



City of Broken Arrow

Minutes Visit Broken Arrow

City Hall
220 S 1st Street
Broken Arrow OK
74012

Chairperson Brian Dean
Vice Chair Tommy Yardy
Member Ben Buie
Member Lisa Ford
Member Craig Hagin
Member Gene Barber
Member Kathy Muskrat
Member Sonja Schneider
Member Trevor Swanson

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Time 3:30 p.m.

Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

Chair Brian Dean called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: 8 - Ben Buie, Brian Dean, Lisa Ford (arrived at approximately 3:32 p.m.), Gene Barber, Kathy Muskrat, Sonja Schneider, Trevor Swanson, Tommy Yardy

Absent: 1 - Craig Hagin

3. Presentations

There were no presentations.

4. General Visit Broken Arrow Business

A. 24-794 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the meeting minutes from the May 28, 2024 Visit Broken Arrow meeting

MOTION: A motion was made by Tommy Yardy, seconded by Trevor Swanson.

Move to approve Item 4A

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Ben Buie, Brian Dean, Gene Barber, Kathy Muskrat, Sonja Schneider, Trevor Swanson, Tommy Yardy

5. Board members' opportunity to address Visit Broken Arrow on general topics related to city business or services (no action may be taken on matters under this item)

There were no Board Members who wished to address Visit Broken Arrow on general topics related to city business or services.

6. Tourism Director Report including updates on the following:

A. 24-793 Presentation and discussion of the year-to-date available budget report

Tourism Manager Makala Barton stated there were not many changes in the budget since last month. She stated next month would be the end of the year report. She indicated the VBA was at 63.5% of its total budget.

B. 24-795 Presentation and discussion of updated hotel/motel tax collection report

Ms. Barton stated the City was tracking at about the same pace. She noted this month the City collected less than it had in the past two years for this month. She indicated she was unsure why this was the case.

Board Member Tommy Yardy noted last year there was a golf tournament in May.

Ms. Barton noted that would explain why this year's collections were less than last year in May. She asked about the year before.

Board Member Ben Buie indicated the APT Tour was in June last year.

Marketing and Communications Coordinator Erin Hofener noted Broken Arrow also received some overflow from the PGA tour last year as well.

Discussion continued about which tournaments were nearby or in Broken Arrow over the last few years.

Ms. Barton stated it would be a good idea to make notes about these events for future reference. She reported tomorrow would be the first quarterly hotel meeting. She stated she received an excellent response from all of the Broken Arrow hotels, and she hoped there would be a representative from at least 90 percent of the hotels. She indicated she was expecting 10 to 12 people. She stated the meeting would be at Water's Edge tomorrow and hopefully Brian Buie would attend and report back at the next VBA meeting as well. She discussed some of the information which would be shared with the hoteliers, noting perhaps a tour of the Rose District would be conducted.

Board Member Ford asked if the Broken Arrow Police Department would attend the hotelier meeting tomorrow.

Ms. Barton responded she would invite the BAPD to the next meeting. She explained she did not invite the BAPD to this meeting because she did not know what to expect and the meeting was only one hour.

Board Member Ford noted it was good to have a representative of the BAPD attend these meetings as a resource.

Ms. Barton stated Officer Peale was aware of tomorrow's meeting, so she would get in touch with Officer Peale and if he had time, perhaps he would attend.

Board Member Ford noted Officer Peale would be able to provide information about the Fire Department as well as the Police Department because of his involvement with the Safe Hotels program.

Ms. Barton noted there were three VBA Board Members whose terms were ending in September: Ben Buie, Sonja Schneider, and Craig Hagin. She asked Mr. Buie, Ms. Schneider, and Mr. Hagin to let her know whether they were interested in serving for another term.

C. 24-796 Presentation and discussion of staff updates on marketing, events, or other miscellaneous items

Ms. Erin Hofener stated she presented on Bullseye last week at City Council and City Council was excited about Bullseye. She stated she was working on the Bullseye airport ad and was being picky because it was a very large ad, and it would be up for a long time. She stated the VBA bought some swag this week with Bullseye logos. She stated some digital ads would be pushed out soon, and Bullseye would also be at the Block Party next week. She stated VBA would have a booth at the Block Party under the City tent, and Bullseye would be prevalent. She noted In House would also be present filming testimonials from Broken Arrow residents and visitors; clips from the testimonials would be used to create Broken Arrow commercials. She stated Broken Arrow was hosting the Oklahoma Municipal League's Community Leadership Development Program next month and she would be working with the OML to ensure it was a good experience. She noted there would be many city officials from all over the State in Broken Arrow for the event.

Board Member Ford noted she was a graduate of the OML Community Leadership program, and she noted the participants were city leaders, directors or higher from various businesses, and it would be great to show off the City of Broken Arrow to these visitors. She asked how the VBA was pushing the Block Party to hoteliers.

Ms. Hofener stated she would email the hoteliers directly. She stated she advertised the free hotel Uber service directly to the consumer. She indicated she would send an email reminding the hoteliers about the program as well.

Board Member Ford asked if the hoteliers were provided a calendar of events for the City with information about the Uber program. She noted this type of information could be shared with a flyer.

Ms. Hofener stated normally the Uber information was at the hotels. She noted Tourism had an intern this summer and the intern would be working on a front desk manual to provide to the hotels which would include information about what to do around the City of Broken Arrow. She noted she would make sure the manual included local events updated quarterly.

Board Member Ford stated she envisioned a sheet which perhaps included coupons for local restaurants and such.

Ms. Barton asked if Board Member Ford had seen the quarterly weekend guide. She stated the weekend guides included this type of information with QR codes. She noted the guides were digital, but she had just begun printing some of the guides as well.

Board Member Ford stated when she went out of town, she looked for coupons for local restaurants and if the front desk recommended a place, she would usually visit said restaurant. She noted if there was a free Uber ride to the restaurant on top of that she would definitely go.

Ms. Barton reported Green Country Tourism had a dining guide and went around and sold the ads to businesses specifically. She noted sometimes the VBA would buy an ad, but often the restaurants purchased ads.

Board Member Ford said perhaps the VBA could partner with the Chamber and have the Uber QR code in the dining guide that it printed out, as well as the calendar of events.

Ms. Hofener noted last year the Chamber went with a wrap card QR code for the Dining Guide, so it was not a printed book. She noted it was similar to what the VBA did with the wrap card QR code for the Visitor's Guide. She indicated the VBA bought ads with the Chamber and could include the Uber QR code.

Board Member Ford stated she wanted to get away from feeling like "oh, we should have done that" because she did not want to miss any opportunity to assist business owners in Broken Arrow.

Ms. Hofener stated she would speak with the hoteliers tomorrow at the meeting about these things and could take flyers around for the hotels to have on hand.

Board Member Trevor Swanson noted at her hotel, a City Guide could be put in the rooms. She noted Broken Arrow did not have one of these, so her hotel was putting a Tulsa City Guide in the rooms.

Board Member Ford stated this had to change.

Board Member Swanson agreed noting there was definitely an opportunity for Broken Arrow to advertise in the rooms.

Ms. Hofener asked if the Tulsa Guide was the quarterly Visit Tulsa.

Board Member Swanson noted the Visit Tulsa guide was a hard cover book, but she was unsure if these were quarterly books. She stated she would love to have something specific to Broken Arrow for her rooms. She noted Town Place had a bulletin board and was always looking for special events to post on the board.

Board Member Ford stated if Broken Arrow could advertise in the rooms, even if funds had to be spent, it would be highly beneficial to the City.

Board Member Buie noted there were so many events which would be included in the Guide, such as Tuesdays in the Park, Farmer's Market, etc.

Board Member Ford indicated the VBA needed to make this as easy as possible for the hotels.

Ms. Barton noted this was exactly the type of thing she would discuss with the hoteliers tomorrow.

Board Member Ford stated the City Council were really excited about the Bullseye campaign.

Board Member Swanson asked if the Bullseye debut at the Block Party would be with a selfie-sized cutout, or a mascot.

Ms. Hofener responded a Bullseye cutout would be at the Block Party.

Board Member Ford suggested including a #VisitBA sign as well.

Board Member Buie noted backup Bullseye cutouts could be placed at Potbelly's Pub.

Board Member Dean asked how many visitors were expected at the Block Party.

Ms. Hofener stated last year there were approximately 27,000 attendees at the Block Party. She noted last year's Block Party was only one night, so it was difficult to know how the attendance would be for the three nights of the Block Party this year.

Board Member Ford asked if all three nights would be geofenced.

Ms. Hofener responded in the affirmative.

Board Member Ford noted this would be excellent data for the hotels.

Ms. Hofener explained geofencing was software which used cell phone data to determine who was visiting from where. She stated she had New Orleans Square geofenced and she could tell how many people attended last year, where the visitors were before attending and where the visitors went after attending, household income, and all sorts of demographic data. She stated she was having her intern take Broken Arrow major events and compare the data collected for the events over the past few years. She stated this information would be useful in many ways for many different Broken Arrow Departments and businesses. She indicated she was still learning how to use the software. She stated she could pull the data from the software for the last three years of Block Parties.

Board Member Buie asked if the data could be retroactively pulled.

Ms. Hofener responded in the affirmative. She said this information was exciting to have moving forward. She stated she and the marketing company were going to use this data to pick cities to advertise to. She noted many of Broken Arrow's visitors came from Dodge City, Kansas, and Northwest Arkansas. She stated Texas would always be a big visitor to Broken Arrow, but the advertisements would be more strategically planned for certain cities.

Board Member Ford asked how far back the geofencing information extended.

Ms. Hofener responded she did not know exactly; it was not 20 years, but perhaps 5 to 7 years back.

Ms. Barton stated she believed it was 5 years.

Board Member Ford noted this was a great tool.

Board Member Buie noted he saw the Broken Arrow ad and he loved it; it made him want to go see the mural.

Board Member Ford stated the Police Department had a trailer with a wrap of the mural on its side which would be at the Block Party.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:43 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Lisa Ford.

Move to adjourn

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 8 - Ben Buie, Brian Dean, Lisa Ford, Gene Barber, Kathy Muskrat, Sonja Schneider, Trevor Swanson, Tommy Yardy

Chair

City Clerk