

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES  
Monday, August 11 , 2025  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

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

**Absent:** Troy Migut, Comptroller Laura Pisarcik (Ex-Off).

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

Alderman Joel Hoiland spoke on Item #11, the money budgeted for the Knowles-Nelson Grant. He believes there would be challenges because Hillmoor, Zone 1, is resident-oriented use. He suggested the budgeted money be used for Welcome Signs into the City.

**Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from July 14, 2025**

*Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to approve the minutes from July 14, 2025. Unanimously carried.*

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

Heather Jones highlighted data from her June – July (first half) Riviera-targeted Marketing Campaign. The site session for the Tourism City-Only Hotels website [www.lakegenevahotels.org](http://www.lakegenevahotels.org) is showing a huge boost. Alder Fesenmaier asked if Heather could add the details (i.e. which group and total expense approved) for the comp/donated Riviera use.

**Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva**

Deanna Goodwin was proud to announce that the seven weeks of Concerts in Flat Iron Park had fantastic attendance and much positive feedback. The Visit website has topped One Million visitor sessions already in July. Events and Things to Do continue to top the page views. Impact Award nominations remain open until August 31<sup>st</sup> for the October dinner celebration.

Included in July 2025 Earned Media Highlights:

<https://www.cntraveler.com/gallery/the-most-beautiful-towns-in-america>

<https://www.chicagoparent.com/things-to-do/travel/summer-family-fun-in-lake-geneva/>

<https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/now-lincoln-county-joins-door-dane-milwaukee-sauk-brown-and-langlade-as-wisconsin-sees-skyrocketing-tourism-growth-new-update-you-need-to-know/>

**Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) –**

Alexandra Binanti handed out copies of her monthly report.

Best reach on Social Media are posts regarding new store openings, mural announcements, and store anniversaries.

The new mural installation has been completed at 605 W. Main Street across from the Geneva Lake Museum.

The Lemonade Crawl on August 20 will consist of the ticketed event from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. with twenty-five businesses participating and new this year, the picnic in Flat Iron Park from 4:00 p.m. to 8 p.m. The annual Maxwell Street Days this year is August 22 through 24. Bids will be opened today for refinishing benches in the downtown. BID Boundary adjustments will be presented for approval at the August or September Council meeting.

**Written financial update provided by City Comptroller**

Balance Sheet from June 30, 2025

Total Assets \$932,697.41

Restricted Fund Balance - \$1,075,073.65

**Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests**

**Honoring Our Military Heroes – Geneva Lake Museum**

The grant details for the Military Room renovation at the Museum were explained.

Commissioners were invited to view the progress. *Motion by Frame, second by Pirzada, to award \$20,000.* Unanimously carried.

**Final Grant Evaluations from organizations receiving Tourism Grant**

**Veteran’s Park, Geneva Lakes Family YMCA –**

This is an example of a municipal development grant that uses sports marketing and shows a direct correlation from tournaments for overnight stays in the shoulder season.

**Knowles-Nelson Grant and Matching Funds**

Continued to September 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**

Klett asked how follow-up is done AFTER an event to ensure guidelines were met.

Commissioners believed appropriate review is done through approved invoices by staff and post-event review documents in the packet and discussion included in the minutes.

**Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –**

**Monday, September 8 at 4:00 PM**

- Knowles-Nelson Grant and Matching Funds
- Budget – add line items for municipal development projects including maintenance; City limits entrance signs and wayfinding kiosks
- Switch Riviera Contractor individual grant requests to line items in the City budget
- Note: Include Future Meeting Date on the agenda

*Motion by Frame, second by Waspi, to adjourn at 5:20 p.m. Carried.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary