



Tourism Commission Meeting Agenda

Monday, April 06, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

Notice of Open Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

1. Consider and take action to approve the Tourism meeting minutes from March 2, 2026

Public Comment

New Business

2. Consider and take action regarding the 2026 tourism grant applications

Adjourn

*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.



Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 02, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31pm. A quorum included Hammer, Famularo, Roelke, Walcott, and Walker were present. Staff liaison Bennett was also present.

Notice of Open Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Hammer motioned to approve the meeting agenda as presented for March 2, 2026. Roelke seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes

1. Consider and take action to approve the Tourism meeting minutes from February 2, 2026

Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance for comment. Bennett did not receive any correspondence.

New Business

2. Discuss and possibly take action regarding the designation of a tourism entity

Bennett presented additional information regarding how other communities that collect room taxes have complied with the 2015-17 updates to Wisconsin's room tax law. Discussion involved identifying possible partnerships and obtaining interest and additional information. There were concerns about accountability regarding contracting with a tourism entity that should be addressed any contract language. Additional discussion involved reaching out to other nearby communities about a prospective joint tourism effort and collaboration.

Staff will get more information from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism and try to see if a representative could meet with the Tourism Commission via Zoom or in-person.

3. Consider and take possible action regarding tourism marketing activities

Bennett recapped current marketing efforts. Discussion included doing more legwork to obtain visitor information as Placer.ai is overly expensive to obtain. There was interest in pursuing tourism and beautification grants if available to assist with marketing efforts.

Bennett gave a budget update and highlighted that most of the marketing funds in 2026 are tied up and any new marketing efforts would have to replace an existing effort. The Holiday Train had earned media from Good Karma Brands' Daily Dodge coverage. There was discussion for trolleys to shuttle visitors for the Holiday Train.

4. Discuss and possibly take action regarding assisting with the Redbud Days event

The Tourism Commission discussed possibly assisting the Redbud Days event. It was noted that the Chamber already had its event plans lined up with hosting the Redbud Prince and Princess Pageant and having a redbud tree giveaway. Planning for 2027 or 2028, the Tourism Commission

discussed having the pageant at Fireman's Park along with the Food Truck festival and focus on one day of events. There could be potential for live music.

Additional discussion revolved around promoting the event along with other community events. Bulk mailers were seen as an option and could be explored.

Adjourn

The next meeting will take place Monday, April 6, 2026, in the 2nd Ward meeting room in City Hall.

Famularo motioned to adjourn the meeting. Walker seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:46pm.

*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 **



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: April 6, 2026

Item Title: Consider and take action regarding the 2026 tourism grant applications

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

Staff have received X applications for the 2026 tourism grant. The Tourism Commission has \$10,000 to allocate toward tourism events, marketing, and development that can be applied for. There was a total of \$14,373.12 requested, and staff recommends the following amounts to be awarded:

- \$850 to Wyverns Trove – Quilt Show & Workshop
- \$450 to Wyverns Trove – Summer Arts & Crafts Event
- \$2,500 to Wyverns Trove – Facility Improvement – A/C
- \$947.80 to Recreation Department – Tables and Carts
- \$150 to Public Library – Mark Moran Event
- \$2,500 to Redbud Players – Fall Production
- \$2,000 to Columbus Chamber Choir – 2026 Concerts
- \$300 to Chamber of Commerce – Redbud Days

These amounts total to \$9,697.80 and will allow the Special Events line item to be \$302.20 under budget to either roll over at the end of the year or be spent on Tourism supporting another event.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

- Applications for the 2026 Tourism Grant

Action Requested of the Committee:

Review and approve tourism grant applications in the amounts recommended.

Strategic Plan Objective(s):



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Barbera Oelke

Organization Name: Wyvern's Trove

Applying for: Total of \$833.33 in Event Funding to help offset cost of the 2026 Quilt Show and Workshop.

Use of Funds: Wyverns Trove will spend around \$2,500 this year's Quilt Show and Workshop for additional crafting tools and materials (\$1,500), shelving/storage (\$400), and advertising (\$600).

We want to improve on our annual Quilt Show, Sale, and Workshop. The new poles for displaying quilts last year were very popular and we hope to expand the quilt workshop as well as the length of the "show" part of the event to four days, which should encourage more participants to stay in town, by offering more activities suitable for beginners, including basic embellishment (in the form of more, different National Quilt Project blocks and beginner quilting techniques classes, prior to the intermediate quilt workshop).

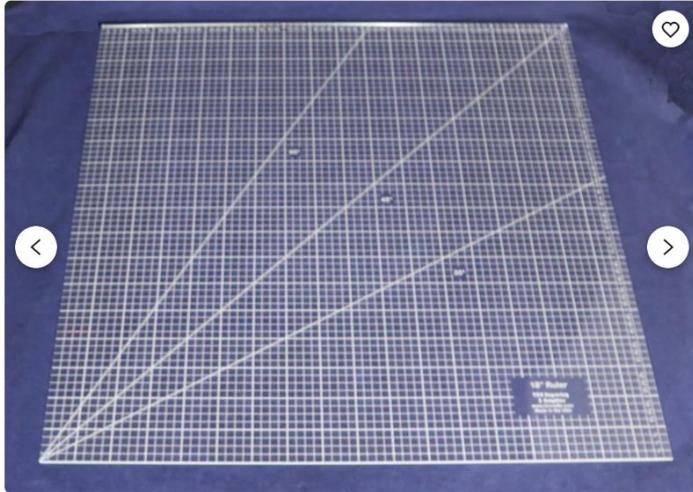
More attendees require more tools as well as fabric kits and other craft materials. In addition, we plan on wider, targeted advertising, mostly in the form of sponsorships at quilting events around the state and mailings to quilt groups around the state and in neighboring states.

Supporting Materials:

- Pricing and display of planned purchases of materials/tools and storage
- Analytics from previous event
- Photos from previous event



Crafting Items



Only 1 left and in 1 cart

\$59.99

18 Inch Square Ruler. Acrylic 1/8 Inch Thick.
Quilting/Sewing/Embroidery

QuiltingTemplates ★★★★★

- ✓ Arrives soon! Get it by Mar 14, 18 if you order today
- ✓ Returns & exchanges accepted

From \$20/month, or 4 payments at 0% interest with Klarna
[Check purchase power](#)

Add to cart

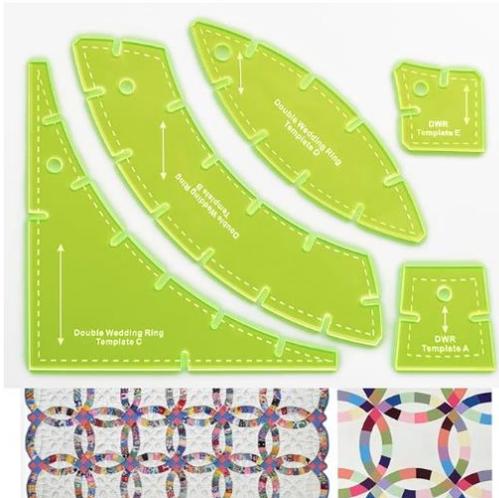
Item details

Highlights

- Supplies for making crafts
- Materials: acrylic

A supply or tool to make things
Made in the USA!

