

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, January 11, 2021
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 Dana Trilla, Alderman Hedlund, Alderman Fesenmaier, Zakia Pirzada

Absent: Linda Moritz

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

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from December 14, 2020

Trilla moved to approve the December 14, 2020 minutes, second by Hedlund. Unanimously carried.

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

Copsey pointed out that the Hotel and Lodging tab on the Riviera website has been changed to give equal visual benefit to all establishments in the City boundaries. The Weddings tab will soon be updated to do the same.

Copsey is preparing for the 2nd Annual Winter Bridal Expo on January 23 to be held both virtually and in-person at the Bella Vista Suites. The event is free, but tickets must be reserved online. <https://lgwinterbridalexpo.com/>

Events and inquiries are up from 2020. Commissioners asked for next month's report to include data on reservations, website analytics, details/examples of marketing promotions, RFPs from VISIT Lake Geneva. Parameters will be set up to direct how RFPs are shared.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin, Visit Lake Geneva Director, gave highlights from the December 2020 report. Winterfest is February 3 – 7 and includes 12 national snow sculpting teams, 26 sculptures for the downtown Ice Sculpture, Walk, and free shuttle rides.

<https://www.visitlakegeneva.com/winterfest/> Hovercraft rides from TLS WindSled will be present using a vendor footprint. Details and permit information is available through the City.

Other events for the upcoming year were mentioned: Restaurant Week (April 24 – May 2), Concerts in the Park (weekly from July 1 – August 12), and Christmas Parade (December 4).

In the Top Cities section of the website data, Chicago's percentage was a bit down (usually in the 25-30% range) due to COVID and quarantine restrictions.

The 2021 Lake Geneva Visitors Guide print edition will be available next week with the online edition available earlier.

Commissioners asked Goodwin to include the general category/contract type in another column for the RFP Report.

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) None

Wisconsin Valley Media Group – Grant Status Report

Craig Grove dissected the Campaign Performance Report dated October 28 to December 31 included in the Commission packet. He interpreted the data for their Targeted Display ads (3),

20,000 Targeted Emails (one burst), and the subsequent Riviera Website Analytics. Commissioners asked about the cost-benefit ratio for the \$1500/month grant.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Commission reviewed financial data included in the packet. The fund balance is \$335,987.19 to date leaving approximately \$198,683.75 unencumbered with about \$50,000 left until September for additional grants.

Walworth County Visitors Bureau Payment Schedule

Discussion regarding Visitors Bureau Payment beginning in January. There has been no sign of an official contract sent to the city attorney. Kathy Seeburg, Director of the Visitors Bureau, was in attendance to hear the explanation. Waspi asked about making the payment ahead of contract completion. City Attorney Draper confirmed that he will view the RFP details to write a contract. Motion by Hedlund, second by Fesenmaier, to approve payment for the first quarter after the city attorney drafts the two-year contract in one week's time and that contract is approved and signed by Vice Chair Trilla and Pirzada. Unanimously carried.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests:

Baker House: Ice Bar

Request was withdrawn.

Grand Mission: Flow Fest

Amber Cumming presented the Flow Fest request for \$55,000. They anticipate this would become a yearly event. Some Commissioners like the location and the event date but didn't think there was enough detail worked out at this point. Other Commissioners thought holding an event of this size during the summer months was not necessary and suggested a different location such as Hillmoor. The applicants will revise and return in the future.

Geneva Lake Arts Foundation: Art in the Park

This is the 41st annual event which will continue to be held in Flat Iron Park on August 14 and 15, 2021. Motion by Hedlund, second by Trilla, to approve the \$8,000 grant application for Art in the Park. Unanimously carried.

Wisconsin Valley Media Group: Digital Marketing Campaign

Waspi pointed out that the focus of promoting bookings/reservations for mid-week and off season seemed to have morphed into a wedding focus. From the data presented it was questioned whether the outcome was worth the expense. Commissioners encouraged Copsey to use part of her \$5000 promotional grant money to continue with this Digital Marketing Campaign in the next few months if she deemed it necessary. Motion by Hedlund, second by Pirzada, to deny the additional grant request beginning January 22nd. Unanimously carried.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date – set up parameters for sharing RFPs;
Monday, February 8 at 4:00 PM

Motion by Trilla, second by Waspi, to adjourn at 5:56 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary