

Visitors Promotion Committee
May 10, 2017
MINUTES

In attendance: Lynne Ireland, Roland Morgan, Colette Wear, Amy Dickerson, Becky Perrett, Kerry Eagan, Nicole Fleck-Tooze, Michelle Waite, Dave Wheaton, Trent Fellers and Bill Avery

Staff attending: Derek Feyerherm, Jeff Maul, Kyle Fischer, Ron Kalkwarf and Kathy Dvorak

Guests: Dennis Meyer, Ann Ames, Matt Olberding, Paul Tunakan, Lori Thomas, Bill Stephen, Kyle Cartwright, Lynn Johnson, Tom Lorenz and JJ Yost

Call to Order and Introductions:

Lynne Ireland called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. and introductions were made.

Discussion of Available Funds: Maul stated that doing projects is hard dealing with cash flow which limits when bigger grants can be considered. Morgan stated that paying out over a longer period of time is a consideration, but does not always work. Maul stated that Dennis Meyer was in attendance and would give an update on what is available from the County before we hear the grant requests. Meyer passed out a summary and stated the balance as of April 30, 2017 was \$2,178,457.04 and estimated annual receipts (FY16-17) (two months) are \$250,000 for an estimated balance as of June 30, 2017 of \$2,428,457.04. Meyer stated that FY16 projects that will be paid in FY17 total \$550,000; FY17 projected/committed funds equal \$330,000 for a total of \$880,000 of which all could be paid in FY17. Meyer then reviewed the FY18 projected/committed funds totaling \$705,000. Projected/committed funds for FY19 – FY24 include 300,000 for the Lincoln Children's Zoo (6 years) and Lancaster County Ag Society for \$770,000 for three years. Estimated Bid fees were \$366,000 and \$100,000 is being allowed for ten grants of \$10,000 each; however, he anticipates it to be closer to 6 – 8. Meyer keeps a running total so when Maul asks if funds are available he can respond quickly. Meyer plans to budget \$1.85M for 2018 and could budget \$2M for 2019. FY2017/2018 will have a fund balance to cover 2019 and out; however, need to look at the cash flow.

Lincoln Partners for Public Art Grant Request: Lori Thomas, Director of LPPAD (Lincoln Partners for Public Art Development) stated LPPAD is a fund of the Lincoln Community Foundation and is a public/private partnership that has been around about three years with the idea of being able to bring public art to the forefront and grow an endowment to purchase/lease art. LPPAD serves in an advisory capacity for the City of Lincoln to promote public art such as the Gettysburg Address on the west side of the Capitol – this same artist also did one in DC. LPPAD is a small organization with a small budget. The fund request is for \$10,000 to purchase an app called Otocast. Lori stated that leisure travelers often find themselves laden with guidebooks or are ill-informed about their local surroundings – the Otocast app would be the only source needed. Region businesses and attractions want to engage visitors and encourage longer and more meaningful interactions. The Otocast solution would allow you to download the app that would pull up the closest attractions around you. You can also click on photos of what you are interested in – it is very interactive in audio as well as video. Sponsors could purchase ad space and this app can be used with social as well. Otocast can provide measurement of user activity such as tours accessed, points-of-interest accessed, session duration, most popular tours, most played audio, first-time users, repeat users, social media sharing and location of user. Usage can be promoted via various other media. Example is Columbia, MO uses their city channel to promote the

local art scene using this app. Lori provided some quick statistics such as: free download for Apple and Android, averages 13% monthly growth in user base and has users in the USA, Canada, UK, France, Italy and more, over 2,100 points of interest listed such as art, architecture, historic and general interest as well as a puzzle hunt, 100+ guides, short-term (1-day) and long-term permanent guides. Thomas showed a map of current guide locations and western Nebraska already has done this. Thomas also stated that content partner areas include local government, economic development/BIDS, tourism/marketing and historic preservation. A partial list of content partners was also reviewed and examples of comments by users were provided. Fellers asked if it was \$60 per point of interest and how many are being planned. Thomas said there is an initial fee of \$100 per point. Fellers asked if there was a limit on the total number of users and a limit on users per guide within the app. How will this be cash flowed and is there a chance financing will go away? Thomas stated she is confident things will go well. Fleck-Tooze stated that 150 Art Makers have made commitments to LPPAD and some at the \$25,000 level. A project recently worked on was a loan of public art bringing in five pieces of sculpture which was funded by the Art Makers. Waite asked if Thomas would tell how Lincoln compares in the Art scene and Thomas stated that the Sheldon Museum is one of the best collections in the nation with the sculpture garden being third in the US. The mayor is very supportive and the Arts Council is very active. Artists in residence want to come here as there are buyers here. Currently working with WRK and to use the Cube in the Railyard for digital art. Ireland thanked Thomas for her presentation and opened the floor for discussion. Wheaton stated he has used Otocast before and it is awesome; his brother lives in Austin and used it there. It is easy to use and easy to put together. Waite stated you can do self-guided tours of museums on your iPhone. Ireland asked if it was capable to deal with a wider number of other museums etc. and Fleck-Tooze said it was. Dickerson stated that Chicago uses it for a landmark loop. Ireland stated there is the option to do it on a larger scale if needed/wanted. Fellers stated the idea is a great use of technology, but how do you find the app and know that it exists as it stands on its own and will be hard to gain a user base – the business model reflects it struggles to get a user base. Maul stated you would be able to piggy-back onto other organizations that have their own app. Fellers stated that it would be hard to get noticed as it is one of a million. Ireland stated the proposal does include a marketing plan for \$1,000 and does not know whether it is for funding brochures or what. Fleck-Tooze asked Wheaton how he came upon the app in Austin and Wheaton said his brother showed him a plaque on the public art pieces – sort of a VR. Ireland said the budget has a slot for all-weather signs. Maul stated that cultural tourism needs to be broadened. Currently trying to do that with the Haymarket tours. This would be a designated first step – we need it as it is a struggle to let people know what we have; it would help build the brand and put heads in beds. Ireland stated she would entertain a motion to approve the grant request of \$10,000 to purchase Otocast for LPPAD; Wheaton made the motion and it was seconded by Perrett. Roll call vote: Perrett – Yes; Dickerson – Yes; Wear – Yes; Wheaton – Yes; Morgan – Yes and Ireland - Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Lied Center Grant Request: Bill Stephen of the Lied Center for Performing Arts presented the grant request for \$175,000 to repair and/or replace concert hall seats. Stephen stated the mission of the Lied Center is to educate, inspire and entertain the people of Nebraska through the performing arts. The Lied Center's claim to fame includes being one of the top 100 performing arts centers in the world; has 150,000+ patrons per year; 50,000 visitors from outside of Lincoln; won the 2014 Tourism Award; 2015 Downtown Leadership Award and the 2016 Event of the Year Award. Events of note include hosting Yo-Yo Ma and Tony Bennett; is the place where Idina Menzel debuted her new songs and Cinderella was the best attended in the 2016/2017 season with 9,000 in attendance. The Lied Center is bringing national attention with the landmark "Firebird" collaboration with the American Ballet Theatre and the

St. Louis Symphony which was made possible by a generous donation and will have performances by Kristin Chenoweth and Audra McDonald. Stephen stated the Lied Center is an integral part of tourism in Lancaster County by hosting events such as the International Thespian Festival (5,000 visitors and growing) and the Nebraska State Music Educators Association Conference (2,600+ visitors). Annually responsible for 12,500 hotel room nights and annual ticket sales have grown substantially from 2009 to 2017. Work continues to revitalize the Lied Center as evident with the addition of The Lied Commons. The Lied Center is over 25 years old and while some renovation has been done, more needs to be done. Consumers want a world class experience and comfort is important. The seats are in dire need of repair; some are torn and some have broken springs and some fall down. The Main Hall Seat Revitalization will include replacing fabric, cushions, seat pan and all damaged chair parts of the 2,259 seats. The total cost to fix the seats is \$362,000 and funding has been received from the Rogers Foundation, Hixon-Lied Endowment and the Friends of Lied leaving a balance of \$175,000 which is the amount of the request. Stephan explained the challenge is there is a deadline and need to take advantage while the company still has the chair parts. Stephen explained that 45% of income comes from ticket sales and the balance comes from generous people. It is difficult to get sponsors for facilities that need updating. Other significant renovation needs besides the seats include the fire alarm system, fire and safety update and administrative office updates. Costs for maintenance each year is \$300,000 of which \$100,000 is from a maintenance endowment and the balance has to come from the general fund. UNL cannot provide maintenance funds nor can it provide financial support for the seats. Lied is a nonprofit. It is their dream to receive a major gift for a maintenance endowment. Stephen stated that it has been five years since this project was started and over half has been raised (\$187,000) and he is hoping the VPC can see the need to do it now. Time is of the essence to maintain the Lied Centers sterling reputation and he hoped the VPC could help with that. The Lied does not receive hotel/restaurant tax revenues or City support; that is why the VPC grants are critical for support. Patron surveys say the seats need upgrading. The last request for help with this project was in 2014 and if funding is not received now, the project will again be delayed. Stephen stated the investment will last 25 years and with the audiences growing will continue to bring visitors to Lancaster County. Ireland asked if anyone had any questions and Waite asked if payment could be made over two years – either cut in half or however the VPC wants to pay and Stephen said yes. Dickerson asked if there was a maintenance fee on the tickets and Stephen said yes \$3.00 per ticket and that price is monitored. Ireland said \$3 per ticket with 150,000 seats sold each year seems adequate and Stephen said No – they only charge the fee when tickets are sold in person or on the phone. Fellers asked if there are higher fees purchased online and Stephen said yes and those fees are up to \$7 each already. Stephen stated the industry standard is lower if ticket is bought in person. Avery asked if there was a transaction if purchased with a credit card and Stephen said yes. Ireland thanked Stephen for his presentation and excused him from the room.

Ireland reminded the group that the last time we talked about his proposal clarification was needed and asked Eagan to determine if the VPC could fund such a request. Eagan said we will start with the state statute and quoted the section relative to what grant monies can be used for which included expanding, improving and developing attractions which is broad and would cover the seats. Avery asked if refurbishing the seats would fall under maintenance and Eagan stated yes, but the guidelines currently allow for it to be used for maintenance. The Nebraska Tourism recommendations last time stated counties need definite guidelines with the provision that no part of the funds shall be used for maintenance; however, this is only a recommendation and not etched in stone and it is not in the guidelines now. There is no black line test, but the concern is - are we funding something that should be regular depreciation. Maul stated the size of the last request in November, 2015, was larger. Waite

stated that this time he made an effort to get more outside money. Wheaton stated there were several components for the Lied Center revitalization, two of the five components for a total of \$362,000; they are asking for \$175,000 however we could choose over two years. Fleck-Tooze said the condition of the seats does affect ticket purchases. Wheaton asked if we will be setting a precedence. Ireland stated that tightening the grant guidelines will be critical and yes, every other use of major seating could come for funding; however, we could do this and then change the guidelines. Waite stated that guideline revision is a totally separate discussion. Morgan asked if the dates are flexible and when would work start and it was determined work started on August, 2018. Eagan stated according to the current grant guidelines we pay upon completion. Avery asked if we ever put funds into escrow and Eagan said no, but we could set aside \$100,000 now and \$75,000 in 2018. Ireland asked if there were more comments and asked if anyone proposed action on this proposal. Morgan said it would be beneficial to split payment into two years. Avery asked isn't it the County's only obligation is to pay after the work is done? Eagan stated the grant contract guidelines is the controlling document. Fischer stated the VPC can make a recommendation to complete payment whenever it determines. Avery stated we needed to be careful not to spend money. Dickerson asked if it would be better to pay now and Wheaton said in FY18 and get it done. Wear suggested we grant \$100,000 in FY 2017 and upon the start of the project and in March of 2018 pay \$75,000 so it is over two fiscal years. Wear made the motion to pay \$100,000 and \$75,000 over two fiscal years respectively. Eagan said to clarify over fiscal years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. Morgan seconded. Roll call vote: Dickerson – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Wear – Yes; Wheaton – Yes and Ireland – Abstained. Motion carried.

Pinewood Bowl Grant Request: Lynn Johnson and Tom Lorenz presented a request for improvements to update Lincoln's iconic Pinewood Bowl in Pioneers Park bringing it to the 21st century. The request is for \$1.8M - \$450,000 annually over four years. Johnson gave a history of Pinewood Bowl stating it was part of the original master plan taking advantage of the natural bowl. The land was donated by the Harris Family in the 1920's and Pinewood Bowl was dedicated in 1947 as a World War II living memorial. In 1975, Viola Jelenik gave funds to build the large covered stage structure. Pinewood Bowl has been offering summer community musical theater productions since 1949 and this year it will be "The Little Mermaid". The partnership between the City and SMG has been a tremendous success bringing national tourists to Pinewood Bowl since 2012. Lorenz stated it has been an honor to use this venue for concerts. 136,000 tickets have been sold from 2012 to date for over \$7M in ticket sales. The highest single gross was for Paul Simon at \$360K. Lorenz referred to a slide that showed the history of the concert series from 2012 through the upcoming season and next week there will be another announcement. Concerts appeal to all ages. Concert goers and artists alike love the look and feel of Pinewood Bowl. Lorenz talked about the current conditions, future needs and recent project improvements stating the current condition has aging infrastructure and undersized infrastructure; back of house improvements are needed to accommodate national touring artists and front-of-house improvements are needed to accommodate audiences up to 5,500. Lorenz referred to pictures of the Stage Right Green Room, Women's Dressing Room, Green Trailer which houses the Production Office. Johnson stated performers speak of Pinewood Bowl like going to summer camp. A master plan was developed in 2015 with involvement from Pinewood Bowl, Inc., SMG Lincoln/Pinnacle Bank Arena and Lincoln Parks & Recreation. Lorenz reviewed a list of 23 items in the areas of production area-Back of House; Audience Amenities – Front of House and Site Infrastructure. Lorenz stated lowering the sound mixing station was completed in Spring of 2017; construction of a new entry plaza is planned for Fall, 2017 and construction of a new scene shop is planned to begin in Fall, 2017 as well. Lorenz stated there is a future need to expand and improve truck staging. Enhanced improvements will have a positive impact on tourism and why it is important to invest in Pinewood Bowl. PWB concerts

is now in its 6th year of hosting national level concerts and performances; PWB is an important attraction for Lincoln and Nebraska; it is a regional destination for music fans, drawing from multiple states surrounding Nebraska; it has a diverse music program appealing from teens to millennials on up to classic rock, comedy, urban and country fans. Improvements will encourage bands to route through Lincoln from their bookings in Kansas City to Red Rocks, Colorado. Lorenz then reviewed statistics connected with PWB's growing reputation and part of the growing reputation that Lincoln is nurturing as a "music city". Patrons comment they never explored Pioneer Park or haven't been in years – now there is increased use of the park and the nature center. The summer concert and play series provide additional hotel nights and a value added component for the CVB to groups and visitors. Lorenz then reviewed sales by market stating that people outside Lincoln purchase 45% of the ticket market. Millennials travel and are interesting in creating memories.

Ireland thanked them for the presentation and opened the floor for discussion. Wheaton asked of the 23 item list what is the most important or what are the top five? Johnson said the construction of the new performers building would provide improvements to the septic system, showers help attract acts. Perrett asked if Pinewood Bowl, Inc. was raising funds as well and Johnson reported yes and we use those funds toward immediate needs; Lorenz stated their needs match our needs so it is nice to work with them. Avery asked what are your needs 20 years from now? Lorenz stated parking is a consideration, but we are not looking to increase the capacity of the bowl and are happy with 4,800 to 5,000 capacity and want it to be a high-end experience. Lorenz stated the stage is in a wind tunnel and need legitimate theater space with a back wall. Johnson said that PWB, Inc. uses scenes that come down from the top and if these improvements would reduce production costs. Waite asked if we lost performers due to condition of the Performers Building and Lorenz stated that several representatives have made pointed remarks and replied they are not steering people here because of it. Maul stated the day Pershing went away a void was created and asked, has Pinewood Bowl helped fill that void. Lorenz stated it fills a niche and allows them to work with companies like Live Nation, Mammoth and William Morris Office. Wear asked if there were actual budgets anywhere and if the City and SMG/PBA were in agreement. Johnson reported that the SMG pays \$5,000 per show of which 2/5 goes for staff. The City has allocated some money for the scene shop and Lorenz stated that SMG/PBA has set aside some dollars to do funding for mixed locations. Wear asked how much and Lorenz stated \$5-7K for the stage roof catwalk and cutting a doorway as it is a safety issue now. Eagan said there are actually two projects and looking at the left column what are they actually asking – we need to keep in mind the cash flow for the next 3 – 4 years. Ireland thanked Johnson and Lorenz and excused them from the room and opened the floor for additional discussion. Eagan spoke to Meyers who said that \$450,000 over four years would help with the cash flow. Avery said to Eagan that you didn't say you support it and Eagan said he needed to stay neutral. Maul asked if the County Board had discussed this and Eagan said not yet but PWB did a presentation several months ago and there seems to be a lot of items. Wheaton referred to the Performers Building for \$750,000 and thought that was a little high and would like a breakdown that had more explanation. Dickerson said performers are looking for something better. Waite said demolishing a building is expensive. Maul asked if the County would ask for more explanation and Eagan replied yes. Dickerson asked if County Purchasing would be involved and Eagan said no. Ireland stated that SMG putting in \$5 – 7K is not much to put back when ticket sales are \$7M. Wear stated she wanted to see a budget. Wheaton asked how much of the \$7M in ticket sales goes to SMG's bottom line? Ireland asked if the VPC could ask for more information and Maul stated we could hold our decision until we have more information and hold another meeting. Ireland wanted to know what their alternate strategy would be if we didn't fund all of it. Perrett asked if they charge a facility fee on the tickets and if not recommend it. She was also afraid it would put funds

in a bind for years 2019, 2020 and 2021. Ireland stated she is hearing we need more information. Wear moved that more complete information is requires and postpone a decision until the next meeting. Maul asked Eagan if that we could do that and Eagan said to just leave it as pending. Avery said to be fair to the proposal, we need to take it up before the guidelines are changed. Eagan suggested Maul write Johnson of what is needed and ask about what Perrett talked about. Morgan seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Dickerson – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of February Minutes: Ireland asked for a motion to approve the February minutes. Perrett made the motion to approve. Motion was seconded by Dickerson. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Dickerson – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of April Financials: Ron Kalkwarf gave the financial report for the period of July, 2016 through April, 2017. Income was ahead of budget at \$1,648,035 due to grant income. This income was offset by the correlating expense. Total Expenses for the same period were \$1,710,240 with area of note being Medical & Dental Insurance is under budget as premium rate did not increase as planned. Net income for July 2016 through April 2017 is (\$62,205). Dickerson made the motion to accept the financials as presented. Motion was seconded by Wheaton. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Dickerson – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion passed unanimously.

CVB Audit: Kalkwarf presented the CVB audit stating the audit was completed by BKD, LLC in accordance with accounting standards practiced in the United States. BKD gave the audit a clean or unmodified opinion which is good news. Kalkwarf referred to the financial statements to include the Statements of Financial Position, Statements of Activities and Statements of Cash Flows. Kalkwarf then referred to the Notes on Pages 6 – 8 and stated there was nothing major to note. This audit was performed along with the Chamber audit and reflect the calendar year, not the fiscal year. Ireland asked for a motion to accept the audit as presented and the motion was made by Morgan and seconded by Wear. Roll call vote: Dickerson – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Wear – Yes; Wheaton – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

½% CVB/Event Promotion Lodging Tax Request: Maul stated this request is made twice per year in order for the CVB to continue their bid process in attracting new events and securing existing relationships with organizers. Currently, the CVB has past and existing fees that need to be paid and is requesting a ½% lodging tax (January 2017 – April 2017 collection) totaling \$100,000 to be used for bid fees for the NSAA State Basketball tournaments. Eagan stated the VPC must determined that the facilities in the county are adequate and therefore these funds can be granted. Ireland asked for a motion to approve this request. Dickerson made the motion it was seconded by Wear and a roll call ballot was made: Dickerson – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Wear – Yes; Wheaton – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion carries unanimously.

CVB FY 2017/18 Budget: Maul presented the proposed budget for July 2017 through June 2018 stating there were no surprises and its pretty much business as usual. On the income side, Room Tax-CVB request was increased by less than 1% for a total of \$1,715,000. This money is for normal operating costs from the Visitors Promotion Fund and the CVB receives 1/12th of this money each month. Room Tax-Bid Fees remained the same at \$339,800 and Other Income which is derived from Visitors Guide ad sales is up 4.4% for a budgeted amount of \$47,120. Total budgeted income is \$2,101,920. Budgeted

expenses will be increased by less than 1% to \$2,100,600, as well. with areas of note being salaries up due to the hiring of a full-time Visitors Center person, Karen Shinn; Payroll Taxes up due to tenured people; Travel and Training as attendance at two more conferences is planned; Garage Rental & Parking up as the City's rates for Visitor Center parking increased; Postage decreased as more web content is planned; Printing is up as a Meeting Planners Guide will be printed; Public Relations and Advertising increased due to Eclipse promotion; Event Promotion and Sports Event Promotion are down due to contracted rotation of events and Depreciation is up due to software enhancements and refurbishing the Visitors Center. This budget leaves an overall Net Income of \$1,260. Maul stated the approval of this budget is a four step process with approval needed from the LCOC Executive Committee, LCOC Board, VPC Board and the County Board. Ireland asked for a motion to approve the proposed budget as presented and it was moved by Dickerson and seconded by Wheaton. Roll call vote: Perrett – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Wheaton – Yes; Wear – Yes; Dickerson – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Directors Report: Maul reported that attendance was up at the 2017 NSAA basketball tournaments for both the boys and girls. Lincoln was awarded the 2017 Unified Bowling Championships and this is the second year awarded. USA Wrestling World Team Trials will be June 9 -10 and Feyerherm has USA Wrestling posters. The passage of LB222 was a key piece of legislation for tourism as it gives better governance. Bousquet hosted the Southeast Nebraska Fam Tour and booked one tour as a result. Work is being done on a 2017 Lincoln Craft Beer tour featuring nine local breweries. The CVB is excited about the kickoff with a passport. Passports can be picked up at the Visitors Center and each participant will receive a bottle opener. Completed passport participants will receive a free pint glass compliments of Boiler Brewing. Lots of neat things about this tour.

Activities continue to be planned for the 2017 Solar Eclipse at Haymarket park. The eclipse will be Monday, August 21, at 1:02 p.m. for approximately 90 seconds of total darkness. The baseball game at Haymarket Park will begin at noon and activities include a celebrity tossing out the first pitch, the players will be wearing eclipse jerseys and the game will be suspended during eclipse time. The eclipse has international appeal and hotels on the south side of Lincoln have seen increased traffic due to the proximity to Beatrice where the optimum viewing is anticipated. Lots of educational activities are being planned from UNL and others – too bad school isn't out. More information can be found on the website www.neclipse17.com.

Pints and Politics is a local show by Dan Parsons and features the local craft beer culture and its relationship to visitors. The Children's Zoo expansion is very exciting and great news for Lincoln. USSSA State Baseball, which is the major governing body of baseball has interest in Lincoln and we are getting close with our facilities to get them involved. A baseball field complex feasibility study by CSL has begun and will determine how many fields is needed, the demand and the sustainability. Maul stated CSL has completed studies for Lincoln before and has complete faith in their findings. Their report should come out in June and user surveys should be out in the community now.

The Visitors Improvement Grant Guidelines are being revised and hope to have the revisions completed by late May or early June. There is still a huge demand for downtown parking and the City is looking at building a new garage. Maul reported that the "Be A Tourist Program" is being retired. Other big summer events include Formula SAE – Feyerherm thanked Wheaton and Kalkwarf for their participation in judging, USARS Championships will be at the Speedway Village again and as mentioned previously, USA Wrestling World Team Trials.

Feyerherm gave a Sales Leads and Proposals update and stated that to date for 2017 there have been 78 sales leads for 37,180 room nights of which 29% was regional/national and 33% being new business. Nine proposals have been submitted for consideration and 28 leads are currently pending for 9,441 room nights. Booked business for 2017 includes 59 events for 30,150 rooms with 33% being regional/national and 23% new business. Events to be confirmed definite include National High School Rodeo Championships in 2020 and 2021 which would equate to 10,200 room nights; a housing bureau may be set up for the rodeo. Another event to be confirmed is Sports Car Club of America for five years, 2018 – 2022 equating to 40,000 room nights; 2027 will be the 60th Anniversary of SCAA and they are very happy with Lincoln and would like to make Lincoln their home through their 60th anniversary. Offutt will be working on their runway and will have some of their assets here; however, the Lincoln Airport Authority worked hard to ensure access to the west ramp. And USA Roller Sports for 2018 for 10,000 room nights – there is talk of adding two more disciplines which would equate into additional days.

Feyerherm reported the NASC Symposium in Sacramento, CA was attended. Marketing efforts include group tour itineraries, sports and meeting planner guides and software enhancements for the RFP process working with Cvent to make it work more seamlessly.

A Statewide Sports Marketing Coalition will meet to discuss work on presenting the state as a whole rather than individual cities.

New Business: Ireland stated that due to the request for more information on the Pinewood Bowl Grant Request a special meeting will need to be held the first part of June. Maul stated he would send out a Doodle Poll survey to find a time that works best for all.

Adjourn: Being no further business, Wear made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Morgan. Roll call vote: Dickerson – Yes; Perrett – Yes; Morgan – Yes; Wear – Yes; Wheaton – Yes and Ireland – Yes. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Visitors Promotion Committee
June 1, 2017
MINUTES

In attendance: Lynne Ireland, Roland Morgan, Colette Wear, Amy Dickerson, Kerry Eagan, Dave Wheaton, Jeff Cunningham and Carl Eskridge

Staff attending: Derek Feyherm, Jeff Maul, Kyle Fischer and Kathy Dvorak

Guests: Tom Lorenz, JJ Yost, Jerry Shorney, Zach Hammack

Call to Order and Introductions: Lynne Ireland called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. welcomed Councilman Carl Eskridge and introductions were made.

Pinewood Bowl Grant Request: Tom Lorenz, JJ Yost and Jerry Shorney were present. Yost referred to a PowerPoint where the construction cost estimates were put into logical groupings aligning with the master plan. Yost reminded that this is just a preliminary look and until funding is known and a design professional is on board these figures may get shuffled. Yost also reminded everyone these estimates are from a 2015 design and numbers may change. Maul stated discussion was held on whether or not the Visitors Improvement Fund could support a large request such as this and asked what is needed now or is it an all or nothing project. Yost said it was not an all or nothing project and it could be completed in phases and referred to the color coded groupings and stated if needed it could be broken down more and timeline stretched; but some efficiencies would be lost. The construction season is also concert season and timing is a big issue, but the basic answer is no – it's not an all or nothing project. Total request is for \$1.8M over four years; the orange category is the priority items for \$955,000; blue and green categories do not total correctly, but the overall total is correct. Maul stated that piecing it out may be best in order to let the fund build. Fischer asked what the 2018 season looked like and Lorenz stated that the 2018 concert season has not yet been determined, but roughly the same. Lorenz stated they turned down a couple of acts for October, 2017 because of construction. Yost stated the backstage storage building will be started this fall and the design work is currently being bid. Lorenz stated the last show will be September 22; however, that show has not yet been announced. Fischer asked if they were looking at an October start. Eskridge asked if there were any other sources of revenue. Yost stated-honestly – no. Lincoln Cares and SMG currently provide funding. Ireland asked if there were any other questions. Wear asked if any type of fundraiser could be done at Pinewood Bowl such as a free concert. Lorenz stated that there is no such thing as a free concert; even if you could get someone to draw a large enough crowd at a discount or free, there are ancillary costs associated with concerts. Shorney stated that Pinewood Bowl Inc. struggles a little bit with donations, but was able to give money to lower the mixing station. Eskridge asked what the capacity was and Lorenz stated 4,700 seats with a total of 5,500 to include standing room. The biggest difficulty is parking cars which limits future expansion of Pinewood Bowl. Ireland referred to one of the presentation sheets specifically the other committed dollars that would answer Eskridge's earlier question. Wheaton asked if there was a rental fee and how often is that negotiated. Lorenz stated \$5,000 is put in the budget, but paid \$6,250 the first year. Maul asked if there was a future in Pinewood Bowl doing other events or for other uses. Shorney stated national organizations that hold events such as walks have requested to use it, as well as weddings. Lorenz stated they have been approached by Yogafest which is a multi-day event so there are other opportunities. Ireland asked if there were any other questions and thanked them for the additional information. Ireland asked Eagan to give a thumbnail reminder of what a project like this

would do to balance of the improvement fund. Eagan stated as Dennis Meyer indicated at the previous meeting, it will be tight in a couple of years, but can be done. If something else comes along it would be difficult to consider. Although monies for ten \$10,000 grants has been budgeted the committee never give away ten; receipts are always more than budgeted and Meyer did not calculate for additional revenue. There is sufficient funding, but a delay for a year or two might be better. Ireland stated we are looking at a substantial obligation over four years. Eagan stated it was originally three years and went to \$450,000/4 years which would be the new commitment now. Ireland asked if anyone had more questions and suggested the decision would be dependent on how comfortable the committee was with restricted funds moving forward. Maul handed out the improvement fund balances to committee members. Wear asked if the totals included what we approved for the Lied Center at the previous meeting and Maul said no. Feyerherm stated the Lied project was \$175,000 over a two-year period. Ireland stated she got the sense since no one was making a motion there was hesitancy. Wear referred to the orange box and stated this is where the major funding request lies. Wheaton stated he was concerned that Pinewood Bowl won't call more bigger/better acts as there is already a better venue in town with the Pinnacle Bank Arena and that a venue holding 4,700 – 5,500 would draw more local crowds who would not be staying in hotels. Wheaton also said he'd rather put the money into ballfields. Wear asked why they didn't fill out the grant application. Cunningham agreed that the shiny new house is what brings in extra people. Ireland asked if there was any interest in partial funding stating that as an option. Wheaton asked if providing funding the items in orange including preparing site for parking, construction new performer's building and paving the back loading plaza or half of their requested funding is something they could move forward on or will it delay the overall project. Maul stated someone needs to go forward and make a motion, keeping in mind the County Board has the final decision. Dickerson stated the unfunded number in the top box is \$955,000 and also stated interest rates are low right now which could allow them to get up-front funding. Dickerson made a motion to fund \$955,000 over four years to fund items C, D, E.. Wear seconded. Ireland asked if there was further discussion. Wheaton asked the question if the VPC were willing to fund the other parts of the project at any other time – can they come back? Maul stated if revenue was high enough the committee could entertain paying for more. Eagan said there are two parts – first the County Board could decide to fund more and second, they could come back. Morgan stated that the Performers Building is a large expenditure. Wheaton stated they really want that building by next year and like Dickerson said – they could get funding. Morgan questioned whether the project would need updated cost estimates as it has been two years. Eagan stated that the numbers are probably legitimate. Wheaton stated it is up to them to figure out current costs. Ireland asked do we have a revised motion and a second or do we not amend the original motion? Wheaton said no and Wear asked what if we pledged different amounts each year to ease the financial stress on the budget. Wheaton suggested paying a higher payment up front and smaller amounts in subsequent years. Wear said that suggestion could be done or to do it over three years. Ireland asked for a revised motion. Dickerson moved to approve improvements to Pinewood Bowl in the amounts of \$505,000 for FY 2017, \$150,000 per year FY 2018, FY 2019 and FY 2020. Wear seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Ireland – Yes; Cunningham – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes and Dickerson – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Grant Guideline Review: Ireland reported that she, Maul and Eagan met informally to review the Lancaster County Visitors Improvement Grant Guidelines as presented here and will work down the document point to point. Maul stated the revisions highlighted in yellow reflect the suggestions everyone has given over the last six months. Maul also stated that he, Eagan and Ireland worked on it document in yellow and the document with red shaded areas are the additional revisions the City wants. Ireland started with 1.b. 'For major grant applications that exceed \$10,000 annually and that are part of

a multi-year contract, you cannot return for the same project or facility, until after the multi-year payout has been complete.’ Maul asked if we really want to say they can’t come back before their contract period is up. Wheaton added using today as an example thinks yes a definite timeline needs to be in place to be fiscally responsible. If new guideline language is used it would preclude Parks & Rec from coming back for more money in the case of Pinewood Bowl or preclude them from requesting multiple grants at the same time. Ireland stated if there is no other discussion she is hearing 1.b. is appropriate as written. Moving on to item 2, the word improvement is added and initial review is defined. Dickerson suggested the word “Board” is added after County and Ireland asked for the word “their” is replaced by “the applicant”. The purpose of this section is to be sure everyone completes the application. Eagan asked if there should be a separation between the \$10,000 requests and the larger grant requests – keep the \$10K process separate? It was determined the processes shouldn’t be mixed. Dickerson asked if notification to the County Board was the first step. Maul stated it is a process step and Eagan asked if the language needs to be beefed up and Maul suggested underlining ‘completed grant application’. It was determined to accept as suggested. Ireland referred to 4.a. and everyone agreed it was ok. 5.f. was then discussed regarding the definition of structural component. Wheaton stated the IRS definition does not consider it a capital expense. Fleck-Tooze wants to delete this paragraph. Maul asked if anyone had a problem with the proposed addition of the IRS definition and reminded that this language is a recommendation by the Nebraska Tourism Commission for best practices. Wear stated no that it should be added and Dickerson stated she was concerned about whether past projects would have been denied due to this new language. Feyerherm gave the example of the Boosalis Trail as an expansion, not general maintenance or replacement. It was determined to accept as presented. Ireland moved to 9. Regarding grant program schedule which states minor grant review (\$10,000 or less) will be held in May and November and major grant review will be held in February and August which makes the meetings more defined. City was asking to delete deadlines for large grant reviews to give more flexibility for big capital campaigns. Wheaton stated he did not agree and Eagan stated it’s nice to know of projects in advance. Maul stated people need to do advance scheduling. Dickerson asked would it mean having to say no to things that come out of the blue. Wheaton added like USA Volleyball trials? Eagan stated those requests come out of the promotional fund, not the improvement fund. All were good with this revision. Item 10 was next discussed and it was determined the first sentence should read: Minor and major grant awards will each be made twice yearly unless determined otherwise by the Visitors Promotion Committee and/or the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. The last sentence was removed as Eagan stated that language does not apply here and should be moved to 4.d. All were in agreement with the proposed changes for item 11. Item 12 is a housekeeping matter related to allocation of funds. Maul asked if #12 was necessary. The term encumbered funds was discussed and suggested the word be changed to expended; Eagan stated he will talk to Meyer about encumbered funds. Ireland asked if Eagan was saying item12 could be deleted and Eagan said yes. Due to the removal of item 12, the numbering would need to be changed throughout the guidelines. The new item 12 was discussed with the suggestion by Dickerson to add “s” to budget in the first line and in the letter g. to change the word from Private to ‘Any’ as recommended by the city to include governmental contributions. Agreed. Item13 (old 14) was discussed and said “unless otherwise agreed in grant contract” however, that does not allow for multi-year contracts. Eagan stated it can be written in the contract when there are phases. The city’s recommendation of adding ‘Unless otherwise agreed in grant contract,...’ This recommendation was agreed. Item14 was discussed and Maul stated Perrett had asked if visual evidence should be provided in this wording and Eagan stated No; Maul stated there would be problems enforcing it. Ireland asked if there were any other suggestions needing to be made to the grant request form. Item 2 was again discussed and it was determined that the following sentence be added “All grants major or minor must complete the grant application.” Ireland then asked if there

are no other concerns she would entertain a motion to empower Maul and Eagan to implement suggestions as determined and present to the County Board. Dickerson asked if the multipliers on the grant application were going up and Maul stated these are new numbers and are looked at every year. Ireland stated she still needed a motion. Morgan asked if a multiplier should be added which directly shows how much lodging tax is returned to the fund and whether an average rate of \$100/ hotel room night could be used. Feyerherm stated 2.04% would need to be used in that case to reflect the arena occupancy fee as well. Dickerson asked of the total economic impact, how much is put back in lodging tax fund. Wheaton asked what makes up the \$375 and Maul said all and these figures come from Dr. Thompson's office. Wheaton stated he thought the multiplier is exaggerated. Maul stated it is average for our market. Dickerson said this figuring more than one person to a room. Maul to Morgan we can get with the Partnership for Economic Development or the State to get what the lodging impact is and can add it at some point. Wheaton stated it was not necessary on the grant application. Ireland asked for a motion again. Cunningham made the motion to empower Maul and Eagan to implement suggestions as determined and present the revised grant guidelines to the County Board. Wheaton seconded. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Cunningham – Yes; Ireland – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes and Dickerson – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

VPC Committee Re-Appointment: Ireland stated that Wear's term on the VPC Board is up and Wear has agreed to be reappointed for another term ending in June 2021 and asked for a motion for this reappointment. Wheaton made the motion to reappoint Wear for another four-year term on the VPC Board and it was seconded by Dickerson. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Cunningham – Yes; Ireland – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes and Dickerson – Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn: Being no further business, Ireland made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Cunningham. Roll call vote: Wheaton – Yes; Cunningham – Yes; Ireland – Yes; Wear – Yes; Morgan – Yes; and Dickerson – Yes. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:26 pm