

Golden Spike Tower

Board of Director's Meeting

October 29, 2017 – Golden Spike Tower and Visitor's Center

Present: Dan Blank, Bonnie Kruse, Ty Lucas, Tim Malmkar, Jim Nisley, Jennifer Priest, Anna Stacy, Mike Steele, Kathy Swain. Natalie Furrow – USDA

Staff present: Kirsten Parker

Blank called meeting to order at 8:05 am.

M/ Kruse Approve September minutes.

2nd/ Lucas

Motion Carried

Executive Director's Report

There were 12 tours in September, one private event. Those all went very well. Parker shared the importance of the GST attending the American Bus Association conference to maintain and build relationships with the tour operators. ABA will be in Omaha in 2020.

Parker reported on the Nebraska Travel Conference. The new State Tourism Director shared his plan for the upcoming year. The Japanese Trade Agreement could result in added tourism for Nebraska. Nebraska experienced the best July lodging tax in recent history.

The sprinkler system is complete. The contractor failed to include one section of the lawn on his bid resulting in a higher cost than the bid stated. The difference is \$1,400.00.

M/ Priest Offer a negotiation of an extended service contract in lieu of paying the additional \$1,400.00

2nd/ Lucas

Motion carried.

The septic area has been leveled and seeded. The grass is starting to grow.

The Pumpkin Patch was discussed. Attendance has decreased due to bad weather on the weekends it has been open. Alternatives to the Pumpkin Patch were discussed. The BOD will address the special events issue at the November board meeting.

The GST is on the calendar for the city council work session on November 21 at 6:30pm. The BOD is encouraged to attend.

The wrap up meeting for NPRD will be next week.

Finance Committee

Lucas reports the cash position has improved. This is due to good expense management by Parker and staff.

M/ Lucas Capitalize the sprinkler system, at approximately \$10,000 expense, transfer funds from the building fund to pay for the sprinkler system. The landscaping project will be added to the general budget as an expense since maintenance and capital portion of each is below the \$5,000 capitalization limit.

2nd/ Steele

Motion carried

The budget session will be November 13 at noon at NebraskaLand Bank. All BOD members are encouraged to attend. Parker has provided a five year budget average to assist with budget decisions.

Discussion regarding the occupancy tax issue and Oak Tree.

The RFP for book keeping services will go out today (October 29)

Education Committee

November 7 staff will go to Lincoln to work with ESU to develop the virtual field trips. Equipment could be provided to the GST by ESU. Staff and committee will work to determine how to generate funds from the tours.

Blank presented a proposal to develop a Strategic Plan for the GST. Lorre McKeone would facilitate the plan in two sessions. The cost would be \$1,200.00. Discussion followed. BOD will table the decision until after budget meeting.

Special Events

The commitment from UPRR is very positive for the NPRD event. They are committed to improve their presence at the event, provide better displays with more management participation. The BOD agrees the event has great PR value to the GST.

Dusty Barner will produce a pumpkin patch in 2018 on his property. The GST would have to find a new partner to have the event on our property. The BOD recognizes the value of the event as a community engagement event, however it is very labor intensive for the staff at a time when the GST is not fully staffed. Discussion followed on how we can maintain a community engagement event that does not stretch the staff.

Adjourned at 9:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Priest

Secretary