[Report this item to Etsy](#)



Quilting Templates Slit N Sew Double Wedding Ring Set Templates - Acrylic, None

Visit the Anmboor Store

4.5 ★★★★★ (92)

Amazon's Choice

100+ bought in past month

-8% \$21⁹⁹

List Price: \$23.99

Get **Fast, Free Shipping** with Amazon Prime

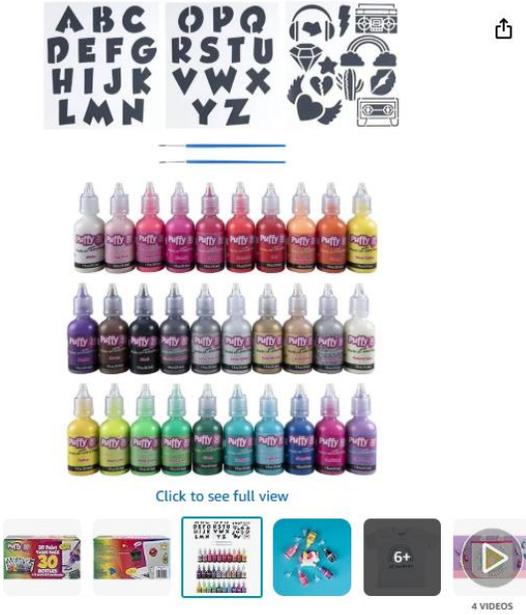
FREE Returns

Brand	Anmboor
Style	Classic
Product Dimensions	10"L x 4"W
Item Weight	5 Ounces
Set Name	Double Wedding Ring Set Templates
Manufacturer	Anmboor
Size	4 inches x 10 inches



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.



Puffy Bulk Buy Paint 30 pack Premium Quality Nontoxic 3D Paint Set. Safe for Kids, Great for School Projects, Permanent on Fabric, Canvas, Wood, Glass, and More Craft Surfaces

Visit the Puffy Store
4.6 ★★★★★ (871)
Amazon's Choice
100+ bought in past month

Lowest price in 30 days
-16% **\$21.99**
Typical price: ~~\$26.39~~

Get Fast, Free Shipping with Amazon Prime
FREE Returns

Available at a lower price from [other sellers](#) that may not offer free Prime shipping.

Size: **30 Count**

24 Count (1 fl oz each) \$17.65 (\$0.74 / fluid ounce) \$20.06	30 Count \$21.99 \$26.39
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------

Brand: Puffy
Color: Rainbow, 30 Color Pack



Uxcell
Uxcell Loose Sequins 5MM Iridescent Sequins for Jewelry Making Crafts Sewing, 15 Colors
★★★★★ (5.0) | 3 ratings

Key item features

- Product Dimensions:** Each sequin measures 5mm/0.19inch in diameter, providing a consistent size for various crafting needs.
- Material Composition:** Crafted from durable PVC, these sequins are designed to be sturdy and resistant to deformation or breakage.
- Vibrant Assortment:** The set includes 15 distinct multicolored iridescent sequins, offering a wide palette for creative projects.
- Versatile Applications:** Ideal for DIY projects such as jewelry making, sewing, scrapbooking, embroidery, and decorating evening wear and costumes.
- Organized Storage:** Sequins are conveniently packaged in a plastic box with 15 separate compartments to prevent mixing and facilitate easy access and storage.
- Creative Enhancement:** The smooth surface and exquisite workmanship of these sequins can elevate ordinary items, adding a shimmering touch to any creation.

\$15.49
Price when purchased online

Free 90-day returns

Add to cart

How you'll get this item:

I want shipping & delivery savings with **Walmart+**
Try 30 days for just \$1! Choose a plan at checkout.

Shipping Arrives tomorrow Order within 3 hr 13 min	Pickup Not available	Delivery Not available
-----------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------------

Cottage Grove, 53527 [Change](#)
Arrives by **Tomorrow**. Order within **3 hr 13 min**

Sold by **Tasharina Corp**
Fulfilled by Walmart
★★★★★ (4.1) 30719 seller reviews



City of Columbus, Wisconsin Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.



