

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, April 12, 2021 – SPECIAL Meeting
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:07 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 March 8, 2021

The March 8 minutes were approved at the Special meeting on March 23. On the May agenda include approval of March 23 and April 12 meeting minutes.

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

Copsey was pleased to inform the Commission that bookings are happening even without the in-person views by using the digital tour on the website. <https://www.lakegenevariviera.com/>

Stephanie was excited to announce a three-day conference in July sponsored by the Wisconsin DARE Association with attendance anticipated for 100 per day with overnight stays. There was discussion regarding hotel bookings and awareness by other businesses who might want to offer specials to the group. She promised to add a page to the website with general information as an announcement to the business community who can follow up with Copsey for specifics.

The amount of data reported continues to increase as suggestions are implemented from the Commissioners. Copsey reviewed the 2018 data added but explained that the renovations in the period had an impact. Suggested that she add an explanation under the chart.

May 1st will be the first wedding held since the Phase 2 remodeling.

Request for Proposals for Social Media and E-blast Campaign for Riviera

This item was moved up. Copsey reviewed the three-month campaign consisting of a Fall Getaway, Holiday Shopping, and Weddings. The campaign was funded through a separate grant. Copsey will use her judgement on continuing with outside companies for future campaigns using her Riviera budget rather than additional grant money or the RFP procedure. If the campaign was to run longer or be a permanent action, then the Commission would recommend going out for bid instead of using grant money for a more competitive price and quality control. No action taken.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

They are meeting virtually on the third Tuesday of each month with the Visit partners.

Goodwin gave details about this year's Restaurant Week April 24 through May 2. There will be menus available, so patrons know what to expect at each restaurant. The Charity Check will now be split with one charity receiving \$5000 and four charities \$1000 each for a total of \$9000.

Concerts in the Park will be held this year Thursdays July 1 through August 12. The July 15 date will be held in coordination with the Riviera Open House. Vendors set up in the park on those nights will be covered under one permit from Visit. Goodwin will submit vendor names weekly to the City for transparency and safety.

The Visitor Center will be open 7 days per week beginning Memorial Day.

According to recent studies, 80% of those surveyed plan to travel in the next 6 months. Of those, 70% want COVID conscious options for their experience. This is the year of the Road Trip, so VISIT is widening their marketing to 5-6 hours' drive time to capture potential tourists/travelers.

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) – None

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Comptroller Hall handed out Room Tax Comparison sheet not included in the packet showing the 12-month periods in 2020 and 2021 with a positive variance of \$22,385.58 (not including the room tax increase which will take effect in June).

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests:

Lake Geneva Women's Weekend – Geneva Lake Women's Association

The Geneva Lake Women's Association has taken over the event this year. The event will be held on May 14 and May 15 which is the same weekend as the Jaycees Pub and Grub Crawl.

There was discussion by the Commission regarding what the grant money's intended use.

Motion by Hedlund, second by Fesenmaier, to award \$10,000 for the Women's Weekend event.

Although the grant amount is higher, the approval is given based on the marketing and advertising details in the application. Unanimously carried.

Spring Break Family Special – Canopy Tours

Eric Howden from Lake Geneva Canopy Tours dba Lake Geneva Ziplines and Adventures this mid-week event from March 22 to April 30. Discussion centered around whether this was an event or actually a business promotion especially due to the lateness of the application.

Motion by Pirzada, second by Hedlund, to reimburse marketing receipts from March 22 to April 30, 2021, up to \$3000. Carried.

Star Parties – GLAS Education

Adam McCulloch joined via GoToMeeting to explain the four events comprising the request:

June Summer Equinox - Big Foot Park location cancelled due to COVID attendance limits, working on an alternate venue; July – Dunn Field; August Perseid Meteor Shower – Geneva Cruise Line; and September Autumnal Equinox – Library Park. It was noted that the original application page was missing from the packet but the supporting pages contained enough detail.

Motion by Pirzada, second by Hedlund, to approve \$4700 grant. Unanimously carried.

Parameters for Sharing Event RFPs with City Hotels

Deanna Goodwin explained that Visit cannot give out specific RFP information but is now including an RFP section in her report. Commissioner Pirzada was concerned with the lack of smaller hotels are excluded from the offerings. Goodwin said that the event planner not Visit decides which facilities to select for the RFP.

It was pointed out that Stephanie Copsey in her work with Riviera bookings uses a different process for soliciting hotel stays.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date – Monday, May 10 at 4:00 PM

Agenda items for May: minutes from Special March 23 meeting and April 12 meeting; Walworth County Visitors and Convention Bureau contract; review and revise grant application for date of submission (i.e. first Wednesday of the month), parameters (i.e. City limits, marketing costs), and sample applications.

Motion by Trilla, second by Hedlund, to adjourn at 5:43 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary