



## Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 07, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm by Walcott

A quorum of Tourism Commission members present was Belschner, Famularo, Hammer, Roelke, Walcott, and Walker. Staff liaison Bennett was present.

Bennett stated the meeting was properly noticed

Hammer motions to approve the October 7th agenda with amending it to move the September financial update before unfinished business. Famularo seconds. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

Famularo motions to approve the minutes as written for the meeting of September 9, 2024. Roelke seconds. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

1. Approve Minutes from September 9, 2024

### Public Comment

There was no one from the public to comment and no correspondence was received.

### Staff Reports

Bennett informed the Tourism Commission that there were no new room tax revenues to report.

September expenditures include \$143.76 for Google Ads that will be taken from the marketing / advertising line item. Walcott asked if there were any expenditures from the special events line item. Bennett stated that there hasn't been any. Famularo would like to see if it's possible to move funds from one line item to another in order to potentially fund all asks of the room tax funding.

### Unfinished Business

2. No representative from the Columbus Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (CHLPC) were present to give a final report regarding its room tax funding request. Bennett provided a copy of their final report along with a few photos from the events, concert agreements, and marketing receipts. Roelke motioned to table any action until the representative appears in person at the November meeting and brings additional data. Famularo seconds. Motion carries unanimously.
3. Bennett recapped the previous application attempt at the September meeting. Belschner presented the updated application on behalf of the Redbud Players. The new request is for \$800 by the Players. Roelke questioned the new application did not include a breakdown of expenses. Belschner said the cost was for signs, flyers, and ads as listed. Roelke asked if these events brought large crowds to town. Belschner responded that they bring 350 - 400 people with most being relatives to the production crew and a few out of state guests. Walker asked if the request can be modified or rejected during the final report. The Commission agreed it could be.  
  
Roelke motioned to approve \$500 pending final report presentation but was amended to \$800. Famularo seconds. Motion carries with 5 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstain.
4. Bennett updated the Tourism Commission with news that the carryover amount has been amended to \$23,903.92 from the \$30,000 requested. The remainder of the budget has been unchanged. Belschner liked the increase in special events line item for more events and bigger

events. Walcott asked if there were grants for hiking and biking trails. There was comment about partnering with other groups for joint effort marketing as well.

### **New Business**

5. There was no representative to present the application and answer questions on behalf of the Columbus, WI Area Chamber of Commerce. Bennett shared the Chamber's application for \$1,225 for their Wine Walk event to offset trolley cost. Famularo motioned to approve the \$1,200 pending final report and the ability to move some unused marketing / advertising line-item funds to cover additional grant applications. Walker seconds. Discussion revolved around disapproval of no representative to present and debate of the definition of operating expenses. Walcott had concern for funding a trolley and would like to see proof of insurance. The motion fails with 0 ayes, 5 nays, and 1 abstain. No other motions were made.
6. Bennett presented a recap of previous discussions involving potentially updating guidelines for room tax funding. Bennett gave some possible updates to the guidelines. Discussion showed concern of being too broad overall and easily leading to inconsistency. Famularo would like to start a new set of guidelines and processes. Walcott reiterated that it should bring in data and event photos. Roelke motions to start a new application exempting 2024 applications. Famularo seconds. Motion passes unanimously. Famularo will email Bennett with Watertown's tourism information.

Roelke motions to adjourn the meeting. Belschner seconds. Motion passes unanimously. Meeting is adjourned at 7:52pm.

**\*\*These minutes will be reviewed and approved and amended as necessary at the next Tourism Commission meeting. These minutes are respectfully submitted by David Bennett, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator**

**\*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.**