

TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, January 13, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

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

Roll Call

Present: Chair Brian Waspi, Vice Chair Zakia Pirzada, Alderman Fesenmaier, Alderman Stoodley, Troy Migut; Stephanie Klett (Ex-Off, arrived at 4:33 p.m.), Mayor Klein (Ex-Off)
Absent: Comptroller Laura Pisarcik (Ex-Off).

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

Approval of Tourism Commission minutes from December 9, 2024

Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, to approve the minutes from December 9, 2024.

Unanimously carried.

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

Jones reviewed her monthly report included in the packet. We are on-pace for Riviera bookings. The social media campaign runs from mid-December through mid-March which will help with future bookings. The wedding expo is being held this weekend, January 18.

Update from Tourism Entity – Visit Lake Geneva

Deanna Goodwin was happy to announce there will be 15 teams, invited back from past winners, for the 30th anniversary of Winterfest from January 29 through February 2. Visit Lake Geneva now has sole proprietary of the event. Human Dog Sled teams of six members will be able to sign up soon through their website. The Sculpture Walk will include 36 to 38 businesses (still finalizing list).

The year-end website visits topped out at almost 1.7 million with over 5 million page views. Due to media presence Lake Geneva has become a premiere **year-round** destination.

Earned media:

<https://seattlemedium.com/winter-travel-spots-family/>

<https://www.worldatlas.com/cities/8-of-the-most-captivating-small-towns-in-wisconsin.html>

<https://www.tmj4.com/news/walworth-county/dungeons-and-dragons-50th-anniversary-how-lake-geneva-changed-the-fantasy-world>

Deanna pointed out that the hotel activity data is from October because the November data had glitches that need review.

Visit reps will attend an international convention show in Chicago for the first time.

Update from Lake Geneva Business Improvement District (BID) –

Stephanie Klett joined the meeting.

BID Director Binanti let the Commissioners know that the Main Street Resource Team will be doing a site visit in February. Invitations will be sent to different stakeholders.

Alex will create a composite annual report from Placer.ai for 2024 and will then provide reports for each event in 2025.

Written financial update provided by City Comptroller

No information was included in the packet. October payment to Visit Lake Geneva not received.

Tourism Promotional Grant Program and Requests

Fall 2025 and Winter 2026 Promo, The Riviera Ballroom – Heather Jones, Riviera Event

Coordinator Heather explained the grant that has been received the past few years. It will include a 25% off deal for the Riviera booking with the confirmed booking of rooms at City hotels. There will be a limit of 10 offers. Heather will return if necessary if all 10 are booked. Motion by Waspi, second by Pirzada, for a grant Not to Exceed \$10,000. Unanimously carried.

2024 World's Tallest Glass Tree – updated application

The packet included an updated application reflecting a more detailed/specific budget for public transparency.

Final Grant Evaluations from organizations receiving Tourism Grant

Oktoberfest - The evaluation included in the packet is outstanding and the success of the event shows in the documentation. BID Director Binanti pulled data from Placer.ai which showed 47,000 visitors to downtown Lake Geneva during the weekend of the event. There were 211 people tracked to hotels after their time at Oktoberfest.

Tourism Commission related forms, paperwork, and grant procedures review

Commissioners recommended keeping this item as a standing item on the agenda each month.

Future meeting agenda items and next meeting date –

Monday, February 10 at 4:00 PM

Motion by Waspi, second by Migut, to adjourn at 5:00 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Alderman Fesenmaier, Secretary