

Garnett Tourism Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2020

The regular meeting of the Garnett Tourism Advisory Committee was called to order at 4:31 p.m. on Wednesday, February 5, 2020, with the following members present: Tom Emerson Jr., Chairman, Travis Wilson, Susan Caron, and Krystal Baugher (via phone). Absent: Laurel Ladewig, Nicole Stevenson and Paula Wallace. Also, present: Chris Weiner, City Manager, Susan Wettstein, Director of Community Development and Kris Hix Administrative Assistant/Chamber Director.

Positive Tourism Observations

Not discussed at this meeting due to limited time by committee members.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Travis Wilson to approve the minutes from January 8, 2020. Motion seconded by Susan Carol. Motion passed 4-0.

Financial Report

A Transient Guest Tax (TGT) distribution was received by the State in the amount of \$12,200.27 in January for the fourth quarter 2019. No expenditures were made. The TGT cash balance is \$53,770.04.

The tax distribution received was considerably up from this time last year (\$8,595.20).

The Greeley Smokeoff has not submitted for reimbursement for 2019. Susan Wettstein has made multiple contacts with the applicant. Krystal Baugher brought to the Committee's attention the application form states the After Event Report and receipts must be provided within 60 days of the end of the event. Staff has done its due diligence.

Old Business

Old business is tabled to the March meeting.

New Business

Transient Guest Tax Event Applications:

The Committee reviewed the letter request by Susan Wettstein for discretionary marketing funds to advertise and promote the "Love What's Local Garnett" campaign. The amount of the request is \$4,715. If granted, these funds would come from the Marketing line item of the Tourism budget, not the Local Event Grants. Tom reiterated two of the responsibilities of the Tourism Committee, which are:

- To study, investigate and develop programs and plans to create and maintain an environment in which tourism can flourish in Garnett and in the adjacent areas of Anderson County.
- Foster communication regarding and encouraging collaborative marketing strategies to maximize Garnett as a competitive tourist destination.

In recommending approval for this expenditure, the committee observed that this is an ideal use of TGT funds by Community Development, but that neither the Marketing nor the non-Marketing application anticipates a request of this nature: a locally-focused campaign using predominantly local resources.

These requests are best made via a letter to the Committee from Community Development. With no further discussion, a motion was made by Travis Wilson and seconded by Tom Emerson Jr. to recommend to the City Commission to approve this request as written. The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

Krystal Baugher asked that the Committee look into the creation of an application to specifically address these kinds of requests. The Committee will take up discussion of transient guest tax and the application process through its goals and strategic planning discussion at the next meeting.

City Manager Weiner left the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

The Committee considered two (2) TGT applications provided by Garnett BPW. The first is a request to fund the advertising of the March 14, 2020 BPW Women's Fair in the amount of \$712.28. Anticipated attendance is 200 people. Discussion included that this event has been funded by TGT for almost 10 years. In the past few years it appears by Committee member's attendance that the event is the same thing every year, and that attendance last year did not seem as high as reported and includes vendors. History on the last five (5) years of this event provides that the highest request (2018) was for \$1,130.90 with only 70 attendees. The lowest request for funding was in 2015 in the amount of \$563.40 and 90 to 100 people reported to attend. In 2019, the request was in the amount of \$585.25 with reimbursement in the amount of \$550.25. Reported attendance was approximately 160 people on the After Event Report, as well as this year's application.

The Committee voiced concerns that this event is not providing any new activities or draw to entice visitors from outside the community and directed Susan Wettstein to ask that they re-evaluate their stewardship of these transient guest tax dollars to effectively increase attendance in order for future consideration.

The application meets the 30/70 rule.

A motion was made by Tom Emerson Jr. to recommend to the City Commission to approve the application request in the amount of \$712.28 as submitted. Susan Caron seconded the motion. Motion carried, 4-0.

The second request by Garnett BPW is for the marketing and promotion of the May 9, 2020 Square Fair in the amount of \$1,674.57. They are expecting an anticipated attendance of 900 people. Last year's request was \$1,630.57 with 700 reported attendance. This application meets the 30/70 rule. The Committee wished to convey a job well done on this application. A motion was made by Tom Emerson Jr. to recommend approval of this request as written. Travis Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Staff Reports

Susan shared the latest 2020 Special Events Calendar. The Recreation mailer has been sent out. She will send staff written reports; same as those going to the City Commission, to the Committee. She also reported that a freelance writer had called her looking for unique experiences in Garnett for Valentine's

Day. The writer is doing this for a television station. Susan provided many options. The one that resonated the most was the February 13th Ghost Hunt event at the 1858 Garnett House Hotel.

Susan will provide information to the Tourism Committee on the upcoming WeKan Conference in Newton on March 17-18.

Susan reported on the very nice Bridal and Event Showcase held at Troyer's Prairie Gold.

Susan and Travis will not be able to attend the next scheduled Tourism Advisory Committee meeting due to a scheduling conflict. The next meeting is tentatively moved to March 11, 2020, providing there is a quorum.

Other:

Krystal asked if the Committee would consider a giveaway for a Facebook promotion that would consist of a night stay, meals and other perks. By promoting this on social media, perhaps others would not only enter the contest but just take it upon themselves to book their lodging and partake on this idea themselves whether they win or not. Tom suggested that we might reciprocate with offering such a package to another community similar to ours. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Susan Caron and seconded by Travis Wilson. Motion passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully submitted by Susan Wettstein.