Convention & Visitors Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes 05/27/2026
In-Person Meeting | SpringHill Suites (3921 S. MacArthur Boulevard)

I. **Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Jean Bruner-Jachino at 8:00am.**

II. Attendance: Jean Bruner-Jachino, Mike Murphy, C.J. Metcalf, Betsy Dollar, Jay Kitterman, Malinda Montz, Darin Dame, Scott Dahl, and Karen Conn.

III. **Motion to approve meeting minutes from 4/15/2026 by Darin Dame, seconded by Karen Conn. All ayes, no discussion.**

IV. Chair Report: Chairwoman Bruner-Jachino started by thanking group for an efficient April meeting, which included discussion of both the local tourism grant and Route 66 event fund.

V. Update on Local Tourism Grants Process: Director Dahl mentioned that the previous evening's City Council meeting, the ordinances got moved onto the consent agenda so that they can get approved next week as omnibus. Scott then read the list of prospective grant recipients, as well as grant recommendations from the board that didn't go through. Both the Spartan Park and Rumble on 66 events will not be approved, as they are in unincorporated areas and cannot receive city grant funds. The money the board previously recommended for the Spartan Park event will go back into the grant program balance. As soon as the prospective grant recipient ordinances get passed, the SCVB will get vendor info to get checks cut.

VI. Continued Discussion on Route 66 Events Fund: The group has $12,500 left over from the $35,000 available for Route 66 event funding. Since the $6,000 isn't going to the Rumble event, the group now has $18,500 available to award. Darin asked if the Board could give prize money to the corndog eating competition that will take place during the Mother Road Festival. Scott said the prize money is already set. Jean asked if the board could give money to the ISF. Scott is waiting to hear from the Fair director. The SCVB already gives money annually for the ISF info booths.

Jean asked if there are any new event ideas board members have heard about that might make a good candidate for being awarded some money. Karen suggested putting the word out about the available money. Darin is asking if we could add a concert or another event before the Mother Road Festival or the 11/11 festival. Scott suggested inviting Greg Cooper to the next board meeting so that they could get a rundown of what is planned before the Mother Road Festival. The group is not supposed to meet again until September, so they would have to call an additional meeting this summer. The group agreed that Greg could email the board members, rather than have a meeting.

VII. Old Business: Betsy mentioned that the bourbon event at Edwards Place went well. Lots of volunteers came to help, so set up and tear down was smooth. Attendees had a good

time. There were many walk-ups, rather than prior registration. She said the Springfield Art Association is open to doing the event again.

Board members asked about the Joliet Route 66 Centennial kickoff event at the Joliet prison site. Scott reported on excellent attendance but noted the need for some additional organization/logistical planning. Others who attended the event agreed.

VIII. New Business: Scott reported that there will be a sixth round of Route 66 grant funding from DCEO. The state is moving through the process faster than in previous rounds. The maximum ask for each CVB is $500,000. The state should have grant requests/applications in June, and plan to announce recipients by the State Fair. DCEO also came out with international and marketing partnership grants. Scott mentioned that the SCVB does not usually apply for the marketing grant. Karen asked why. Scott followed up with the explanation that the marketing grant does not match up with the SCVB fiscal year as the state is July 1 – June 30th.

Next event is the Route 66 5K at the ISF on June 6th. Scott and organizer Bill Stokes are expecting 350 participants. The event at Motorheads in the afternoon is for participants. During that event, there will be a screening of Tomas's film/documentary about running across America. He will be at the event.

Jean marveled at everything going on over the next few months. Darin asked for website recommendations when visitors are interested in learning about everything going on in the area. Scott suggested using the Visit Springfield website and the *Illinois Times* community events list.

Scott mentioned that he and Jean will assess if the group needs to meet before September. Any meeting added this summer would mainly focus on discussing how to award the rest of the Route 66 event fund. Darin asked if the group could do a Teams meeting. Jean agreed.

Scott asked the group if they want to be a sponsor for the evening event on 11/11.

Jay asked if the price of gas is affecting occupancy. Malinda and Darin are seeing a slight dip in reservations. Karen mentioned that the state of the economy could be contributing to the drop in numbers.

IX. **Adjournment: Jean moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38am. Karen made the motioned, and Darin seconded.**