

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, September 12, 2022
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Alderman Fesenmaier, Alderman Hedlund, Kevin Singh, Linda Moritz; Mayor Klein, Administrator Nord (via Zoom).

Absent: Stephanie Klett.

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

Jody from Williams Bay, a school psychologist at Lakeland School, spoke in support of the Never Say Never Playground grant advocating for appropriate equipment for residents and visitors.

Diane Grenus spoke in favor of the Never Say Never Playground insisting that it is difficult to quantify the “heads in beds” numbers that would result from the equipment in the park. Event goers would use the playground which should be included in ALL marketing as part of any Tourism grant awarded.

Tami Carstensen, current manager of Harbor Shores, and past chair of the Tourism Commission reminded the members of state statute and local ordinance definitions of how the grant money is to be used. She encouraged the Never Say Never group to keep raising money and to apply for other grants that are available.

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from August 8, 2022. Alderman Hedlund moved to approve the August 8, 2022 minutes, second by Moritz. Unanimously carried.

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

Jones mentioned that this is her second meeting appearing before the Tourism Commission with August proving to be a very busy month.

She highlighted marketing stats including a 10% increase in site sessions on the Riviera website including an additional 274 visits directly from Facebook. Bookings for 2022 have exceeded the 2021 total and 2023 is now more than half as many compared to the 2022 total. There are no cancelled and rescheduled events for 2022 through 2024.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Goodwin announced the Annual Partner Appreciation Night and Impact Award Dinner will be held October 25 at The Abbey Resort.

There were four ribbon-cutting ceremonies recently. The Electric Christmas Parade will be Saturday, December 3rd. Winterfest dates are February 1-2, 2023.

John Trione, owner of Lake Geneva Balloon Company, is the new VISIT Winterfest coordinator. The Geiger Media Tour happened last week with eleven journalists representing more than 50 media outlets. As in the past, this exposure has a direct impact on tourism numbers for our city. OnMilwaukee.com folks will be visiting next week for three days.

Visit Lake Geneva purchased Car Wraps ads from a company called Wrapify. The Car Wraps were seen in the city of Chicago at different locations to advertise spending time in Lake Geneva. Results were very positive with planned repeats in the fall and possibly the holidays and expanded to Milwaukee and Madison.
Meetings and events by the numbers are making a comeback.

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

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2022

Total Assets \$509,488.24

Restricted Fund Balance \$685,614.30

The room tax comparisons continue to show a month-to-month increase over 2021 with an increase of over \$185,000 with a note that Marketplace providers now pay quarterly.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests

Never Say Never Playground – Dusti Grenus

Diane Grenus spoke on behalf of Never Say Never, Inc. After discussion of Commission finances and available money, motion by Waspi, second by Alderman Fesenmaier, to award \$25,000 for equipment. More discussion on how much we are actually ahead in dollars and whether this counts as municipal development, the motion was withdrawn. .Motion by Alderman Fesenmaier, second by Waspi, to have Heather Jones add a link to the Never Say Never Playground on our Riviera website to assist awareness and in fundraising. Unanimously carried. Commission encouraged the applicant to continue fundraising and to reapply in the future for components/pieces rather than the whole.

MPI Great Lakes Summit – Heather Jonest

This summit is being held at the Riviera for event planners. This second grant would cover the food, linens, and entertainment as part of the marketing for events to be booked at the Riviera. Motion by Pirzada, second by Moritz, to approve the grant for \$11,404.73. Unanimously carried.

Update regarding livestream camera locations – City Administrator Nord

The first camera approved, installed, and currently viewable on the City's website cost approximately \$9,000 with minimal expense for operations. Three extra locations are being proposed for livestreaming: Riviera Beach, West End Pier, and Boat Launch. There is no guarantee of privacy nor liability when livestreaming. More details presented at a future meeting.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –

Place on agenda BID holiday events and Riviera interest on borrowing.

Monday, October 10 at 4:00 PM

Motion by Hedlund, second by Moritz, to adjourn at 5:23 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary