

**CONVERSE COUNTY TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING**

Board members: Jane Garber (6/2026, At Large - Chair)
Carl Kosters (6/2024, County) – Vice Chair
Robin Cross (6/2024, Douglas) - Treasurer
Jamie Sullivan (6/2024, Douglas) – Secretary -
Karissa Goosen (6/2025, County)
Zach Martinez (6/2025, Douglas)
Lyle Hunt (6/2026, Glenrock) -
Candace Benedetta (11/2025, Glenrock)
J.D. Cox (6/2026, County)

Date: January 15, 2024

Call to order: Jane Garber called the meeting to order @ 5:02 p.m.

General:

Grants: No grants this month
Lyle Hunt has resigned from the Board

Fair Manager Report:

Courtney Conkle stated that with the cold temperatures, the HVAC systems in many of the buildings at the Fair Grounds need service or update. They are currently interviewing 2 candidates for maintenance positions and have 8 candidates for the Events Coordinator position. The Event Coordinator position is still open for applications. Courtney and Kota reported they have received 23 awards in 2023 and the Top overall promotion and marketing award. They are now focused on quality of experience.

There were 479 event days with a team of 4 maintenance workers. They have requested 2 additional positions so they can add event days. Governor has not approved positions. They are looking at contractual options. They can currently do a max of 3 events simultaneously. Current staff is 4 admin positions and 4 maintenance positions. They have the infrastructure – not the staff - to grow.

Questions

- ever consider leasing to a promoter? WSF – have not pursued as they are trying to get new positions.
- rent space for small events (weddings, banquets, etc...)? WSF – only get 15% profit with small events; 30-40% with large events – want to be good partner with the community by renting for small events – but need staff.

Courtney discussed the dorms at WSF and the possibility to retrofit – cost is 6 million. 2 dorms only used for state fair. 1 dorm used 4 times a year. There are 519 hotel rooms in Douglas.

Sagebrush Marketing Report:

Jen Womack stated the State has approve the adjustments for the use of the grant dollars from the Destination Development Grant. The E newsletter has been distributed to 60,000. Jen received the bid for Harriett - \$34,000. Working on Camp Douglas.

Previous Month's Minutes: Minutes from December 2023 presented.

Motion: Karissa Goosen Seconded: Robin Cross Motion Carried

Financial Report: Invoices paid in the amount of \$25,043

Motion: J.D. Cox Seconded: Zach Martinez Motion Carried

Old Business:

Work session held from 3-5pm prior to general meeting – Jane, Jen, Candy and J.D. attended. Discussed duties that need to be completed by The Enterprise and visitor center that have been taken over by Tourism Board over time. Many tasks on Jen’s list of duties are tasks that are Chamber or Visitor Center business. Need to separate list of duties into area of responsibilities – Chamber/visitor center; Marketing; Administrative

Candy called several other County and the State Tourism rep for our area to discuss other Board compositions. There is a mix of staff and consultant services in other Tourism Boards – but most have paid staff as a Director/CEO or administrative. Counties of similar size and budgets have 2-3 paid staff.

Discussed Boom Bust cycle of our communities. Need to focus on needs of communities (not Tourism role) such as motel rooms, shopping, outdoor recreation. Big attractions for bringing people to CC may be Sports, Museums/History and Outdoor activities (river, biking, hiking). Need to investigate revising 30-day stay tax rule. Need hotel rooms – many are booked by boom cycle.

New Business:

Berkeley Young with Young Strategies Inc. may be able to zoom in or meet at our February meeting as he will be in Wyoming for state conference. Jen will call to determine availability. We will schedule February meeting around his schedule – if there is a fee the Board will fund this. There was a motion to pay Berkeley Young for this meeting.

Motion: Candy Benedetta

Seconded: Robin Cross

Motion Carried

State Conference is February 25-27 in Cheyenne – Jen will be attending – Anyone else on Board Interested? Candy and Jane may be interested.

Joint Powers Board – Candy attended in Glenrock in January as we were not aware of these meetings. Jane Garber will represent the Tourism Board at these quarterly meetings – The next meeting is on April 3 at 7 am at the Plains in Douglas. Candy will advise Tory Walsh.

J.D. would like to set up a meeting with the Tourism Board, Arts and Culture Board and Main Street. – may be a special meeting or may be later this spring.

Board Homework – everyone please review list of duties that Jen sent and split list into duties for Chamber/visitor center; Marketing; and Administrative duties. Also add any duties that should be included. Also need to review our mission and By-Laws to accurately determine needs of the Board.

Public Comments: None

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned @ 6:00 pm.

Next Meeting: TBD at Ruthe James building at the Fairgrounds.

Submitted to file by: Candace Benedetta

Converse County Tourism and Promotion Board Attendance Sheet: January 15, 2024 at Ruthe James

Jane Garber

Robin Cross

Karissa Goosen

Zach Martinez

Candy Benedetta

J.D. Cox

Guests:

Jen Womack – Sagebrush Marketing

Courtney Conkle – State Fair

Kota Provence – State Fair