

Johnson County Tourism Association/Lodging Tax Joint Powers Board

Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. at the Bomber Mountain Civic Center

In attendance: chairperson Jill Smith, vice-chair Harold Anton, treasurer Cathy Bradley, secretary Sylvia Bruner, Cole Burnham, and Susan Moyes (attending via telephone). Guest Claudia Todd from the Bomber Mountain Civic Center.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00

Minutes Approval: the minutes of the June meeting and the August special meeting were reviewed and approved. Anton moved, Bradley seconded. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report: the treasurer's report and bill pay list were reviewed and approved as presented. Bruner moved, Anton seconded. All in favor. The bills approved for payment were to the Casper Star Tribune and bookkeeper Chanda Rule. Bradley reported the money market account balance as of August 31 was \$135,287.28 and the checking account balance as of August 31 was \$14,678.89. Bradley planned to visit with Chanda Rule about options other than the money market account to determine if we could be gaining a higher interest rate.

Board update: Moyes reported that Laurel Foster (curator at the Hoofprints of the Past Museum in Kaycee) will be appointed by the commissioners to fulfill the county requirements. It was also reported by *Sheridan Media* that the city appointed Jennifer McCormick to the board beginning next month (Jake Kennedy has gone off the board – thank you to Jake for your service!). Further discussion about board members included the thought that it could be useful to have a hotel representative on the board again.

Old Business:

Budget revisit: discussion was held about the downturn in this summer's revenue due to COVID. There are concerns that the budget may need to be adjusted. Anton reminded those present that the funding in the money market account can be accessed to meet our mission. Bruner also noted that JCTA was due to receive over \$50,000 from the state for COVID-related expenses, which might cover some of our costs if they are re-worked to include COVID marketing. It was decided to wait to formally revisit the budget. No action needed.

Lodging tax vote update: Commissioner Novotny was unable to attend the meeting, so Smith shared updated information she had received from the county attorney's office. There appears to be general confusion regarding the impact the new statewide tourism tax (HB0134) is having on all county's ability to increase local taxes. Assistant county attorney Barry Crago determined that if we were to pursue an increase in local tax collections this year (as we had intended to do), we would be required to define it as a 4% tax instead of a 2% tax. Given the current financial issues residents are facing, Crago and the county commissioners recommend we not pursue the increase at this time, but delay it for a future effort. Bruner motioned to terminate our plans to ask for an additional 2% local increase to be on the 2020 ballot. Bradley seconded, all in favor.

New Business:

Updates/Information:

Contract updates: McCormick has this month remaining on contract with JCTA (5 hours), so if we have any further questions or requests of her in this capacity, we need to submit them to her soon.

CARES Act grant update: Bruner noted that JCTA was approved for the full amount offered to Johnson County -- \$50,790 and that an email from 9/8/2020 indicated the check should be in our mailbox. Smith volunteered to coordinate with Todd to create a plan to use the funds for marketing efforts.

Marketing update: Todd provided insights from the JCTA facebook page regarding posts relating to the upcoming Oktoberfest event. Todd also noted that next year's RMI (Rocky Mountain International) roundup dates are set for March 21 – 24 in Casper.

Billboards: Anton is going to contact Kami Kennedy to visit about the billboards on I-90 East and I-25 South which are discoloring. Kennedy's business produced the billboards. Todd is going to investigate a new vendor for the billboard by Mr. R's auto salvage, with the thought that we might be able to pay for it with the CARES Act funding if the message is changed to fit the parameters of the grant.

WY BEST program: The meeting in Buffalo has been changed to Tuesday, November 17. There is a survey which is to be conducted prior to the meeting. Smith is spearheading this project. State Travel and Tourism is also planning a FAM (familiarization) trip through Buffalo mid September.

URL Forwarding: We had decided on purchasing the url www.johnsoncountyyw.com Understanding that developing a real website is not likely to happen in the near future, the plan is to secure the site and forward clicks to other pertinent sites – such as to the civic center – until we develop our own.

800 number update: There was discussion about moving the 800 phone number to a cell phone or landline and having Todd man the phone as pertinent calls will be dealing with marketing requests and travel information packets.

File boxes clean out committee: Todd and Moyes will be going through boxes to sort and dispose of unnecessary items.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Next meeting: 10/13/2020 – 3:00 p.m. at the Bomber Mountain Civic Center