

Roll Call Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Alderman Howell, Troy Migut, Cathy Stoodley; Mayor Krause (Ex-Off)
Absent: Stephanie Klett (Ex-Off), Comptroller Laura Pisarcik (Ex-Off), Alderman Fesenmaier

Motion by Stoodley, second by Pirzada, to approve the minutes from May 13, 2024.
Unanimously carried.

Heather Jones, Independent Contractor for Tourism Commission, Meet at the Lake
Promotional Activity:
Jones gave update with lakegenevahotels.org going live

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva, Deanna Goodwin- Ribbon cuttings going on with relocated businesses and cicada fest (Timber Ridge Waterpark, Commons at Grand Geneva and Library Park Art Installation coming up). Concerts in the Park beginning June 27. Earned media had a big increase in May starting with Cicada Fest. A large turnout that had at least 1,000 people turnout even in the rain and participate. A small dip this May over last May potentially due to the rainy weather patterns the last few weeks. Goodwin highlighted the hotel occupancy rates being up 6% over 2023 at this time. FAM Tour with Norwegian journalists and Icelandic journalists promoting international travel from the state initiative – highlighting Lake Geneva. Shooting of the Discover Wisconsin episodes for the Fall has been happening over this last month. USA Today nominated Geneva Lake for best lake and best swimming – winner being announced June 12th. New social media manager beginning in June for Visit Lake Geneva.

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) – Alexandria Binanti - Binanti announced the Murals in Motion going off without a hitch and showed a 104% increase from the previous month on site sessions. Highlighted a huge jump in TikTok. Announced Horticultural Hall Mural kickoff was a big hit and around 14,000 attendees for the week. Weather was great. Will be doing an auction for art in 2025 with other muralists. Maxwell Street Days are up next on the calendar. A group of local kids pitched a “Lemonade Crawl” (August 20th) in lieu of the Coco Crawl, and the BID will be helping get this off the ground. Looking at discussing evergreen banners downtown. Find out next week if Main Street Application was accepted.

9. Written financial update regarding Room Tax Dollars Collected, Financials, current Budget & Disbursements, list of outstanding (unpaid) tourism grants awarded
-Waspi discussed the fund balance increasing with the new Visit contract and that this balance will begin to increase. Pirzada voiced her reservations around how we will be using the excess funds and make sure it does not go against the state statute.

10. Discussion/Action on Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests: Maximum ten (10) minute presentation per request:

a. Data service software for downtown events; continued (BID) - Alex Binanti summarized that we were waiting to hear from the city attorney on this and to setup a meeting sometime on a Tuesday/Wednesday between 2-4pm before next meeting. Continued to next meeting.

b. Venetian Fest (Lake Geneva Jaycees) – Howell, Pirzada and Waspi spoke about their hesitations with the grant paying for the fireworks in the itemized budget. Discussion was around moving the budget to marketing instead of the fireworks. Waspi made a motion to support a not to exceed \$40,000 grant with the following changes – add line items for printed materials, banners, social media marketing; also a requirement to use the lake Geneva tourism logo and to include a link to lakegenevahotels.org and/or QR code on all marketing materials. Second by Pirzada. There was clarity made around a little grace on the actual budget line items as long as the overall stays within the statute. Resubmit page 45 if there are more items in July. Unanimously approved.

Waspi moved to amend the agenda to move item #4 to now.

4. Election of Tourism Commission officers:

Ken moved to nominate Waspi as chairperson– Pirzada second – unanimously approved.

Ken moved to nominate Alderman Fesenmaier as secretary – Pirzada second – unanimously approved.

11. Final event evaluations from organizations receiving tourism grants

a. Wee Whiskey Fest – Waspi spoke about a positive first year. Reservations discussed regarding all of the events next year be in the city limits (2023 large dinner was at The Ridge). Consensus is that it was a positive.

b. Cheese Fest – Pirzada voiced public “secondhand” opinions that she had heard it was not exactly what was advertised as a true cheese festival. No members were at the event so we could not verify. Cheese Fest underperformed based on attendance, but due diligence needs to be done on the quality of the performance of the festival.

c. The Balloon Adventure – Stoodley voiced that she volunteered and said the event was well executed. FOX 6 appeared for PR. There are questions around the location of the event and the partnering better of the hotels/lodging downtown.

d. Veterans’ Park Ball Diamonds – All agreed this was a “Home Run” as heads in beds is definitely a byproduct of this.

12. Discussion/Action concerning possible revisions to tourism grant application webpage – Changes to the grant were discussed. Migut brought up that maybe we should list resources for providing data around overnight stays, who/where/demographics of people coming and what is legally covered to be able to apply for from the statute (1,2,3). Pirzada brought up that we could make the actual application (part 1 and 2) as a simple form instead of the whole packet. Continued until next meeting.

13. Discussion/Action regarding Tourism Commission related forms / paperwork / grant procedures review

- Waspi discussed that he would like to make this a standing/reoccurring item as this is a topic discussed frequently. Discussion occurred around P&L having to be provided. Deanna Godwin brought up that the financials were already required– Waspi made a motion to eliminate item #4 from the application in its entirety. Howell second. Unanimously approved.

14. Future Agenda Items (next meeting date: Monday, July 8, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.) 15.

Adjournment

-Placer ai discussion

-Tourism Grant Applications

-Link for Tourism Commission to be placed on city website

Woodley motions to adjourn. Pirzada second. Unanimously approved.