

NETA Board Meeting

Oct. 17, 2023

Minutes

Chairman Anjanette Bonham called the Oct. 17, 2023, meeting of the Nebraska Travel Association to order at 4:03 p.m. Board members present were Bonham, Traci Jeffrey, Regina Osburn, Steve Maly and Brianne Schuler. Absent was Karli Schulz. Director Wendy Kreuser was also present, as was lobbyist Andy Pollock.

Membership members present were: Jane Gustafson, Nebraska Game and Parks; Marcie Sextro, Growing Small Town Nebraska; Sheila Jenkinson, Growing Small Town Nebraska; Fred Uhe, Sarpy County Tourism; Amy Allgood, NCTC; Pam Frana, NCTC-Nebraska City; JoAnne Hoatson, Archway; Stacy Schwartz, Archway; Karen Kollars, NTC; Shawn Rubek, Keith County Tourism; Sue Imig, Seward County Visitors Bureau; Clark Kolterman, Seward County Visitors Bureau; Kendra Mitchell, Cheyenne County Tourism; Marva Ellwanger, Cheyenne County; Gina Elsen, Cheyenne County; Linda Lacy, Calinda's Pot Shop & Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway; Christa Monti, Boys Town; Brenda Leisy, Scotts Bluff County Tourism; Karla Niedan-Streeks, Gering Visitors Bureau; Lisa Burke, Visit North Platte; Amanda Connick, Visit North Platte, Dana Jelinek, Grand Island Tourism; Robert Sabin, Hilton Omaha & Nebraska Tourism Commission; David Fudge, Nebraskaland Days

David Fudge of Nebraskaland Days moved to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2023, meeting. JoAnne Hoatson of the Archway seconded. Motion carried.

Schuler presented the financial report, indicating a fairly stable financial picture year-over year. Lisa Burke of Visit North Platte moved and Karla Niedan-Streeks of Gering seconded to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

Pollock presented the legislative update. In the 2023 session, NETA supported seven bills, six of which passed. Five were alcohol related bills and the sixth allowed county visitor improvement funds to be used at state or county parks/fairgrounds even if there is a casino present. The funds cannot be used for the casino. NETA did not oppose any bills in 2023.

A number of interim studies were introduced, addressing topics including, but not limited to, alcohol shipment, games of skill, entertainment district licenses, intrastate air travel, pheasant hunting and the cleanliness of rest stops.

In 2024, expect legislation on the funding for the State Tourism Commission. The conversation has been ongoing for a couple of years. A recent meeting with a representative of the governor's office went well around the goal of increasing the money available to promote Nebraska as a tourist destination. A bill will be introduced in 2024, though it will likely take more than one session to pass it, and the industry will need to build a coalition of support.

A quick survey was done on the best days/times for legislative meetings once the session begins; the best choices from the meeting will be forwarded to the entire membership for feedback.

NETA has formed two sub-committees to study best practices. The CVB/DMO committee includes Karla Niedan-Streeks, Anjanette Bonham, Kerri Rempp, Traci Jeffrey and Brad Mellema. A working document has been compiled with a glossary of terms, funding mechanisms, governing bodies and other terms.

The second committee currently includes Brienne Schuler and Karli Schulz and is in need of more members from the events/attractions/associations group.

The membership broke into small groups to discuss the following questions:

- How can NETA add membership value to you?
- What questions do you need answers to?
- What challenges are you facing?

Reporting out on these questions included the following feedback:

- Better understanding of legislation: how it works, our role, specific bills, etc
- Resource contact list: printers, marketers
- Hotel recruitment: how do we approach that
- Membership rates: lower for microbusinesses
- Why aren't all counties paying membership dues to NETA?

Brochure Swap will be May 14-15, 2024, in Grand Island.

Brienne Schuler moves to adjourn the meeting at 4:56 p.m. Regina Osburn seconds. Motion carried.