

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, December 9, 2024
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair Waspi at 4:04 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Alder Fesenmaier, *Alder Stoodley (temporarily replacing Alder Howell), Troy Migut (via cell phone), Stephanie Klett (Ex-Off)

Absent: Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Mayor Krause (Ex-Off), Comptroller Pisarsik (Ex-Off)

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

None.

Approval of the Tourism Commission minutes from November 11, 2024. Motion by Stoodley, second by Waspi, to approve the minutes from October 14, 2024. Unanimously carried.

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

Jones reviewed the data in her monthly report. December 15 will kick off the holiday engagement season. The new Tourism website www.lakegenevahotels.org is showing good data already. Trends will be identified in the future.

Independent Contractor Agreement for the Lake Geneva Cooperative Convention Center Special Events Coordinator

No action needed. Final contract had never been placed in the packet for public view.

Update from Tourism Entity, Visit Lake Geneva

This year's parade set record attendance at an estimate by Lake Geneva Police Department (drones) at 20,000 with almost 100 floats. Goodwin cautioned that creations of copycat or fake event pages continue to pose challenges.

Winterfest is now sponsored by Visit Lake Geneva. The Ice Sculpture Walk continues to be popular with the use of Tourism grant funds. A new/returning event is Human Dog Sled Races on Riviera Beach. Registration opens in January for two teams. Deanna encouraged the Commissioners to form a team of 6 for the competition.

Their TikTok added over 500 new followers. The video of Barrel Dining at Magpie's had over 24,000 views (typically in the thousands).

Visit Lake Geneva's Bundle Up Campaign continues through the end of December 2024.

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

Binanti started her report by explaining that this year's Oktoberfest saw 47,000 visitors for the total weekend (using the new Placer.ai program).

BID is now an official Main Street Community.

The Fall Wine Walk was a huge success with tickets sold out (550) and with 24 downtown businesses participating. The annual Tree Lighting in Flat Iron Park still has a large crowd despite the wind and cold temperatures. Many more lighted decorations were added.

The Murals in Motion program will continue into 2025. BID Expansion Informational Sessions will be held in January regarding changing/increasing the BID boundary.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

Balance Sheet from September 30, 2024

Total Assets - \$1,322,848.99

Restricted Fund Balance - \$907,882.50

Discussion/Action on Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests:

Downtown Lake Geneva Ice Sculpture Walk – Visit Lake Geneva

The 6th Annual Ice Sculpture Walk brings a boost to downtown businesses as a complement to the Winterfest Competition and activities. Motion by Waspi, second by Stoodley, to award \$17,560. Unanimously carried.

World's Tallest Glass Tree – Mackglass Community, dba World's Tallest Glass Tree

The grant was approved on November 11 contingent upon submission of a detailed marketing budget. Rob Elliott was not present, and no new budget was included in the December packet. Item will be placed on January agenda with the updated marketing budget details.

Final Event Evaluations from organizations receiving Tourism Grants –

Lake Geneva Beer & Spirits Festival -Nei-Turner Group, Inc.

Commissioners were pleased to be able to review the Event Final Evaluation. This evaluation included paid invoices and the breakdown of data (attendance, etc.) from the event and could be used as a model for other grant recipients. Future evaluations will include Placer.ai data in a report from BID Executive Director Binanti.

Discussion/Act concerning revisions to the Tourism Grant application.

The most updated copy appears to be in the December packet with all the changes requested. Motion by Waspi, second by Stoodley, to approve the Tourism Grant application as modified. Unanimously carried.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –

- World's Tallest Glass Tree – marketing budget details

- City of Lake Geneva Grant for roll up doors at Riviera Beach
- Check on BID invoices.
- Always include date for Future Meeting (see previous agendas)

Monday, January 13, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Motion by Fesenmaier, second by Stoodley, to adjourn at 5:24 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary