Joplin Convention & Visitors Bureau
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JCVB Advisory Board Meeting
Minutes
November 19, 2019

Attendees:	Chair: Mike Wilson, Co-Chair: Kevin Greim, Sec: Miranda Comer, Denise DuBois, Bob Kluth, Erin Slifka, Lynn Weathers, Jeremy Nienkamp, Mike Greninger, and Crystal Albright
Absent:	Traci Palmer
Staff:	Patrick Tuttle and Kerstin Landwer
Guests:	Jim Heaney, George Washington Carver National Monument; Pete Hall, Residence Inn, Christopher Beyer, Hilton Garden Inn, Clifford Wert, Connect2Culture, Craig Hull and Roger Doman, Joplin Sports Authority
Location:	Joplin City Hall, 5th Floor Informal Chamber

I. Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. **Approve of October Minutes:**

Board reviewed the October minutes, and there was discussion around the procedure for the preparation of the meeting minutes. Mr. Greninger suggested that moving forward notes be prepared by the board member who holds the office of secretary. Chair Wilson agreed and suggested that the office of the board chair also prepare the meeting agenda, and that any revisions/additions to the agenda be made by the board chair.

Mr. Greninger made a motion to table the approval of the October minutes for the December meeting to allow further review. Mr. Kluth seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

III. **Around-the-Table Updates:**

Information was provided by the following board members who had comments: Ms. Slifka – Casey's distribution facility will be built; Mr. Greninger – mentioned that his hotel is making improvements to their own facility to better serve guests; Ms. DuBois – noted that her property does have a new director of sales; Mr. Greim – noted that the Board of Governors is meeting to announce the members of the search for a President for MSSU, and also that commencement will be held on December 14, 2019.

Chair Wilson asked Mr. Tuttle for the status on the search for a new City Manager. Mr. Tuttle replied that there were now three candidates and that they would be in town the first week of December for interviews.

IV. **Update regarding CVB / JSA / SWMLA Proposal:**

Chair Wilson expressed appreciation of the board this past year, giving examples of improvements made, and that his intention was to show transparency to this board. Referring to the proposal letter presented at the October meeting, he discussed the impact unity amongst the three groups (JSA, JCVB AB, and SWMLA) has in progressing tourism in Joplin. He asked the board to fairly evaluate the impact of a new facility, to consider the current trade center building (formerly owned by John Q. Hammons Hotels), and to have an open dialogue today. Chair Wilson also acknowledged Mr. Hall and Mr. Doman for their contributions to the proposal letter. The Chairman also shared that Mr. Nienkamp had created a timeline to aid progress rather than to continue to have discussions with no results.

Mr. Greninger suggested that a specific work group formed to discuss in detail the proposal letter, and not to rush this process. He advised that with the impending decision by city council in hiring a new city manager, that perhaps the board should slow down and also include other groups/entities that may be impacted by tourism. Chair Wilson commented that it was not his intention to rush the process, but that he has already spent considerable time with Mr. Doman and Mr. Hall to put this proposal together. Ms. DuBois commented that her opinion is that the tendency as a board is to stall, and that it is necessary to, in good faith, move forward now. She also stated that this is a board for a reason and encouraged members to address any concerns openly and today. She asked that communication be in specific terms, and not generalized.

Ms. Albright asked why changing the number of seats on the board (item 1 in the proposal) mattered. She stated that several of the items in the proposal seemed vague. There was discussion amongst the board, with Ms. DuBois expressing her opinion and understanding being that reducing the seats would ensure the board was made up of representatives directly impacted by tourism.

Ms. Slifka asked for clarification on what the exact purpose of the letter was. Chair Wilson responded that it was to move forward with the 2% increase in lodging tax to fund a facility. Mr. Greninger referenced Mr. Nienkamp's timeline as an aid to present to city council how and why we need to lift the current ceiling of the lodging tax. He expressed that this piece (lifting the ceiling on the lodging tax) is most important. Ms. Slifka asked if council did not already approve pursuit at a State level to lift the ceiling recently.

Chair Wilson addressed Mr. Hall who commented that the MO State Lodging Association would defer to the SWMLA on the issue of raising the ceiling on the tax. He translated the percentage of increase in tax into dollar impact/funding potential. He shared that additional partners beyond hoteliers would be required to be successful in passing with voters in Joplin, as seen with recent initiatives. Mr. Hall gave the example of how a quarter cent increase in restaurant tax would be another possible route for partnership, beyond hotels that benefit from tourism, to contribute to the funding of a facility.

