

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, March 14, 2022
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Brian Waspi at 4:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Dana Trilla, Alderman Hedlund, Alderman Fesenmaier, Zakia Pirzada, Mayor Klein (online), Stephanie Klett (online), Administrator Nord (online)

Absent: Linda Moritz

Comments from the Public limited to 5 minutes, limited to items on the agenda: None

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from February 14, 2022

Hedlund moved to approve the February 14, 2022 minutes, second by Pirzada. Unanimously carried.

Update from Stephanie Copsey, Independent Contractor for Tourism Commission, Meet at the Lake Promotional Activity

Copsey was absent; report in March packet.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin was attending Governor Ever's Conference on Tourism. Klett reported that March was the last month for partner meetings by Zoom. In-person Visit meetings will resume in April. Winterfest was wildly successful with record attendance and two separate interviews by the Weather Channel that was pushed out nationally. Earned Media, free coverage, for Winterfest included dozens of articles from various sources.

Restaurant Week this year is pushed out to 10 days due to success in the past. Mark your calendars for April 23 to May 1, 2022.

Visit, in response to concerns over Ukraine/Russia conflict, sent their newsletter with five fully-vetted charities.

In the February Marketing Metrics, Wisconsin cities continue to see an increase on the website. This is a trend that will likely continue.

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID)

Kristi Tarantino, BID Director, let us know that they have hired an events coordinator. BID is not asking for a grant for the May 22nd Wine Walk. The Shamrock Shuffle as a hybrid, new event between online and in-person was almost sold out at this point. BID is returning next month with a grant application for Fashion Week, April 27 to April 30. They are waiting for permit approval from the City.

Commissioners are concerned about BID promoting ALL City lodging for grant approvals.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Balance Sheet as of February 28, 2022

Total Assets \$1,081,125.28

Outstanding Grant Balance \$502,147.75

Restricted (Uncommitted) Fund Balance \$685,614.30

Walworth County Visitors Bureau

Board Member Tristin Crist updated the Commission regarding the financials. From the \$90,000 contract amount, they have submitted invoices for approximately \$37,900 and will return the balance. He reiterated that no additional funding will be requested at this time. They have not hired an executive director or group marketing manager. WCVB is in the process of rebranding their website and will switch more digital marketing using state grants and other member funding. Nothing was included in this month's packet.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station

No written report provided. Parking manager, Seth Elder, is exploring grants and federal tax credits. The Wisconsin legislature failed to make changes regarding electric charging stations. The prediction is that all new cars will be electric by 2035. The Public Works Committee continues to schedule this item on their agendas, also, but the issue seems to be gaining little traction in spite of the idea that visitors now have access and use apps that show charging station locations in cities.

City of Lake Geneva logo versus Tourism Commission log on Grant Marketing Materials

There is no direction on this issue in city ordinance or state statute.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests:

Bacon Fest (Wisconsin Valley Media Group)

Kelly Wells explained that this second annual event will be held in Flat Iron Park on May 14 and 15. The event will NOT expand and requiring the closing of Wrigley Drive.

Motion by Pirzada, second by Waspi, to grant the \$10,000 request. Carried with Alderman Hedlund voting no.

Art in the Park (Geneva Lake Arts Association)

Nikki Marcicano explained the updated application for the August 13 and 14 event including a detailed budget for marketing. The concern continued to be advertising in a wider area to that would encourage visitors to book overnight stays in the city. Motion by Pirzada, second by Fesenmaier, to grant up to \$11,964. Unanimously carried.

Year Round Advertising (Geneva Lake Arts Association)

The Commission was not convinced the grant would cause overnight stays in city lodging. The idea of a year-round campaign rather than individual, more focused events was not supported. No motion was made for the \$5,000 grant.

Lax Geneva (Lacrosse America)

Commissioners again expressed concern with using and listing lodging outside the city limits. The use of Delavan athletic fields was questioned. Nicole Bingham insisted that splitting the actual competition between Delavan and Lake Geneva would not work. A comment was made about Lake Geneva pursuing land purchase for more sports complexes. Motion by Trilla, second by Pirzada, to continue to next month with an updated lodging list. Unanimously carried.

5:30 p.m. Klett and Trilla exited meeting.

Lake Geneva Summer Star Parties (GLAS, Geneva Lake Astrophysics and STEAM)

Adam McCullouch explained the three separate events: Summer Solstice, Perseid Meteor Shower, and Lunar Eclipse. These events are all held in the evening and would be most likely to cause overnight city stays. Motion by Pirzada, second by Fesenmaier, to award the full grant for \$6,675. Unanimously carried.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date – Lax Geneva (Lacrosse America) grant application; Grant Application Discussion (45-day deadline, cut-off dates for submitting invoices, permit approval prior to or after grant award)

Monday, April 11 at 4:00 PM

Motion by Hedlund, second by Waspi, to adjourn at 5:39 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary