

Garnett Tourism Advisory Committee
Minutes – July 11, 2018
Garnett City Hall

The Garnett Tourism Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, July 11, 2018 in the Commission Room at Garnett City Hall with the following members present: Tom Emerson Jr., Chairman, Laurel Ladewig, Nicole Stevenson, Paula Wallace and Travis Wilson. Also attending was Susan Wettstein, Director of Community Development. Absent: Susan Caron.

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.

Positive Tourism Observations

KC Mom's Facebook group had a post asking for the best fireworks display. Someone posted "In Garnett!". June was the highest selling show for this time of year by The Chamber Players Community Theatre with approximately 700 tickets sold. The ball complex has been packed with activities. The Garnett Inn called and reported things were looking busier and better these days.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Paula Wallace and seconded by Laurel Ladewig to approve the minutes of June 6, 2018 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

The ending balance of uncommitted funds the end of May was unofficially \$20,157.87. The amount yet to be awarded through the TGT Program Budget, less commitments: \$8,353.30.

Old Business

We have a board vacancy. Susan has put articles in the newspaper and on social media with no response. She has reached out to the fair board and others. Tom Emerson suggested the name of Jamie Tastove. He will reach out to her to see if she is willing but she is moving back to Garnett.

New Business

Susan introduced Kris Hix as the new Executive Director for the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce and Administrative Assistant for the City. She will be assisting with promoting tourism as well.

The committee discussed ideas to include in the budget for next year. Those ideas include geo-fencing, a billboard and marketing campaign. Tom would like information on the cost of direct mail and insertion costs into local newspapers.

The staff report was emailed prior to the meeting. The only other issue brought before the board was the request by a citizen to the City Commission to have advisory board meetings streamed live on Facebook or audio recorded so that citizens could listen to what went on in

these meetings. Discussion ensued. Comments and concerns were made by committee members regarding the fear that doing so would stifle freewill ideas; stifle creativity. Some of what the committee discusses concerning events could be information the event would rather not end up as the focus of public conversation. If a comment were to end up in the newspaper in a negative fashion it could make good volunteers reluctant of giving of their time as an advisory board volunteer. The consensus of the board is to report to the Commission that they are not in favor of recording the meetings. The public is always welcome to attend these meetings.

It was acknowledged that there was some concern that a discussion took place at a recent Commission meeting about the role of the Tourism Committee. It was expressed that it would be nice if those concerns were brought to the Committee first. The Committee is open to the discussion on how the Commission would like to prioritize TGT funding; if the priority is "heads on beds", then it could be that none of the events would be worthy of these funds. One weekend event does not represent a significant amount of transient guest tax funds.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Travis Wilson and seconded by Paula Wallace to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Wettstein