Ms. Comer addressed Mr. Hall and asked for clarification, for those board members who may not be aware, who makes up the SWMLA. Mr. Hall stated the lodging association is made up of 16 hotel members (who pay dues) and offered that the SWMLA website (which he then provided) for more details. Ms. Comer then asked Mr. Hall how the position of the SWMLA is decided. Mr. Hall responded that the board of directors, which is made up of a majority of the members, determines this (stance).

Mr. Kluth stated that he agreed with the proposal as is. Mr. Greim expressed concern that if everything requested in the proposal letter would not be well-received or approved by city council, why not first find out what would be objected before presenting it. Mr. Kluth asked why they (City Council) would oppose if we (JCVB AB, JSA, and SWMLA) were united. Mr. Greim indicated that he didn't want to stall progress but suggested forming a group that included all parties to discuss the proposal and uncover any potential objections to address.

Mr. Greninger addressed Mr. Doman and asked what impact/importance number three in the proposal had on the JSA, and if the JSA would then oppose the tax increase if this section was removed from the proposal. Mr. Doman communicated that this proposal was about moving forward together, and that we can't move forward until we pass this proposal (and present it to city council). Mr. Greninger further asked why removing this section (item three of the proposal) would be a "deal breaker." Mr. Hall responded that clarification was needed.

Mr. Wert was addressed by Chair Wilson and reminded the board that the citizens of Joplin had formed a group – Vision 2022 – made up of three committees in May 2017 and their presentation to city council included: to build a multi-use sports facility; to increase dialogue with SWMLA in an effort to increase the lodging tax; and to develop a plan to build and operate the facility. He strongly conveyed that these results were compiled by citizens of Joplin. Mr. Greninger agreed that we want to bring more people into this community and move forward with a facility and inquired why we were not voting on that proposal (that of Vision 2022) rather than this proposal letter, which includes other focuses besides tourism. Mr. Wert responded that we need the support of the SWMLA. Chair Wilson stopped the discussion to allow other board members a chance to speak to the proposal. Mr. Tuttle commented that the CVB was a part of Vision 2022 through participation in a workgroup.

Mr. Nienkamp felt that his timeline which had been referred to often today, was as a positive step towards progress and unity, yet he didn't sense unity at the table. He asked that the board have faith in our Chair as he has put in the time and effort to meet with the other groups (JSA and SWMLA). Ms. Comer expressed that the proposal seemed focused on the JCVB AB and some items have already been addressed, like the term limits for the Joplin Chamber seat.

Ms. Dubois expressed not wanting to take another month to move forward. She again encouraged direct feedback. There was some discussion of specific concerns. Chair Wilson asked for specifics changes/amendments to the proposal be emailed to him directly.

Mr. Greninger made a motion to review the proposal letter, for individual board members to put concerns together and to send them to the Chairman to adjust. Then to put the letter to a vote at the December meeting. Ms. Comer seconded the motion. It was discussed that if there were no changes/revisions, there would be a vote on the proposal letter as it is currently.

Vote was recorded as 6 in favor, 4 opposed, with Mr. Greninger, Ms. Comer, Mr. Greim, Ms. Slifka, Ms. Weathers, and Ms. Albright supporting the motion. Mr. Wilson, Ms. DuBois, Mr. Kluth, and Mr. Nienkamp voting opposed.

The December meeting will be held on December 17th, at City Hall.

Following the vote discussion returned to the proposal letter. Mr. Nienkamp provided a copy of his timeline with dates and explained that it was created to provide a visual path for a tourism facility development (progress). He offered to send a copy of the timeline to the board members via email for review. Ms. Weathers asked why it was only now that we were seeking unity in this way. Mr. Tuttle mentioned that in 2000 it was attempted to move forward with the tax increase, and it was put on hold by the lodging association (SWMLA). He also encouraged the board to consider including the Joplin Parks Dept. at some point in this process. Mr. Greim called for the formation of the work group for the timeline. Ms. Weathers, Ms. Slifka, Mr. Nienkamp and Mr. Greim volunteered. Chair Wilson concurred, and no vote was necessary.

V. **2020 Officer Elections:**

Officer elections were discussed and tabled for the December meeting.

VI. Mr. Greninger motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Nienkamp. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

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Submitted respectfully, Secretary Comer.

Mike Wilson
Chair

Miranda Comer
Secretary