



Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 11, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm with a quorum consisting of Belschner, Famularo, Hammer, and Walcott. Staff liaison Bennett was also present.

Notice of Open Meeting

Bennett confirmed the meeting was properly noticed.

Approval of Agenda

Hammer motioned to approve the agenda with a second by Famularo. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

1. Consider and take action to approve the minutes from June 30, 2025

Famularo motioned to approve the June 30, 2025 minutes as presented with a second by Hammer. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance for comments. No correspondence was received.

New Business

2. Consider and take action regarding continuation of creating flyers and distributing them at events

Bennett and Belschner presented the distribution of the joint Tourism - Redbud Players flyer. The Redbud Players had handed out around 3,000 during the 4th of July along with about 800 distributed at National Night Out. They had given out some flyers to cast members. Discussion involved redistributing left over flyers. The Redbud Players and the City will continue to hand them out.

The Tourism Commission discussed creating a smaller version tourism flyer highlighting major 2026 events that could be distributed during the Holiday Train. Belschner motioned to continue the discussion at the next meeting with a second by Famularo. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion regarding the project to create and distribute a tourism insert for historic tour booklets

Bennett reported meeting with the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (HLPC) to seek a partnership for creating and distributing tourism marketing materials with the historic tour booklets. The tourism inserts and booklets would be distributed for free to local lodging, attractions, and businesses willing to display them. Bennett and Hammer stated that HLPC would agree to the partnership. Staff would draft an insert that both HLPC and Tourism Commission could approve.

Famularo motioned to move forward with creating a draft tourism insert for the HLPC tour booklets with a second by Belschner. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Consider and take action to make recommendations for the 2026 Tourism budget

Bennett presented the proposed 2026 Tourism budget. The 2026 proposal errs on the side of caution with proposed revenue and anticipates carrying over \$20,000 to put towards digital signage. Bennett highlighted several expenses that will remain the same as 2025 or adjusted to better reflect actual costs. The Tourism Commission wanted to increase the Special Events line item, but staying within the proposed revenues would make that challenging. Staff would like to increase it when appropriate. The overall proposed 2026 Tourism budget would be \$53,750.

Famularo motioned to forward the proposed 2026 Tourism budget to the City Administrator for approval with second by Belschner. Roll call vote: Belschner - aye, Famularo - aye, Walcott - aye, Hammer - aye. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Consider and take action to continue support of the City's digital signage project

Bennett updated the Tourism Commission that the digital signage project would most likely be expanded to include a digital downtown sign that replaces the current library info sign along with adding corridor signage that duplicate the one by Kwik Trip. The digital signs would be connected with the downtown sign. The expanded project would involve the Public Spaces Committee, the City's Community Services Team, and possibly the Chamber of Commerce and local civic groups. Bennett would apply for a Columbus Area Endowment Grant to assist in funding the project.

Discussion highlighted challenges to the portion of the project that involves distributing digital signage at parks. The main challenge would be the lack of WIFI in order to keep them updated. Discussion involved the possibility of improving City WIFI in parks or even have a city-wide WIFI program.

The Tourism Commission directed staff to follow up with the project and would like to get the ball rolling in 2025.

Adjourn

Famularo motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second by Hammer. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51pm.

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.

** These minutes will be approved at a future meeting and may be amended. These minutes are respectfully submitted by David Bennett, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator **