

**Visitors Promotion Committee**  
**November 15, 2017**  
**MINUTES**

In attendance: Lynne Ireland, Roland Morgan, Dave Wheaton, Amy Dickerson, Becky Perrett, Susan Madsen, Bill Avery, Michelle Waite, Carl Eskridge, Kerry Eagan and Nicole Fleck-Tooze

Staff attending: Jeff Maul, Derek Feyerherm, Ron Kalkwarf and Kerry Paup

Call to Order and Introductions:

Lynne Ireland called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. and introduced new board member Susan Madsen, of The Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel. Lynne then asked for introductions around the room.

Lincoln Children's Zoo Construction Update:

John Chappo, Executive Director of the Lincoln Children's Zoo, updated the committee on the construction of the zoo expansion. The zoo's mission is to enrich lives through firsthand interaction with living things. This is what differentiates the Lincoln Children's Zoo from other zoos. A couple of zoo highlights include that the Lincoln Children's Zoo is the number one arts and cultural attraction in Lincoln and third in the state of Nebraska. It is one of the highest attended zoos in the nation per acre (8.8 acres) and one of the top 20 fastest growing zoos in the country in attendance and accredited by the AZA for 26 consecutive years. The Lincoln Children's Zoo has an estimated \$8.7 million annual economic impact in Lincoln according to research by the Bureau of Business Research at UNL. Annual operations are funded through earned revenue and private philanthropic support; no tax dollars are received. Over 2,500 children were in education programs in 2016 through the zoo and it is home to Lincoln Public School's Science Focus Program. The Zoo donates over \$250,000 of tickets, train rides and memberships annually to low income families. There has been a 44% growth in the last 5 years from 160,000 annual guests to more than 230,000 in 2016. The major elements included in the construction budget for the Love Your Zoo Capital Campaign are; expanded guest parking on the Triangle, renovating Ager Play Center for year-round play and adventure, adding up to 5 new animal habitats/areas, including a new outdoor amphitheater and a splash stream and the LPS Science Focus Program will be expanded. The current campaign commitments have surpassed \$15.5 million, which includes major funding from Visitor Promotions Committee at \$2.1M, Lincoln Public Schools at \$3.2M and private philanthropic support that equals \$10.2M. The proposed expansion timeline has construction continuing in 2018 with the ribbon cutting in 2019.

Approval of August 16, 2017 Minutes:

Ireland asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2017, meeting. Morgan made the motion and Perrett seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of October Financials:

Kalkwarf presented the CVB Profit and Loss Statement for the period of July through October, 2017 stating income was \$571,957 which is 100% to budget as 1/12 is projected each month so will always be budgeted amount. Expenses were \$744,624 leaving a Net Income of (\$172,667). Expenses were over budget due to the USA Roller Sports. Kalkwarf said this Net Income Loss would be addressed in the next agenda item. Dickerson made the motion to accept the financials as presented and it was seconded by Wheaton. Motion carried unanimously.

½% CVB/Event Promotion Tax Request: Maul stated that in order for the CVB to continue their bid process in attracting new events and securing existing relationships with organizers, they are asking for the approved improvements funds be released to the CVB. There are past and existing fees that need to be paid. The new request for the ½% lodging tax (July, 2017 – October, 2017 collection) will cover \$170,000 for USA Roller Sports for a total request of \$170,000. Maul presented a sample motion as part of the request document. Ireland asked for a motion and Morgan made the motion that the VPC determines the facilities in Lancaster County as adequate and approves the use of improvement fund dollars for promotion as presented by the CVB in the amount of \$170,000. It was seconded by Perrett and motion carried unanimously with Cunningham absent. Maul thanked the group and stated that these funds will help keep Lincoln competitive.

2018-2023 Attraction Survey:

Maul presented the 2018-2023 Tourism Attraction survey that will be sent out to current attractions to find out which attraction will be applying for grants. The survey will allow the CVB to find out from attractions if they are planning on doing improvement projects, as well as what items people will be using funds for. Tooze asked how does the VPC determine who gets the survey. Maul stated that it will be museums, wineries, breweries, etc. or anything that fulfills the definition of an attraction. Waite asked if the survey will be sent to previous award winners. Maul replied that it will be sent to the organizations included on the Lincoln Attraction and Museum Association (LAMA) list by the end of November. Perrett questioned whether the timing for sending out the survey was less than ideal. Maul stated that they could probably hit more attractions now, instead of waiting until the March/April time period. Waite stated that they holidays may make it difficult to get a response. Maul stated that the responses to the survey are only as good as the people on the other end taking it.

Directors Report:

Maul stated that marketing and sales teams have had a busy year with the Solar Eclipse. There is continued marketing alongside the statewide coalition and State Tourism. Also the 2017 Beer Tour is wrapping up with a few guides remaining and redemption ongoing. There were over 1,100 guides printed. Maul mentioned that next year they may be pairing the beer with food on the tour. November proves to be a busy month with high school state championship events. The NSAA Volleyball was last week and had great attendance, NE Music Educators is November 16-18 at the Lied Center and Embassy Suites and the NSAA State Football will be held at Memorial Stadium. December is filled with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual NSAA Unified Bowling on December 4<sup>th</sup> and the NE Power Farming Show at the Lancaster Event Center on December 5-7. Maul reported that the GoodGuys “Day at the Hay” is not returning to Lincoln, due to the market not meeting their expectations, however the local car club people have their own ideas. The State Tourism Conference in October led to new grant programs being released as well as an application for new Tourism Markers that will have a great impact in the rural areas. Maul stated that there is still a continued need for competition facilities in order to make this a sports city. The 2018 Visitors Guide is in production/printing and should be available the end of December/Early January. The plan is to print 70,000 copies. We have the new Meeting Planners Guide available as well if anyone is interested in a copy of that. The CVB Video, which is a product of a grant from State Tourism, is on the YouTube Channel and is a good video. Some of the accolades that the City of Lincoln has received in 2017 include; #1 Best Value City (Craft Beer/Cycling), #5 Best Value Destination, #4 Best State Capital to Live in, #2 Must Visit Stadiums to catch a game and #2 Most Caring Cities in America. Maul stated that these are used in conversation to sell Lincoln.

Feyerherm reported on the 2017 sales leads and proposals to date saying there were 156 sales for 85,634 room nights, in comparison to 153 sales leads and 65,896 room nights total in all of 2016. 31

proposals have been submitted for consideration. There are 24 leads pending for 6,515 room nights. Booked business for 2017 include 115 events booked for 67,743 room nights, in comparison to 103 events booked for 36,261 room nights in all of 2016. The CVB is in ongoing discussions with numerous USOC NGB's such as Roller Sports, Volleyball and Wrestling. There are several events that have already been awarded and contracts are still pending. The second half of 2017 was a busy tradeshow season. Some of the tradeshow that CVB staff attended were; USOC SportsLink, Connect Association, Connect Specialty (SMERF) and Connect Sports in New Orleans, LA; S.P.O.R.T.S Relationship in Cedar Rapids, IA; NASC 45 Summit in Detroit, MI and Connect Faith in Cincinnati, OH. The CVB has plans to attend a couple of tradeshows in 2018 starting with ABA Marketplace in Charlotte, NC, January 26-30, 2018 and RCMA Emerge in Omaha, NE, January 30 – February 1. There is continual work on the Nebraska Sports Marketing Coalition, in which 11 cities are a part of. The first tradeshow the coalition will attend will be the NASC Symposium in Minneapolis, MN in April. Lincoln is hosting the POMA (Professional Outdoor Media Association) in June 2018 and the SE NE Fam Tour in the Spring of 2018.

New Business:

Waite mentioned that the University is planning a 150<sup>th</sup> year event and to put in on everyone's radar for 2018. Maul mentioned to let him know if there was anything that CVB could do to help. Ireland referred to the 2018 meeting date schedule in the packets as well as the Save the Date for the Holiday Party.

Adjourn: There being no further discussion Ireland thanked everyone for their time and made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Wheaton. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.