

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

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:15 p.m.

Roll Call by Linda Moritz

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Alderman Fesenmaier, Alderman Hedlund, Linda Moritz; Kevin Singh, Stephanie Klett, Administrator Nord.

Absent: Mayor Klein

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

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from October 10, 2022. No motion.

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

Stephanie Jones reviewed data from the packet. Riviera bookings are holding strong with the new, increased rates including into 2024. Session Duration for the website showed an increase.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin highlighted impressive data regarding the Visit website including an increase in Direct Traffic (i.e. typing in the URL/web address) and an increase in the Fall Landing page (329% over last October). The Bus Wrap marketing which kicked off in Chicago is now expanding into Milwaukee and Madison. The Winter Marketing Campaign begins this month. The Visitor Center continues their 24/7 hours and is the drop-off location for a winter clothing drive, Bundle Up, running through mid-January. United Way will distribute the collected items locally.

The lighted Christmas Parade, with the 12 Days of Christmas theme, is Saturday, December 3rd. Volunteers are still needed including Ambassadors, who will hand out candy, because throwing candy continues to be prohibited.

October Earned Media samples:

- 7 Most Beautiful Lake Towns in Wisconsin | World Atlas (Web)

<https://www.worldatlas.com/cities/7-most-beautiful-lake-towns-in-wisconsin.html>

- These Wisconsin Towns Named Among America's 'Most Beautiful' | Up North News | Web

<https://upnorthnewswi.com/2022/10/26/these-wisconsin-towns-named-among-americas-most-beautiful/>

- These Are the Most Charming Main Streets in the United States | Fodor's Travel (Web)

<https://www.fodors.com/news/photos/these-are-the-most-charming-main-streets-in-the-united-states>

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

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Balance Sheet as of October 2022

Total Assets - \$825,233.22

Restricted Fund Balance - \$685,614.30

Outstanding Grants worksheet showed a total unpaid liability of \$396,702.10.

Waspi commented that what is not included in the Grant worksheet is a final payment to Visit. He also suggested that we shouldn't grant more than \$40,000 until the end of February. We will probably exceed \$2,000,000 in room taxes for 2022 reflecting the increased rate.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests

Women's Weekend – Geneva Lake Women's Association

Revised grant application was presented with expanded, detailed marketing plan showing. They also adjusted the date to late April to fill the gap of non-scheduled events during that time period. It was noted that Administrator Nord could share this as a sample, model of an outstanding application. Motion by Pirzada, second by Waspi, to approve a reduced amount for \$12,500. Unanimously carried.

Lake Geneva Winter Bridal Expo – Charlie Lorenzi

Lorenzi reviewed the application including the marketing plan. Motion by Hedlund, second by Waspi, to approve \$15,000, with the condition to provide historical data of attendance and room stays along with the invoices for the January 2023 event. Unanimously carried.

Visit Lake Geneva Downtown Ice Sculpture Tour – Deanna Goodwin

The ice sculptures, Art Installation, is a companion to Winterfest, and increases foot traffic to downtown businesses and lodging bookings as an added reason to stay.

Thirty-seven businesses participated last year with the potential capacity of 50. This is the fourth year for the ice sculptures and third year of grant requests.

Motion by Hedlund, second by Waspi, to approve the reduced amount of \$10,800. Unanimously carried.

Heather Jones, Independent Contractor for Tourism Commission, annual contract negotiations

The contract was not in the packet. The City Attorney is working on one document which will combine the previous three agreements into one. Contract was technically approved last month to expire October 31, 2023.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –

- Place on agenda Heather Jones' 2022-2023 contract and include in the packet for Public and Commission viewing the updated, new agreement along with the three agreements mentioned above.
- GLAS reimbursements – missed deadline
- Add column in financials Budget vs. Actual with a subtotal of what has been paid out.
- Revise Grant Application to include attendance and lodging data as part of invoice submission.
- There is no update regarding additional cameras at the lakefront due to a contract with a new IT Service company and marketing the Riviera camera.

Monday, December 12 at 4:00 PM

Motion by Moritz, second by Singh, to adjourn at 5:25 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary