

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, June 9, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Alderman Fesenmaier, Alderman Frame, Troy Migut, Shelley Rowell; Mayor Krause (Ex-Off), Stephanie Klett (Ex-Off)

Absent: Comptroller Laura Pisarcik (Ex-Off).

Motion by Fesenmaier, second by Pirzada, to move Item #12, Riviera Complimentary Request Form, directly after Item #5, the Tourism Entity Update. Unanimously carried.

Comments from the Public limited to 5 minutes, limited to items on the agenda:

None

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from May 12, 2025

Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to approve the minutes from May 12, 2025. Unanimously carried.

Heather Jones, Independent Contractor for Tourism Commission, Meet at the Lake Promotional Activity

Heather Jones gave her Marketing Update with 106 active inquiries from the website; only sixty-four recorded May last year. Site sessions on the Tourism website site, www.lakegenevahotels.org listing only City hotels, continue to increase. The report also included a Sales Update and revenue from the Riviera.

Riviera Ballroom Complimentary Request Form, Heather Jones (continued from May meeting and moved up from place in original agenda) – Alderman Fesenmaier asked if Heather could revise the Complimentary Request Form to include the line item costs to the City. Jones was agreeable and will bring a revised form to the July or August meeting.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin reminded the Commission that the free Concerts in the Park series begin this month on June 26 and runs through August 7. Goodwin gave a detailed recap of the Marketing Metrics and Hotel Activity data.

The **2024** Tourism Economic Impact Report is being re-released on June 10. Commissioners will receive copies by email.

Included in May 2025 Earned Media Highlights:

Geneva Lake Museum <https://www.worldatlas.com/landmarks/12-best-museums-in-wisconsin.html>

Riviera Beach <https://www.thetravel.com/riviera-of-the-midwest-is-underrated-beach-destination-whole-family-will-love/>

City of Lake Geneva <https://www.worldatlas.com/cities/13-coolest-wisconsin-towns-for-a-summer-vacation-in-2025.html>

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) –

Alexandra Binanti gave detailed information regarding Website and Social Media data.

Binanti documented Placer.AI results for the 2023 Christmas Parade, 2024 Winterfest, and Abominable Snow Race showing user locations for these events.

Banners in downtown are typically hung for two weeks between events. City ordinance is not specific regarding other specifics for hanging banners. *Needs to be reviewed for changes.*

Changes to the 2025 late summer Lemonade Crawl will include expanded hours from 4 to 8 p.m. and a picnic in Flat Iron Park with five food trucks and children's games. Proceeds will go to the Mural project.

Another Art Installation (i.e. mural) will be placed on the large wall at 605 W. Main Street (facing the museum).

Binanti Met with a local accessibility advocate about forming coalition for all abilities programming in consideration of the beach, sports activity programming, and walk around town with Public Works.

Update from the YMCA work at Veteran's Park Ballfield

No information was made available in the packet. The fields have been renovated. Total grant award amount was not needed. The amount will need to be revised by the Commission at the July meeting.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Balance Sheet from April 30, 2025

Total Assets \$996,006.84

Restricted Fund Balance - \$1,075,073.65

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests

Jazz By the Lake, Midwest Young Artists – Fred Gahl

Fred Gahl explained the musical event scheduled for Saturday, July 19, at Flat Iron Park to include a live jazz concert and free ice cream. Commissioners focused discussion on the date (i.e. on a popular weekend) and the grant budget for \$9800 which included LOCAL marketing.

Motion by Frame, second by Rowell, to award \$9800. Discussion continued about trying to follow the state statute which speaks to overnight stays for the event. *Motion to amend by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to fund \$5950 of the marketing list: Instagram, Facebook, regional newsletter blasts, flyers, posters, website banners, website design and promotion, and Evite (from the list in the packet).* There was the reminder to remove any LOCAL ad buys and to include the QR Code for City Hotels on marketing materials. *Amendment unanimously carried. Main motion as amended also unanimously carried.*

Women’s Weekend 2025, The Adventure Begins Here – Geneva Lake Women’s Association

It was clarified that this is a fresh marketing proposal combining several events. Unfortunately, the Commissioners did not have the correct application from the packet. *By consensus, this item is continued to the July meeting.*

Sylph, A Contemporary Ballet – Dawn Spring Dance Projects

Due to time limitation, *by consensus, this item is continued to the July meeting.*

**Final Grant Evaluations from organizations receiving Tourism Grant
Winterfest Ice Sculpture Walk 2025, VISIT Lake Geneva –**

By consensus, continued to July meeting due to time.

The Balloon Adventure, 531 Fund –

Continued to July meeting.

Field Work at Vets Park, Geneva Lakes YMCA –

Continued to July meeting.

**Tourism Commission related forms, paperwork, and grant procedures review
Riviera Ballroom Complimentary Request Form (moved to beginning of agenda)
Criteria/Guidelines for awarding grants, to be included on the grant application**

By consensus, continued to July meeting due to time.

Promoting the Tourism Commission’s website listing City hotels (continued from May meeting)

Continued to July meeting.

Knowles-Nelson Grant and Matching Funds

Continued to July meeting.

**Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –
Monday, July 14 at 4:00 PM**

- Note: all items listed above that were continued.
- Budget – add line items for municipal development projects including maintenance; City limits entrance signs and wayfinding kiosks
- Criteria for grant awards (see above)
- Switch Riviera Contractor individual grant requests to line items in the City budget
- Note: Include Future Meeting Date on the agenda

Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to adjourn at 6:01 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary