

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, June 12, 2023
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:03 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Ald. Fesenmaier, Alderman Howell, Troy Migut, Stephanie Klett (Ex-Off), Mayor Klein (Ex-Off),

Absent: Linda Moritz

Also Present: City Admin. Dave Nord, Comptroller Pisarsik

Election of Tourism Commission Officers

Nominations opened by Chair.

Motion by Waspi, second by Howell, to nominate Fesenmaier as Secretary. No other nominations made. By unanimous consent, Fesenmaier elected as Secretary.

Motion by Fesenmaier, second by Migut, to nominate Pirzada as Vice Chair. No other nominations made. By unanimous consent, Pirzada elected as Vice Chair.

Motion by Fesenmaier, second by Howell, to nominate Waspi as Chair. No other nominations made. By unanimous consent, Waspi elected as Chair.

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

None.

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from April 10, 2023

Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to approve the minutes from April 10, 2023. No May meeting held due to lack of mayoral committee appointments. Unanimously carried.

Heather Jones, Independent Contractor for Tourism Commission, Meet at the Lake Promotional Activity (moved down on agenda)

Jones reported that Event Sales Totals continue to hover at 60+ for the past several years. New to the chart is a Comp category to show how often the Riviera fee is waived. Jones is focusing now on booking weekday events to fill in the schedule. Revenue continues to increase in all categories.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin gave highlights from her superb monthly report. Restaurant Week winners were announced. Concerts in the Park start up again on June 29 and run through August 10. Schedule of entertainment can be found online.

Mark your calendar: Lighted Christmas Parade is December 2, 2023.

Notable year-to-date numbers from the Visit website: visitor sessions are over 600,000 and page views over 1.5 million. Included in the monthly packet is abbreviated data from the Economic Impact of Tourism Report 2022 (released May 6, 2023).

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) – Alexandria Binanti

Alex gave information regarding upcoming events sponsored by the BID including a Summer Bucket List Guide, a November Wine Walk, Oktoberfest (which will shift location to downtown on Broad Street rather than Flat Iron Park), and Murals in Motion. Their social media numbers continue to show increases, and they will be launching the BID brand on TikTok soon. Waspi complimented Binanti for the thorough reports submitted routinely now.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Balance Sheet [not available]

Total Assets - \$274,069.41

Restricted Fund Balance - \$525,302.27

Comptroller Pisarsik reminded the Commissioners that profit from the Riveria leases is deposited in the Lakefront Fund not the General Fund as mentioned by a previous speaker. The Commission needs to be aware of the total and timing of the grants awarded which at this point is close to \$57,000. The new chart presented by the comptroller should assist in that effort.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests

Big Balloon Build (submission of revised grant application)

There was some confusion about the grant application being revised. The applicant was asked by the Commission to change a non-city hotel listed as an exclusive partner on their promotional materials to a sponsor instead. The City Administrator will verify this change on the applicant's website and all materials used to market the event before approving reimbursement.

Wisconsin Cheese Festival – APG Southern Wisconsin (Rob Ireland) and Lake Geneva House of Music

This is a new event at the House of Music location. Waspi asked them to include TacoFest data in the application. The actual budget projections were not included in the packet. Discussion ensued regarding awarding partial funding with request to return next month. Howell asked questions about how much money was left in the budget for grants. Motion by Howell, second by Waspi, to grant \$15,000 for the Wisconsin Cheese Festival September 22 to September 24, 2023. Motion carried 4 to 1, with Alderman Fesenmaier voting No.

Addition of invoice deadline to page 1 of current grant application

The revision was included on the application in the packet. Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to approve the addition of the invoice deadline to page 1 of the grant application. Unanimously carried.

Use of different Tourism Commission Logo and other possible changes

This topic was brought up in other meetings because of the confusion with City budget versus Room Taxes which actually fund the grants. Commissioners felt an updated logo might clarify the different monies being used. Klett volunteered Visit staff to create a revised Tourism Commission logo and to submit for the August meeting.

Addition of link or QR code to the Riviera homepage

This was discussed at previous meetings to add a link or QR Code to all promotional and marketing materials by grant recipients. The link or Code would allow readers to go DIRECTLY to the city hotels page of the Riviera website. There was concern by Stephanie Jones that she would not be able to track users entering the website that way. Motion by Pirzada, second by Fesenmaier, to add a link or QR Code to all marketing materials including print and social media. Motion by Howell, Waspi, to continue to the July meeting for further discussion and review. Unanimously carried.

Initial discussion regarding Visit Lake Geneva with Tourism Commission (contract opens July 1, 2023)

Waspi noted that the Visit contract is actually a pay-for-performance agreement, and we should be using percentages for contract amounts. Motion by Howell, second by Migut, that the Chair begin negotiations with Visit including City Staff. Unanimously carried.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –

- Tourism Logo – August meeting
- Link or QR Code on promotional materials
- Contract negotiations update with Visit

Monday, July 10, at 4:00 PM

Motion by Waspi, second by Hedlund, to adjourn at 5:47 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary