sure to get it to Nicole to share at school. Communication with the City Commission is provided through the City Manager who attends all of our meetings. Copies of minutes are available on our website following the day they are approved by the committee.

New Business

In discussion of the upcoming terms expiring of Susan Caron and Travis Wilson, both asked to be re-appointed. The names of Laurel Ladewig and Ryan Disbrow were suggested as possible appointees to fill the committee vacancy left by the resignation of Cecilia Lamb. Her term expires in 2018. Desiree was directed to contact Laurel and then Ryan to see if they would serve on this committee. City Manager Joyce Martin will bring these appointment recommendations before the City Commission for approval.

Robert Risch entered the meeting at approximately 6:05 p.m.

TGT Requests: The Committee considered two (2) Transient Guest Tax applications.

The first application was submitted by the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce. Chamber Director Desiree Donovan prepared this application containing the request for funding of 4 events: Spring Sidewalk Sales, Fall Sidewalk Sales, Taste and Talents Art & Wine Tour, and the 47th Annual Historic Downtown Square Lighting and Lighted Christmas Parade. Desiree provided an overview page attached to all of these requests totaling \$1,376.40.

The first request is for radio, Facebook and print advertising of both Spring (April 8) and Fall (September 9) Sidewalk Sales. Desiree spoke in regard to this application. The sidewalk sales is a new promotion being organized by the Chamber to encourage our businesses to host sidewalk sales to enhance what is already the designated City Wide Garage Sale Day in Garnett. She also said that businesses who operate as an office rather than retail store are being encouraged to open houses or customer appreciation events. There will be music playing on the town square (Everett Cox) to add to the shopping atmosphere. Desiree stated that the Chamber will no longer be creating maps for the garage sales but rather directing garage sale hosts to both local newspapers who will advertise and create a section in their newspaper for this. The funds requested to advertise each sidewalk sale day is \$242.50; totaling \$485.00, and is focusing on Franklin and Allen Counties, where a large portion of visitors to the garage sales come from. The percentage of local advertising in this request is 27% and under the maximum allowed of 30%, thus meeting the grant criteria.

The Sidewalk Sales request is somewhat different from last year's request to promote City Wide Garage Sale Day. Last year's funding request was in the amount of \$565.00 of which \$356.31 was reimbursed. Estimated 2016 attendance was 1,800+ for both events combined. This year's attendance projection: 2,400.

A motion was by Nicole Stevenson to recommend to the City Commission the approval of this request as presented. Susan Caron second said motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The second request is for \$596.45 to promote the Taste and Talents Art & Wine Tour to be held on October 14 in conjunction with the Lake Garnett Grand Prix Revival. The Chamber has decided to downsize the number of tour stops to 4 or 5 to give participants more time to experience each location more. The bus transportation was a hit last year so they are planning to provide that again. Desiree stated the reason they are anticipating 150 participants, up from the 50 last year is because the Lake Garnett Grand Prix organizers admitted that they did not get the information out to their Revival participants. The majority of tour attendees were not a part of the LGGPR event. Organizers of the Lake Garnett Grand Prix Revival have talked to the Chamber, expressing their desire to include the Taste and Talents in their event schedule and increase their participant involvement this year. The times of the tour will be coordinated with the LGGPR car show on the town square. Kansas based products will be sampled. Tom suggested they see if a Kansas winery could be a part of the event. The percentage of local advertising in this request is 27% and under the maximum allowed of 30%, thus meeting the grant criteria.

Last year's funding request was in the amount of \$546.20 of which \$451.20 was reimbursed. Estimated 2016 attendance was 50. This year's attendance projection: 150.

Upon no further discussion on this request, a motion was made by Travis Wilson and seconded by Robert Risch to ask the City Commission to approve this request as submitted. This motion carried unanimously.

The final request by the Chamber of Commerce is to advertise and promote the 47th Annual GACC Historic Downtown Square Lighting Ceremony and Lighted Christmas Parade to be held on November 25, 2017. The amount of the request is \$294.95. Desiree also mentioned that the Chamber will be promoting Small Business Saturday which is held on the same day, so it is important to advertise to bring visitors to our town. The percentage of local advertising in this request is 23% and under the maximum allowed of 30%.

Last year's funding request was in the amount of \$515.95 of which \$428.00 was reimbursed. Estimated 2016 attendance was 400. This year's attendance projection: 500.

A motion was made by Susan Caron to request the City Commission approve the funding of the request for \$294.95 to advertise the Christmas parade and lighting ceremony. Travis Wilson seconded the motion. The motions passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed a request from the Anderson County Corn Festival to advertise the outdoor music festival (Cornstock) scheduled for September 23, 2017 in the North Lake Park. Tom asked Susan Wettstein to comment on this application. Susan stated that the entertainment contracts are still underway. So there is no announcements on this event at this time. The festival committee is still working through the changes from a day festival with a night concert to a "music festival" whereby including some of the day activities into the concert. The committee would like to pursue a significant Facebook and social media presence to be complimented by the radio and print advertising. Susan reiterated what was noted in the application regarding camping. She commended Joyce and city employees on the rental of campsites. The 2-night camping requirement ensures visitors coming in a day early and experiencing more of what the community offers than just the event itself. Susan said they would include marketing, "get your campsite before they are sold-out", which converted to every campsite being sold last year. The amount requested is \$3,500. There is no request for local advertising funds in this application.

Last year's fund request was in the amount of \$3,700.00 of which \$3,700.00 was reimbursed. Estimated 2016 attendance was 4,300. This year's attendance projection: 5,000.

A motion was made by Robert Risch to recommend to the City Commission that they approve this request as presented. Nicole Stevenson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Paula Wallace left the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Discussion of Libertyfest: Chairman Tom Emerson began the discussion on what this committee's role is in finding an organization to take over the Libertyfest fireworks celebration. Tom did not feel committee members have the time and resources to do this. It would be up to Susan "if" actively pursued by Garnett Tourism. At the February 28th commission meeting, the Commissioners' response was favorable to considering a request for TGT funds (both non-marketing and marketing) to help an organization with this event once it passes through the Tourism Advisory Committee for recommendation. It was suggested that a sponsor or two could be obtained to help with funding also. If funding to meet most of the expenses could be arranged then donations at the gates could mostly be used to benefit an organization. Desiree spoke to the Chamber's past financial commitment to host Libertyfest and said that the Chamber is more than willing to visit with and help an entity transition into the host of Libertyfest. Susan had discussed hosting options with City Manager Joyce Martin. Joyce stated that she had asked the Garnett Community Foundation if they would like to take this on as a fund-raiser, with possibly partnering with the fire department. The GCF meets next Monday and will discuss it. The foundation helps fund park improvements, among other community projects and she feels that maybe people would be more likely to donate at the gate if they knew their donations would help in this way. The foundation is presenting working on a new playground in the North Lake Park.

Desiree stated she feels if a non-profit charity, such as the Garnett Community Foundation or WINGS were taking donations for their cause at the gate people would feel more inclined to give. Susan asked the Committee if an organization was interested if they knew how much in TGT funding they would feel comfortable recommending. Tom responded that is unknown until a request is made.

It was asked if a fee could be tacked on to sports registration fees or camping fees; for example, 50-cents, to help raise funds for Libertyfest. Joyce said that would be an administrative decision, if considered.

Susan asked if the Community Foundation says "no", are we to pursue finding another organization. Tom responded that if someone steps up to help them, but it is not for us to search them out. Susan stated the reason she brought it up at the City Commission meeting was that she felt while Desiree had done a fine job of getting the word out that the Chamber was no longer going to host Libertyfest, she felt that the message was not being heard. The effort taken now to make this known gives someone time to organize. Waiting until it gets closer to the 4th of July will make it hard to find a certified shooter who is already not booked.

Other:

Tom shared that The Chamber Players will be performing the first night of their September play, on September 14th, at ACHS with a portion of ticket sales to go to WINGS. He cannot announce the play but said that it is a good fit as a fund-raiser for WINGS. The remaining shows will be held at the theatre September 15-24.

Staff Reports:

Susan provided a report for March that was emailed to the members prior to this meeting. Additions are as follows:

- Website visits for February were 13,489. No boosts or advertising was done to facilitate visits.
- Susan plans to attend the March 20th Hearing on a Special Use Permit for Scott and Jody Troyer to operate an event barn on their property located adjacent Veterans Memorial Park (aka "South Lake). Susan connected the Troyers with the Kansas Agritourism Director Sue Stringer, and they have met with her about their new venture.
- We will be planning an InstaMeet on March 25-26 as a part of Worldwide InstaMeet 15 (Instagram event). This is the same weekend as the Prairie Spirit Ultra Race (100 mile run). The Santa Fe Depot would be a good place for this.

Desiree reported that the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce has a new formatted website. Please check it out (www.garnettchamber.org).

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Nicole Stevenson and seconded by Travis Wilson to adjourn. Chairman Tom Emerson, Jr. adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Susan Wettstein.

Susan's Report for March Tourism Meeting

Desiree and I visited 3 attraction locations in Greeley to plant geocaches. I have ordered some geocaching magnetic boxes for these places. We also checked the 3 sites the committee has set up in Garnett. We will continue to find locations to plant geocaches and work up a page on our website and push on social media to encourage visitors to our area.

Speaking of new sports, I would like to plan a meeting at the new disc golf course sometime this summer and have Chris Goetz talk to the committee about the tourism opportunities disc golf can bring to our community. Please be looking at your summer calendar so that we can consider a date to do this in place of a sit down tourism meeting.

All of the TGT applications were approved by the City Commission on February 14th as recommended by the Tourism Committee. Thank you to Tom for attending the Commission Meeting, as well as the representatives from BPW who were present on behalf of their request.

I also asked the City Commission about Libertyfest and if they would consider a non-marketing TGT grant award to help fund Libertyfest. They were in favor of considering such an application if brought before the Tourism Committee for recommendation. The Chamber is looking for an organization to replace them as the host of this event. If you know of a charity or organization that might be interested in this please have them contact Desiree. If another host or sponsor is not found, the 4th of July community fireworks display will cease to exist.

Please bring to the March meeting at least one (1) name of someone you think might be a good fit on the Tourism Committee. The vacancy left by Cecilia Lamb needs to be filled.

We will need a quorum at our March meeting, which is next Wednesday, March 1st. There is a TGT application to be considered, brought forth by the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce. The Anderson County Corn Festival will also be submitting an application in time for this meeting. Please let me know, either way, if you will be attending on March 1st. This helps us a lot and we appreciate it.

Thank you.

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No report this month by Desiree.