

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, March 8, 2021
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

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

Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair Dana Trilla, Chair Brian Waspi (via GoToMeeting), Alderman Hedlund (appeared in person at 5:50 p.m.), 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 February 8, 2021

Pirzada moved to approve the February 8, 2021 minutes, second by Trilla. Unanimously carried.

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

Copsey reviewed her written report from the packet highlighting the website analytics of a 39% increase of site visits over the previous month including 43 active inquires via email. The bounce rate of 53% is high but will be worked on in the coming month.

Copsey will add the 2018 with comptroller help on sales chart to give a pre-COVID comparison.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin, Visit Lake Geneva Director, presented her February 2021 report. VISIT is moving forward with Restaurant Week from April 24 to May 2, 2021. There will be continued consciousness regarding the Pandemic with take-out options and outdoor dining. Local restaurants are currently signing up to participate.

Concerts in the (Flat Iron) Park will return this year on Thursdays from July 1 to August 12.

Goodwin is reporting an optimistic return of the tourists as there is an uptick in planning as people become more comfortable with travel.

In October the Society for American Travel Writers will hold their convention in Milwaukee. Lake Geneva has been chosen as a tourist showcase that the SATW will visit.

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID)

Kristi Tarantino, Executive Director, gave a verbal report. There was a soft launch of a new event called First Fridays encouraging local shopping from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. with in-store demonstrations and store specials. The plan is continue this all year with 30 businesses participating to date.

The annual Wine Walk will be held Sunday, May 9 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The event was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID. It is a ticketed event for sample wine in downtown businesses. BID is planning early for the annual Oktoberfest on October 9-10. In 2021 the event will be spread out across the downtown with NO street closures. Children's activities will be located in Flat Iron Park, Beer Garden, and Craft Fair.

Tourism Grant awarded in January 2020 still has outstanding receipts of approximately \$200.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Although money will not be moved into the Tourism section of the City Budget now until September, according to Karen Hall, there will be \$100,000-\$200,000 left unencumbered for the balance of this year.

Event Coordinator Marketing Budget for 2021

Copsey explained she splits the \$5000 budget with the Lakefront Harbormaster. The marketing proposals were discussed from the packet page. Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to grant Option 1 not to exceed \$5000. Unanimously carried.

Walworth County Visitors Bureau Agreement

Board members Berlin, Crist, and Gaffey appeared before the Commission to encourage the signing of the proposed contract with the WCVB. There was some concern by Commissioners regarding the change in staff, but Board members gave their assurance that they were in the process of hiring which would not have a significant impact on the services in the agreement. Motion by Fesenmaier, second by Pirzada, to have the City Attorney complete the contract to share and for editing by Nord, Waspi, and Pirzada. Unanimously carried.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests:

Phlow Fest – Grand Mission

Reviewing the current application and new paper packet presented at the meeting, there is support for the event. Motion by Waspi, second by Trilla, to award \$10,000 for website development. The understanding is Grand Mission will re-submit a complete application and show approved permits from the City for any additional funding. Carried.

Youth Lacrosse Tournament – Lacrosse America

6th Annual sports competition on July 24 and 25. With 75-90 teams participating and up to 5500 spectators, 95% will be arriving from out of the area. Motion by Pirzada, second by Waspi, to award the \$8,000 grant request. Their marketers are required to promote the complete list of City proper hotels, motels, and B&Bs **first** before extending promotion to accommodations outside the City limits. Unanimously carried.

Wisconsin Hotel and Lodging Association 2021 Conference and Trade Show – WH&LA

A detailed application was submitted and reviewed briefly. Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to award \$2400 as requested. Unanimously carried.

Riviera Ballroom Events – Mayor Klein

Mayor Klein submitted an application for a Riviera Events Office, Wall of History, and Big Band Events for \$68,000. Due to time, motion by Fesenmaier, second by Pirzada, to continue to the April meeting with the understanding that each event will be submitted separately. Carried.

Due to lack of time, motion by Fesenmaier, second by Hedlund, to continue Item 13 Social Media RFP and Item 14 RFP Sharing Parameters. Unanimously carried.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date – Monday, April 12 at 4:00 PM

Motion by Fesenmaier, second by Pirzada, to adjourn at 5:24 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary