

04-15-26 Park Meeting Minutes: Route 66 Centennial Phase Two, KCBS Barbecue AAR, Easter Egg Hunt, and “Great Saint Robert Campout” Planning

Committee Members Present:

Mark Parker, Dawn Stroud, Travis Brooks, Evelyn Walters, Eloy Garcia, Keala Bennett, Linda Daniels, Anita Ivey, Katie Lee

Action Items

- @Keala - Meet with the tourism office to finalize documents for distribution - [No due date stated].
- @Event Planning Team - Evaluate feasibility and structure of future kids' barbecue or dessert competitions given past participation and timing challenges - [No due date stated].
- @Mark - Post monthly reminders on the “kicking it” page to keep the event on community calendars - [No due date stated].
- @Event Committee - Evaluate and potentially schedule a winter judging class to expand judging capacity - [No due date stated].
- @Judging Coordinator - Implement a notification protocol to confirm or release judges 3–4 days prior, prioritizing those farthest away - [No due date stated].
- @Planning Committee - Consider and design a simultaneous backyard barbecue competition with community sampling - [No due date stated].
- @Linda - Provide authentic baked beans that present well on the plate for next year's meal service - [No due date stated].
- @Centennial Team - Pilot the barbecue event during the centennial to test formats that drive local participation, then iterate for growth - [No due date stated].
- @Travis (Speaker 4) - Evaluate relocating the Easter egg hunt to the ball field with staggered start times and vendor participation - [No due date stated].

Key Decisions

- Agenda approved - Facilitates timely progression given scheduling constraints.
- Minutes from March 12 approved - No opposition noted.
- Proceed on timeline for Route 66 Centennial Phase Two activities - Maintains on-target schedule.

- Retain BBQ funds for next year's BBQ Expenses - Supports continuity and event quality.
- Event covered electric for early-arriving team - Team occupied their spot three extra days prior to competition. Linda Concern
- Committee vote approved moving forward with the "Great Saint Robert Campout" - Enables public promotion and detailed planning.

Detailed Minutes

[00:00-00:38] Meeting called to order; agenda approved; recording confirmed.

- The chair opened the meeting, noted a council meeting at 5:00 PM, and set a 30-minute target to adjourn by 4:30 PM to allow Keala and others to prepare.
- Request for motion and second to approve the agenda; motion made by Dawn, second by Evelyn; approved.
- Key Decision: Agenda approved - Facilitates timely progression given scheduling constraints.

[00:38-01:28] Approval of March 12 minutes covering community event planning.

- The agenda packet included minutes from March 12 (Barbecue, Neon Fest, Easter egg hunt).
- Chair asked for motion and second to approve as presented; Motion by Linda; Dawn seconded.
- Key Decision: Minutes from March 12 approved - No opposition noted.

[01:28-03:04] Route 66 Centennial Phase Two underway: branding, sponsorships/vendors, tourism coordination; military display support uncertain.

- Keala briefed the committee on the progress of event planning.
- Phase One completed: team established, brainstorming, vision/purpose defined; now one week into Phase Two.
- Phase Two accomplishments: branding, logo, flyers, sponsorships, vendors; green light to work on sponsorships/vendors.
- Planned meeting with tourism office to finalize documents for broader promotion; Phase Two April–May; Phase Three in June.
- Obstacle: Military support for a display is uncertain; coordinating with National Guard and Reserve units.
- Fireworks contract sent and forwarded to Ms. Anita for approval.
- Key Decision: Proceed on timeline for Centennial with current Phase Two activities.
- Action Item: @Keala - Meet with the tourism office to finalize documents for distribution - [No due date stated].

[03:06-08:27] **KCBS “Kickin’ at Route 66” Barbecue AAR: finances, participation, lodging, kids’ events challenges; positive engagement.**

- Travis, Park Supervisor, presented BBQ AAR.
- Silent auction raised \$1,604 for “Shop with a Cop”; \$6,531.39 retained for next year’s prize money and expenses.
- Judges: 43 total; nearest ~49 miles; farthest 734 miles; average distance 162 miles (~2.7 hours).
- Teams: 46 total; 13 states represented; team home mentions included Missouri, Alaska, Canada, Wisconsin
- Lodging: 15 hotel rooms reserved under discount code; more likely outside the block.
- Kids’ events: many inquiries to reinstate; past low participation and age cutoff inconsistencies; dessert competition had only two entries repeated both days; affected by spring break; variable March weather.
- Community engagement: Facebook Live; positive comments; extended stays by some participants benefiting local businesses.
- Direct quote: “most successful weekend I’ve had.”
- Key Decision: Retain funds for next year’s event.
- Action Item: @Event Planning Team - Evaluate feasibility and structure of future kids’ barbecue or dessert competitions - [No due date stated].

[08:27-09:04] **Event promotion campaign timing clarified and launched appropriately to avoid fatigue.**

- Timing and approach discussion began with “How often do you start your campaign? We start,” and continued through promotions strategy.
- Promotion typically starts in early October when teams are “in,” avoiding too-early ads that get ignored.
- Monthly posts on the “kicking it” social media page help keep the event on calendars.
- Many teams and judges already expressed readiness for next year and positive feedback.
- Action Item: Mark or Travis - Post monthly reminders on the “kicking it” page - [No due date stated].

[09:04-09:58] **One-day competition favored; request received for a judging class.**

- Previously two identical competitions across Saturday and Sunday; one-day format improves travel feasibility for distant teams.
- One Missouri team asked for a double competition; longer-distance teams (e.g., Canada) need travel time.
- Request to offer a judging class, potentially in winter.
- Action Item: @Event Committee - Evaluate and potentially schedule a winter judging class - [No due date stated].

[09:58-10:17] **Expand local judge capacity to manage team counts and no-shows.**

- A local judging class would build a larger pool.
- Judge needs vary based on team numbers and no-shows.

[10:17-10:48] **Judging logistics: confirm or release judges with 3–4 days' notice.**

- Use electronic communication to notify judges 3–4 days in advance whether needed, prioritizing those farthest away.
- Two judge no-shows noted; judges are volunteers and accrue points.
- Action Item: @Judging Coordinator - Implement 3–4 day notification protocol - [No due date stated].

[10:57-11:26] **Judges' incentives lean toward experience-based recognition.**

- Unclear what judges earn besides points; suggestion to attend the judges' class.

[11:28-11:46] **Early-arriving teams boosted local hotels and restaurants; event operations successful.**

- Success noted; some teams arrived Tuesday and stayed all week.

[11:46-12:15] **Food service schedule and availability clarified.**

- Service begins around 11:00 a.m. due to same-day prep; food remained available close to closing.

[12:15-12:28] **Food purchasing calibrated to minimize leftovers and protect Shop with a Cop proceeds.**

- Buying targets set to meet demand without creating large leftovers that would reduce proceeds.

[12:29-12:48] **Covering utilities for early-arriving team confirmed.**

- First team arrived Tuesday ("Crossed Rifles Barbecue"); occupied usual spot three extra days.
- Event paid electric costs for those extra days.
- Key Decision: Event covered electric for early-arriving team. Linda had a concern about this extra cost for electric.

[12:56-14:15] **Public tasting interest noted; competitor sampling impractical due to high-cost meats.**

- Attendees desire sampling; competitors' Wagyu and costs make free sampling infeasible. Teams do not want to provide this
- Competitors won't fund extra briskets for \$5 walk-around bites.

[14:15-14:43] Backyard competition with wristband-based sampling proposed.

- Run KCBS alongside a backyard everyday barbecue enabling attendee sampling via wristbands.
- Action Item: @Planning Committee - Consider/design simultaneous non-KCBS backyard competition - [No due date stated].

[14:44-15:03] Past competitor sampling occurred; stopped for unclear reasons; Gene may know.

- Historical sampling was discontinued; rationale unknown; Gene may have insight.

[15:04-15:59] KCBS teams optimize portions; full briskets not cooked, limiting sampling feasibility.

- Source specific Wagyu cuts; calculate shrinkage; trim to fit 9x9 boxes; second competition of the year for most teams; two local first-time competitors.

[15:59-16:24] Integrate a backyard competition with the centennial to enhance community involvement.

- Community engagement goal without interfering with KCBS operations.

[16:24-17:07] Meal quality feedback: request for real baked beans; past meat sales no longer permitted.

- Before KCBS association, some competitors' meat could be sold; now not permitted for unknown reasons.
- Linda Complaint: \$12 meal used "pork and beans" instead of baked beans.
- Action Item: @Catering Lead - Provide authentic baked beans next year - [No due date stated].

[17:08-17:45] Leadership planning: retain Gene's expertise while mentoring a successor.

- Question whether Mr. Newkirk (Gene) continues to lead or Eloy partners with him.
- Recommendation: Keep Gene involved; mentor a future lead; even experienced leads still have questions.

[17:45-18:05] Succession: younger leaders should be mentored; retain Gene's knowledge.

- Emphasis on aging leadership and continued involvement of Gene.

[18:06-19:16] Community benefit concerns; centennial will pilot formats to drive local participation despite weather.

- Out-of-town visitors benefit hotels; local restaurants not necessarily boosted; competitors may eat their own food.
- Plan: Run at centennial, evaluate, increase community participation.
- Challenge: Season/weather; make event more community-relevant.
- Action Item: @Centennial Team - Pilot and iterate for local participation - [No due date stated].

[19:16-19:43] KCBS scheduling constraints; community contests could run concurrently outside KCBS rules.

- KCBS dictates weekends and distance rules; no other KCBS event within certain miles.
- Separate community competition could operate independently of KCBS constraints.

[19:43-20:33] Community-judged side competition model proposed (wristbands, scorecards, cultural elements).

- Example: local entrants cook; attendees sample and score; consider complementary music
- Team will revisit improvements later; current session is AAR-focused.
- Action Item: @Programming Lead - Explore community-judged competitions and cultural programming - [No due date stated].

[20:37-21:06] Ongoing efforts to add kids' activities; expectation of improved youth participation with upcoming events.

- Past attempts with kids' games; fresh ideas welcomed; steady events expected to help.

[21:08-22:34] Easter egg hunt AAR: move to ball field, stagger start times, add vendors; safety emphasized.

- Volunteers assisted significantly; PD provided gifts; VFW supported bubble station.
- Current location not flat; hills caused issues.
- Proposal: move to ball field; post staggered start times; add vendor slots.
- Easter Sunday start executed by horn call for orderly participation.
- Action Item: @Travis (Speaker 4) - Evaluate relocation, staggered starts, vendor participation - [No due date stated].

[22:35-23:30] Easter egg hunt turnout and safety/accessibility concerns; ballpark relocation considered..

- Speaker 3 praised the event as a "phenomenal success" with a huge turnout; earlier rough estimate referenced "about fifty."
- Safety hazards noted on terrain; cones marked risky areas; efforts to ensure wheelchair-accessible, flat paths were challenging.

- Consider relocating to ballpark; weather constraints noted (infield unsuitable that weekend; outfield would have worked).

[23:30-24:01] Inclusive programming prompted by outreach from Pulaski County group home.

- Suggest incorporating Special Olympics-style events and planning activities for individuals with disabilities.
- Commitment to expand inclusivity in future events.

[24:03-25:58] Tiger Typhoon kickoff May 23; main challenge is onboarding seasonal hires (fingerprinting, background checks, drug tests).

- Aim to avoid issues encountered in 2024; full candidate pool exists but completion of onboarding steps is the bottleneck.
- City uses St. Robert PD for fingerprinting; result timing depends on PD.
- Dana issued multiple emails for status updates to inform staffing/training plans; scheduling complexity with students noted.
- Clarification: Process depends on PD fingerprinting; many have met Dana and were sent to “Tomo”; scheduling mention of Dana’s hours is not the bottleneck.

[25:58-27:26] “Great Saint Robert Campout” proposal: seeking committee vote; sponsors and timetable outlined.

- Request to proceed enabling public promotion and tourism coordination; packet lists sponsors and timetable.
- Schedule: Saturday, Sept 19, 8:00 AM kickoff; 8:00–10:00 check-in at community center; families receive goodie bags and lanyards with reserved ballpark slot.
- Pricing: \$25 per family (2–6 members); lanyard worn all day; participation allowed without sleeping onsite; fee covers meals/experience (not tents).

[27:27-29:20] Programming details: safety brief, bring-your-own lunch, afternoon skills/demos with station check-offs.

- 10:00–10:30 opening comments and safety brief; families set up tents; lunch is bring-your-own.
- 1:00 PM demos around ballpark perimeter; PCC-style round-robin stations; lanyard “bingo card.”
- Example demos: wood chopping (view-only), fire starting, age-appropriate archery (no points), axe throwing adapted for safety.

[29:20-31:16] Evening and next-day plan: chuck wagon dinner, campfire-style activities, quiet hours, pancake breakfast, safety operations.

- 5:00–7:00 PM dinner by Wagons for Warriors; planning for 300 meals; can increase with sponsorship.

- 7:00 PM infield activities: banjo music, sing-alongs, family skits, awards; lights out at 22:00.
- 07:30 pancake breakfast in community center; teardown and departure by 10:00.
- 24-hour command post at community center; roving patrol; rules: no alcohol/glass/drugs; designated smoking area out of children's sight.
- Request for committee vote to proceed.

[31:48-32:46] Budget and sponsorship: \$1,000 food line; donations cover giveaways; minimal volunteer need.

- Cost for 300 meals: \$1,000 post-discount for Wagons for Warriors; entire \$1,000 allocated to food.
- Sponsors cover raffles, prizes, pancake mix; no additional city funds for those items.
- Minimal major volunteer need due to vendor support.

[32:46-33:04] Camping policy confirmed: tent camping only; no RVs or trailers.

- Inquiry addressed; flyer specifies tents only.

[33:04-34:28] Revenue and capacity planning: \$25 fee, registration controls, scalable meals, approx. 40 tent slots.

- At \$25/family, 40 families generate \$1,000 matching food budget; meal count (300) covers anticipated attendance with room to scale if needed.
- Parks and Recreation to enforce registration cutoff; no walk-ups; badges required.
- Capacity estimated at ~40 tent slots (subject to measurement).

[34:31-35:19] Logistics: field usage, capacity verification, activity areas, scheduling around CASA.

- Positive feedback received; CASA has field Friday before; no early setups.
- Capacity cap at 40 families pending measurement; tent placement in outfield only; training stations on gravel side.

[35:20-35:36] Program detail: families perform skits to reinforce family involvement.

- Skit performers are families; event is family-themed and family-involved.

[35:34-36:31] Committee approval, next meeting scheduled, adjournment.

- Motion made (by Linda) to proceed; seconded by Dawn; supportive comments ("Sounds like a lot of fun").

- Motion carried
- Next meeting set for May 20 at 4:00 PM
- Adjournment recorded at 4:40.