

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON TOURISM, SMALL BUSINESS, AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2026 Interim

June 18, 2026

Call to Order and Roll Call

The first meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Tourism, Small Business, and Information Technology was held on June 18, 2026, at 1:00 PM ET/12:00 PM CT in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Kim King, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representative Kim King, Co-Chair; Senators Gary Boswell, Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Jason Howell, Scott Madon, and Matt Nunn; and Representatives Shane Baker, Beverly Chester-Burton, Daniel Fister, Chris Fugate, Daniel Grossberg, Vanessa Grossl, John Hodgson, Matthew Lehman, Chris Lewis, Mary Lou Marzian, Shawn McPherson, Adam Moore, Timmy Truett, Joshua Watkins, Bill Wesley, Mitch Whitaker, Richard White, Nick Wilson, and Susan Witten.

Guests: Lindy Casebier, Secretary, Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet; Scott Alvey, Executive Director, Kentucky Historical Society (KHS); Stuart Sanders, Director of Research and Publications, KHS; Molly Shaddix, America250KY Research Specialist, KHS; Chris Cathers, Executive Director, Kentucky Arts Council (KAC); and Adrienne Thakur, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG).

Staff: Janine Coy, Christian Deeter, Austin Johnson, and Samantha Gerhart.

America 250KY: Impact and Legacy

Lindy Casebier, Secretary, Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet; Scott Alvey, Executive Director, KHS; Stuart Sanders, Director of Research and Publications, KHS; Molly Shaddix, America250 KY Research Specialist, KHS; and Chris Cathers, Executive Director, KAC, detailed various events commemorating America's 250th anniversary through heritage tourism, education, signature events, and legacy.

Mr. Alvey, Mr. Sanders, and Ms. Shaddix discussed multiple community projects and initiatives designed to promote tourism and community engagement. Mr. Cathers

discussed the semi-quincentennial grant program offered by KAC for artists, organizations, and communities to commemorate America250.

In response to Senator Funke Frommeyer, Mr. Alvey explained how the grant funding could be used to create sustainable legacy projects that support communities after their America250 program.

In response to Representative Lehman, Secretary Casebier discussed how grant funding spurs interest and excitement in communities through education and enrichment activities for organizations and communities to seek other revenue sources.

In response to Representative Marzian, Mr. Cathers explained how grant funding provides access to the arts and history for more Kentuckians.

Representative Chester-Burton acknowledged Mr. Alvey and KHS's leadership role in promoting Kentucky history.

In response to Representative Grossl, Mr. Cathers explained both the KHS and KAC report the number of people served and provide that information to the National Endowment for the Arts.

In Response to Representative Watkins and Senator Funke Frommeyer, Secretary Casebier discussed how history and the arts and heritage agencies should be viewed as investments in Kentucky.

America 250 Events in Lexington

Adrienne Thakur, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation, LFUCG, described the importance of Parks and Recreation and multiple events commemorating America's 250th anniversary. Ms. Thakur described Lexington's 4th of July traditions and added events to increase community engagement. She explained Parks and Recreation's 50th celebration of Bluegrass 10,000 festivities; their 5th year collaboration with Lexington businesses to promote small, minority, and majority women-owned business; and the 2028 parks master plan.

In response to Representative Grossl, Ms. Thakur discussed how the parks listed had \$172 million in deferred maintenance expenses in its 2018 master plan. In 2024, over 60% of Lexington voters approved an increase in property taxes to make repairs and improvements to Lexington's parks.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.