

Approved: 2-19-07

Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lana Gordon at 3:30 P.M. on January 29, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Gary Hayzlett- excused
Don Myers- excused
Gene Rardin- excused
Mark Treaster- excused

Committee staff present:

Kathie Sparks, Legislative Research Department
Hank Avila, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Jean Plummer, Butler County
Lewellyn Crain, Exec. Dir., Kansas Arts Commission

Others attending:

See attached list.

The Chair called the Committee's attention to the minutes for January 22, 23, 24 and 25.

A motion was made by Representative Olson and seconded by Representative Worley to adopt these minutes. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Representative Huntington proposed a bill to be introduced by the Committee that would give sales tax credits to the film industry. Representative Olson seconded the motion which passed on a voice vote.

The Chair then introduced Jean Plummer who presented a DVD showing the opportunities for tourism in Butler County. (Attachment 1).

Questions and answers followed.

Lewellyn Crain offered an overview of the Kansas Arts Commission. (Attachment 2).

Questions and answers followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30, 2007.

Legislative meeting with Dana Jordan 1-07

Rural Kansas is full of feature and success stories about attractions that bring tourists to our state. I'm most familiar with Butler County, since that is the area I help promote for tourism. I have, however taken tour groups to many parts of our state.

I applaud the Kansas Getaway Guide for reaching potential guests from all over the country. They call on our toll-free number on a regular basis, seeking information about our great county.

Tour Butler was formed to unite the people who own or manage attractions, museums, shops, restaurants and other places of interest in Butler County, to better promote our tourism resources.

In addition to our toll free number, we are found on several web sites, giving potential visitors even greater access to tourism opportunities in Butler County. Our El Dorado Convention and Visitors Bureau is a major resource and help to us.

What attracts people to Butler County and Kansas? Obviously the big attractions like the State Fair, the Cosmosphere, Exploration Place, the Sedgwick County Zoo, the Prairie Rose

Economic Development & Tourism

Date: 1-27-07

Attachment # 1-1

Chuchwagon Ranch, etc. I can't wait to see what Wild West World Theme Park will do for us. They are our neighbors to the West and we have plans to unite with them for promotions.

Butler County does have the distinct advantage of being the home of the Prairie Rose, but we also have El Dorado Lake and State Park that attracts nearly one million visitors each year.

As in all parts of Kansas, our small towns each have their own charm and interest.

Do you have any idea what even a small attraction means in revenue for some of these small towns? Tourism is definitely economic development—the only source that some of our small towns have.

I'll use Cassoday, Kansas as an example. During suitable weather, for 8-10 months of the year, the first Sunday of each month, thousand of motorcycle riders converge on this tiny Flint Hills town to swap stories, eat, visit venders and just enjoy a ride with the clean Kansas air blowing in their faces. They are up close and personal with the Bluestem Grass country, the cattle ranches,

Kansas Wildlife--our highways and byways. The Flint Hills are beautiful—a jewel in our state crown of attractions.

These riders come from all over the state and beyond, spend money for gas, food, and novelties. Cassoday only has one café and one gas station, but this is a prosperous day for them.

The Augusta Historic Theater is unique and one of the few left intact and renovated in the state. You can see a live play, enjoy old and current movies and eat popcorn.

Several of our small towns have museums that attract even strangers for visits. The Kansas Oil Museum hosts many visitors from many different countries and almost every state each year. A bridge tour also attracts bus tours. We have a glass blowing studio, an incredible art museum and many private galleries, the wooden railroad water tower in Beaumont, the home of Frederic Remington, Walter's Pumpkin Patch, a growing rural attraction, interesting industries such as one of the most modern oil refineries in the United States, Pioneer Balloon Company, sheep, cattle and

horse ranches, model farms, historic buildings and some incredible sculptures and monuments.

I could spend all day telling you of visitors we have entertained, informed and educated about South Central Kansas and the entire state.

While hosted a recent bus tour, the tour group even wanted to see our downtown loft home. I took them on a tour.

This group was fascinated by the size of our acorns and some of their friends made the trip back from Iowa to collect several bags to plant in Iowa. An unexpected extension of the economic development of tourism.

Recently, a group from out of town requested a visit to tour Pioneer Balloon, the world's largest manufacturer of Mylar balloons in the world. They were able to make that visit.

Each year I interview visitors to Lake El Dorado, asking why they are here, what they do, where they spend money and where they are from.

They are here for recreation, leisure travel, jobs, reunions and cross-country travel. They ski, boat, shop, eat out, fish, picnic, hunt, bird watch, visit our attractions and spend money in many of our stores. They even go to the beauty shop. They are from everywhere.

Before tourism season begins, our Friends of the Lake group hosts a dinner for the camp hosts to acquaint them with what we have to offer in Butler County. Many of our hosts are from other areas of Kansas and even out of state. We invite our local attractions people, including our Kansas Turnpike gatekeepers. They can only tell our story if they know it. The Friends group is another success story of the great volunteer base we have to promote tourism in our county. (Tour Butler is an all volunteer group.)

Better signage for our state parks is on their agenda for this year. In other states, parks rely heavily on highway signage to promote the facilities in their parks and campgrounds. Kansas needs to do the same. Seven major highways crisscross Butler County,

including the Kansas Turnpike. All of Kansas is missing opportunities to encourage travelers to “Linger Longer” in Kansas, because we don’t promote what we have on our many major highways.

When Tour Butler hosted the legislative Arts and Humanities committee this fall, they saw first hand how even our “little bitty” towns benefit financially from tourism—which is economic development.

I applaud Marci Penner for her successful efforts in bringing the world to rural Kansas. We’ll probably never know the economic impact her promotions have on our state. Each dollar spent brings in sales tax, provides and living for the owners and employees, and our bed tax keeps our tourism promotions alive. In her new book, there are towns with great attractions that I didn’t even know existed.

In Butler County our two Main Street cities, El Dorado and Augusta, partner with tourism efforts in promoting this expanding industry. I know in El Dorado, our improved downtown brings

many visitors to shop, eat, seek entertainment, tour our art galleries, street sculptures, historic court house and depot and remember our veterans at our outstanding freedom memorials.

Almost every small town in Butler County has a festival. These events bring former residents, our relatives and targeted interest groups to attend these events. We're planning a new festival for this June with a bull riding event downtown. Yes—it's a Main Street event.

Class and family reunions in our town, not only fill our motels and restaurants, but many of our alumni have come back to invest in our community, after they have seen the progress make here.

I personally believe that tourism has the greatest future for economic development of any industry in our state. Not only am I a volunteer, but have managed a convention center, been a tour guide to bring in and take out visitors, and love to be a tourist.

It would give me great pleasure to have any or all of you visit the largest county in the state, letting Tour Butler plan and host a tour for you.



**Testimony Prepared for the
Joint Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
January 29, 2007**

Economic Development & Tourism
Date: 1-29-07
Attachment # 2-1

Overview of the Kansas Arts Commission

The Kansas Arts Commission supports and builds the creative artistic activities of Kansas through grant programs, educating organizations and artists on building sound business practices, and special initiatives involving arts and cultural organizations, artists and arts industry partners. The Commission has eight different grant programs, artist and arts supporter recognition programs, conducts seminars and leadership opportunities administered by four program managers. Additional staff consists of the executive director, chief operating officer, public information officer and administrative specialist. The current year's budget is \$2.2 million.

The Kansas Arts Commission places a high value on the impact of the arts in Kansas on local and statewide economies and on tourism. We believe that the arts are vital to strong and livable communities and play an important role in making our cities and towns great places to live, work and visit.

I am pleased to report that the Kansas Arts Commission is working diligently, in cooperation with other state and local and national agencies, in conducting research and implementing programs that will positively impact our communities in these areas.

Economic Impact of the Arts in Kansas

The Kansas Arts Commission has contracted with Americans for the Arts to conduct an economic impact study of the arts statewide. The report will take about 18 months to complete.

However, Americans for the Arts has, within the last four years, completed two studies of the impact of the arts in Kansas communities and will complete a third one in June.

In 2003, one of these reports concluded that in Lawrence, Kansas:

- **Nonprofit arts generated \$33.5 million in local economic activity (spending by the organizations and their audiences):**
 - \$16.9 million by nonprofit arts organizations
 - \$16.5 million in event-related spending.

The nonprofit arts in Lawrence alone supports **1,163 full-time jobs generating \$19.3 million in household income to local residents and delivers \$2.6 million in local and state government revenue.**

In 2004, a study of the nonprofit arts in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area – including Johnson and Wyandotte Counties – concluded that:

- **Nonprofit arts generated \$279.3 million in local economic activity (spending by the organizations and their audiences):**
 - \$193.7 million by nonprofit arts organizations
 - \$85.6 million in event-related spending

The nonprofit arts in the greater Kansas City area supports **4,516 full-time jobs generating \$85,163, 000 million in household income and delivers \$8.2 million in local and state government revenue.**

Seventeen percent of the audience consisted of non-local attendees, spending almost \$40 per person per event – excluding cost of admission. Local residents spent an average of \$19 per person.

An economic impact report on the economic impact of the arts in Salina is due to be released in June.

Tourism

There is a huge link between tourism and the arts in Kansas. I am currently working with Becky Blake, Director of Tourism, to develop some ideas that we have, many of which came out of the research study of Kansas cultural and heritage tourism.

Some of those ideas include: expanding access to the purchase of Kansas arts in tourist destinations, tour packages of Kansas artistic sites, including theatrical and music venues, museums, artist studios; the expansion of public art projects, especially along our scenic highways and byways and airports; linking websites and providing arts organizations opportunities to list their events on the Kansas Arts Commission website.

Kansas Arts Commission Chief Operating Officer Chris Howell and I are also members of the Kansas Tourism Initiative Task Force, which is seeking innovative ways of expanding tourism and tourism marketing to in-state and out-of-state tourists.