

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND PARKS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Becky Hutchins at 3:30 p.m. on January 29, 2003 in Room 243-N of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Mary Torrence, Revisor of Statutes' Office
Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department
Russell Mills, Legislative Research Department
Sarah Samuelson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Mary Allman, Exec. Director, KS State Historical Society
Jeff Boerger, President, Kansas Speedway

Others attending: see attached list

Chairperson Hutchins asked for bill introductions from committee members. Representative Peterson requested a bill clarifying regulations of the pursuit of wounded game onto private property. According to this bill, hunters would need to make reasonable efforts to obtain permission from a private landowner before pursuing wounded game onto that landowner's property.

The bill was introduced as requested, without objection from the committee members.

Chairperson Hutchins asked for requests for bill introductions from the gallery. No bills were requested.

Mary Allman, Executive Director of the Kansas State Historical Society, gave an informational hearing on Kansas State Historical Markers Program (Attachment 1). She discussed the history of the Marker program, reported its present status, and presented the Historical Society's plans for the future.

Chairperson Hutchins asked when the last markers were placed; Ms. Allman replied that she is uncertain of when the last new marker was placed; most recently, the focus has been on updating the language of existing signs for political correctness. The most recent of these changes was completed in the summer of 2002.

Chairperson Hutchins asked who pays for the refurbishing of markers; Ms. Allman replied that it is the Department of Transportation.

Representative Osborne suggested a new silhouette design for some of the new signs along the Santa Fe Trail. Ms. Allman expressed interest in considering any suggestions proposed to the Historical Society.

Representative Peterson asked who makes the decisions for a new sign; Ms. Allman replied that the Historical Society has that authority.

John Bottenberg, representing Kansas Speedway, introduced Jeff Boerger, President of the Speedway.

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Jeff Boerger gave an informational hearing on the Speedway's success. He discussed the following upcoming events:

June 1: BPU 200, the ARCA RE/MAX series, an entry-level race comparable to baseball's AAA league; it will be combined with a barbecue and cash prizes.

July 5: O'Reilly Auto Parts 250; combined with the Aventis Racing for Kids 100 and the IRL IndyCar Series Kansas 300.

Oct. 3-5: Winston Cup weekend, including the Mr. Goodcents 300 and the Kansas 400; this event attracts 120,000-130,000 visitors, 70% of whom are from outside of the metropolitan area.

In addition to these main events, the Speedway is used for many other events; the facility has over 200 revenue-generating days per year. Some uses are:

- Other professional motorsports events
- Pre-event testing
- Driving schools
- Classic car shows
- Sponsor appreciation days
- Car club meets
- Concerts
- Community functions
- Track tours
- Walk-a-thons

Mr. Boerger then discussed the economic impact of the Speedway. It was created from approximately \$250 million in private and public funding, and it currently seats 80,187 with planned expansion to 150,000. One advantage of the Kansas Speedway over other racing venues is its excellent highway access, unparalleled in the industry. Also, it is over 450 miles from the nearest NASCAR Winston Cup venue, allowing it to draw from a wide population base of about 42 million people in a six-state area.

The economic benefits of the Speedway include:

- 2000 construction jobs, generating \$50 million in payroll
- 42 full-time employees and 3000-5000 event-day staff members
- \$150 million generated in first year of full operation
- Countless hours of television exposure for Kansas

Additionally, the Speedway has made possible the nearby development of Village West, a complex of hotels, restaurants, and retailers. Village West is estimated to generate 3300 jobs and to have annual sales of over \$440 million.

The 2003 Season is already sold out; the sellout dates have been getting earlier every year since the Speedway opened. This indicates the increasing popularity of the track.

Representative Novascone inquired the price of season tickets; Mr. Boerger replied that they are \$175-330 for five races.

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Representative Novascone asked if there are any tracks to the northwest; Mr. Boerger said there are not, and that NASCAR is not planning to expand the schedule.

Representative Long asked whether the new seats are already sold out; Mr. Boerger said they are.

Representative Long asked whether any tickets are reserved for sale at the door; Mr. Boerger said they are not.

Representative Long asked whether the suites would also be expanded; Mr. Boerger said that they did have possible plans for that in 2004.

Representative Merrick commended Speedway on a first-class operation. He said in his experience the facility is kept clean and is a pleasant place to be.

Representative Osborne asked whether the Speedway leases areas for selling drivers' merchandise. Mr. Boerger replied that the space is not leased but that the Speedway receives a percentage of sales. Also, all merchandise sold on the premises is subject to sales tax.

Representative Osborne asked whether the track is still popular with the drivers; Mr. Boerger replied that the only problem reported is the insufficient wearing in the second groove, which can only be remedied through more racing. Representative Schwab inquired as to when the grooves would be ready; Mr. Boerger said it would probably be the end of October.

Representative Morrison expressed her agreement with Representative Merrick that the Speedway has a beautiful facility. However, she suggested that smoking and non-smoking sections could be designated.

Representative Ruff stated that her constituents in Leavenworth appreciate the Speedway and its economic impact on the area. However, she said that 42 full-time employees does not seem like a high number. Mr. Boerger said that 42 was fairly typical of similar venues.

Representative Peterson asked whether the Speedway was having any difficulty with scalpers. Mr. Boerger replied that there is some scalping, but if the offenders are caught, their tickets are revoked. There is no Kansas law against scalping, but Wyandotte County does have an ordinance against it.

Chairperson Hutchins thanked Mr. Boerger and the Kansas Speedway, saying she is amazed when she sees the growing development of Village West. She asked when more of the retailers are scheduled to open; Mr. Boerger replied that they would all be open by the Winston Cup weekend (October).

Chairperson Hutchins reminded the committee of next week's schedule:

Monday—meeting on call of chair

Wednesday—hearing on HB 2054; possible bill introductions

(Last day for non-exempt committees to request bills to be drafted)

The minutes from January 27, 2003 were distributed and approved without amendment.

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Chairperson Hutchins adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2003 on call of the chair, or for February 5, 2003.