



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

TRANSIENT GUEST TAX COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Location: Holliday Conference Room, 620 SE Madison St.
Date: April 25, 2016
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Attendance

Committee members: Elaine Schwartz (Chair), Brendan Jensen & Jeff Coen

City staff members: Bill Fiander (Planning), Nickie Lee (Finance), Brandon Kauffman (Finance),
Mary Feighny (Legal), Jim Colson (City Manager).

Minutes taken by: Angela Horn (City Council)

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Elaine Schwartz.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the January 6, 2016 meeting were approved.

Agenda Items

Bill Fiander reviewed the use of the TGT funds since 2009. A minimum annual budget of \$60,000 is advised, based on known need (see attached).

Brandon Kauffman provided an update on where and how the funds have been allocated. He also provided information on comparable City TGT and other sales tax rates (see attachments).

Brett Oetting, President & CEO of Visit Topeka, made comments regarding Topeka's hotels and city taxes compared to other cities. He stated that Visit Topeka is exploring options to get the State Capital Building open on the weekends. He stated that his staff is in the process of creating brochures to advertise all attractions at all locations. Their visitor's guide and maps (attached) are supplied to all hotels and attractions; visitor's guides are in each hotel room.

Brandon Kauffman reported on the 1st quarter 2016 TGT taxes received and distributed (see attached).

Kurt Young, Topeka Lodging Association, gave an update on the progress of the downtown public plaza. They are searching for the best location and determining exactly what they want the plaza to be.

Jeff Carson, Jayhawk Theater, gave an update on the progress of the improvements to the Jayhawk Theater. Preparations for mounting the new marque are starting this week.

Chris Meinhardt, Friends of the Free State Capital, gave an update on the progress of Constitution Hall. They have one more phase of stabilization to complete, but are still able to give tours during this phase.

Bill Fiander gave a summary of the five Heritage Tourism Grants approved by the committee.

1) Charles Curtis House approved for \$8,500. 2) Constitution Hall approved for \$12,000. 3) Great Overland Station approved for \$49,170. 4) Friends of the Freestate Capital approved for \$98,561. 5) Freedom Frontier Heritage Topeka Tourism Alliance approved for \$24,220.

Councilmember Jeff Coen moved to approve the Heritage Tourism Grants. Councilmember Brendan Jensen seconded, but abstained from voting due to serving on the Jayhawk Theater Board. Councilmembers Coen and Schwartz voted to approve. Motion passed with a 2-0 vote.

Nickie Lee reviewed the 2015 actuals vs. 2015 budget for the TGT funds (see attached).

Councilmember Elaine Schwartz would like to know how much it would cost to put the tourism maps at all locations Citywide. Brett Oetting stated that Visit Topeka has done a cost analysis.

Brett Oetting stated that the Wayfinding Sign Committee is meeting next week. They are working on the language for the signs so they can fit four attractions on each sign. RFP's have gone out. A funding source still needs to be identified.

Bette Allen and Beth Fager, Great Overland Station, thanked the committee for approving their Heritage Tourism Grant. They explained their challenges in receiving donations and contributions to help cover the operating costs on their historic site.

John Hunter, Executive Director of Heartland Visioning mentioned that they are filming another Topeka Proud commercial and thanked the committee for their support.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Video recording of this meeting can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzVmZmJeemg&feature=youtu.be>