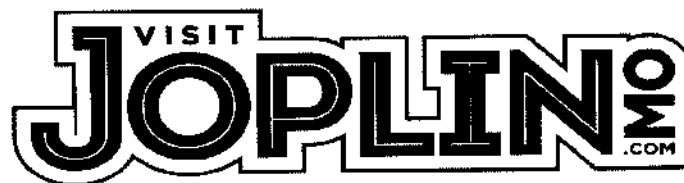


# Joplin Convention & Visitors Bureau

602 S. Main, Joplin, Missouri 64801

417.625.4789

[VisitJoplinMO.com](http://VisitJoplinMO.com)



## JCVB- Advisory Board Meeting

Minutes

May 22, 2018

**Attendees:** Chair: Mike Wilson, Co-Chair: Kevin Greim, Sec: Miranda Comer, Denise DuBois, Bob Kluth, Ginger LaMar, Lynn Weathers, Traci Palmer, Jeremy Nienkamp, and Mike Greninger

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Patrick Tuttle, Erin Slifka, and Donna Miller

**Guest:** Jim Heaney, George Washington Carver National Monument, and Audrey Mathis, Residence Inn

**Location:** Joplin City Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Informal Chamber

I. Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. Approval of April minutes:

Mr. Greim motioned to accept, Mr. Kluth second, unanimously approved 10-0-0.

III. Update on Enabling Legislation process:

Mr. Tuttle reported that the 2018 Legislative Session had ended and attempts to add our Enabling Legislation question to a bill was unsuccessful. The political climate in Jefferson City was such that very little getting accomplished and the types of Bill that would fit were not advancing. We missed the 2018 opportunity and will begin again, early to get it on the 2019 agenda. This means any approved statute will not take effect until August 2019. Should an immediate need arise, we could not take the question of raising the tax to the public vote until, at the earliest, March of 2020.

IV. Update on Tourism Study, next steps:

Mr. Tuttle provided an update on the Visitor Profile and Rebranding projects and that both projects will be placed in the FY19 budget and the RFP seeking a provider will be submitted in July. This will allow time for board review at the August meeting.

V. Upcoming Budget and Board Role:

The discussion was again raised regarding the Board's role when it comes time for annual budget discussion. Mr. Tuttle was directed to confirm with the City Attorney and Finance Director as to the correct role and responsibilities, including managing ALL uses/allocations of the lodging tax.



**VI. FY2019 CVB Event and Attractions Grant Applications:**

From a previous board discussion, the only significant changes for the FY19 grant cycle will be in the review process. 1) Attraction application will be heard back-to-back, then event applications. 2) In the scoring process the high and low scores will be eliminated, and the average of the remainder will be the score.

Mr. Tuttle reminded the Board there would be no June meeting, and that July meeting would be the annual Event & Attractions Grant applications review, to be held on Tuesday, July 24<sup>th</sup> date, 8:00-4:00.

**VII. Other Business:**

**New Visitors Guide:**

Mr. Tuttle showed the Board the cover of the new 2018 Visitors Guide. 60,000 copies are being printed and should arrive in late June.

**Declining Market:**

Mr. Greninger asked what the CVB was doing to turn around the current decline in hotel occupancy. Ms. Slifka replied, "It is challenging to grow occupancy when Joplin lacks community assets that could serve as a venue to attract large groups. Active solicitation is not taking place to attract group business because it does not make sense to go after group events when the market does not have the facilities or amenities planners are asking for, or the existing structures are in poor, outdated conditions. Pitching Joplin as it is would make the local tourism industry look bad, and would take double the effort to be considered in the future, should the meetings inventory improve." She added, "Another factor for the decreasing occupancy is our hotels are all chasing the same pieces of business (meetings, business and sports); nothing new is coming into the market.

Ms. Slifka offered two examples: 1) A planner was looking at various locations that could be utilized as meeting space – vacant retail locations. That is how dire we are. Even at Missouri Southern, the facilities are designed to meet student needs, and at peak time they are unable to support an outside event. 2) Recently a regional dance competition lost their on-campus venue and called for our help in finding a last-minute location. We were unsuccessful with relocating the group and the event ended up going to Branson.

When Memorial Hall was presented as an option for the 2019 competition, they chose to keep the event in Branson where the event space being adjacent to a hotel, with shops and restaurants all within walking distance of the competition, with plenty of parking for spectators/families. We cannot compete with that.

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Mr. Greninger asked, "What about looking at the option of asking the Trade Center to open for certain events like the cat/dog show, Two Friends & Junk, etc.?" Ms. Slifka responded, "Since it is privately-owned and managed that would be up to them, but I would not recommend that route because it gives the community and our tourism stakeholders the impression that the current state of the facility is acceptable, and that we do not need a new venue to meet the needs of today's conference industry. Both are far from the truth."

Mr. Greninger asked about the board receiving a monthly turn down report. Ms. Slifka stated she would have very little to report since the office isn't receiving phone inquiries or leads, plus she isn't actively going after anything because Joplin is not competitive compared to nearby cities. For a planner to do something in Joplin it would take double the time and money verses calling a hotel in Springfield or nearby market to get everything they need.

Mr. Tuttle shared that following the Tourism Study going public the CVB did receive calls from organization who previously brought conventions to town and who were interested in being a part of the process for getting Joplin a new meeting facility. They would like to return to Joplin again if we had the space to support their conferences. We have a great hospitality industry, we are meeting space poor. 42,000 square feet of space has been lost in the past three years.

VIII. Having no further business before the Board, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

###

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Comer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Wilson", written over a horizontal line.

Mike Wilson  
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Tuttle", written over a horizontal line.

Patrick Tuttle  
JCVB Director