In 6 carts

\$34.75

Java Batiks Purple Green Turquoise Blue Batik Jelly Roll
40 2.5 Inch Fabric Strips ST-MASJAB-TUL2

TwistedThreadsFabric **★★★★★**

- ✓ Arrives soon! Get it by **Mar 16, 23** if you order today
- ✓ Exchanges accepted

4 payments of \$8.68 at 0% interest with **Klarna** [Check purchase power](#)

Add to cart

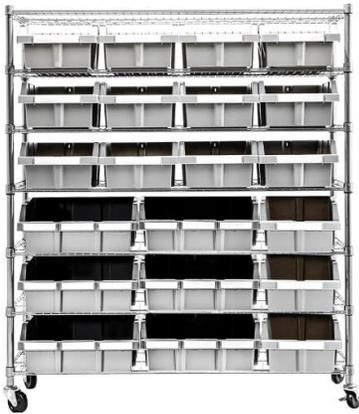


Star Seller. This seller consistently earned 5-star reviews, shipped on time, and replied quickly to any messages they received.

Item details ^

Highlights

- Sourced by **TwistedThreadsFabric**
- Supplies for making crafts
- Size: Yes



Seville Classics Heavy Duty NSF Bin Rack Solid Steel Wire Shelving Storage Unit, Patented Organizer for Garage, Warehouse, Office, Restaurant, Classroom, Kitchen, Gray, Includes 21 Bins

Visit the Seville Classics Store

4.6 **★★★★★** (1,521)

Amazon's Choice

100+ bought in past month

\$289⁹⁹

Get \$50 off instantly. Pay \$239.99 upon approval for Amazon Visa.

Delivery & Support

Select to learn more



Ships from Amazon.com



30-day easy returns



Customer Support

prime

Enjoy fast, free delivery, exclusive deals, and award-winning movies & TV shows.

[Join Prime](#)

\$289⁹⁹

FREE delivery **Thursday, March 19**

Delivering to Sun Prairie 53527 - [Update location](#)

In Stock

Quantity: 1

Add to cart

Buy Now



[Click to see full view](#)



OLFA 45mm Ergonomic Rotary Cutter (RTY-2/DX) - Rotary Fabric Cutter w/Blade Cover & Squeeze Trigger for Quilting, Sewing, Crafts, Replacement Blade: OLFA RB45-1H

Visit the OLFA Store

4.7 **★★★★★** (9,295)

700+ bought in past month

-17% **\$26⁹⁹**

List Price: \$32.99

Get **Fast, Free Shipping** with Amazon Prime

Get \$50 off instantly. Pay \$0.00 upon approval for Amazon Visa.

Available at a lower price from [other sellers](#) that may not offer free Prime shipping.

Brand	OLFA
Item Weight	2.4 ounces
Blade Material	Alloy Steel
Handle Material	Rubber
Manufacturer	World Kitchen

prime

Enjoy fast, free delivery, exclusive deals, and award-winning movies & TV shows.

[Join Prime](#)

\$26⁹⁹

Get **Fast, Free Shipping** with Amazon Prime

FREE delivery **Tuesday, March 17** on orders shipped by Amazon over \$35

Or **Prime members** get FREE delivery **Tomorrow, March 13**. Order within 9 hrs 9 mins. [Join Prime](#)

Delivering to Sun Prairie 53527 - [Update location](#)



Previous Event Analytics

Visitors to the museum included mostly people from out of town including several from Madison, couples and individuals from Mauston, Oshkosh area, Sun Prairie, Two Rivers, Sheboygan, Port Washington and Janesville.

Previous Event Photos





City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.





City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Barbera Oelke

Organization Name: Wyvern's Trove

Applying for: Total of \$466.67 in Event Funding to help offset cost of producing a new summer crafting event with 2026 focused on celebrating the semi quincennial anniversary of the United States.

Use of Funds: Wyverns Trove is creating a new summer crafting event. This year, the theme will be "USA250 Birthday Party". In future years, it will have different themes if it is sufficiently successful. We estimate event cost totaling \$1,400.00 that includes fabric and other craft materials of \$1,000.00 and advertising costs of \$400.00.

Besides free cake and special quilt displays at the museum during the two-day event, we will be hosting a sew-in / paint-in for the National Quilt Project (which kicks off this July and concludes in 2030). We'll have no-sew options such as fabric painting and glue-on beads, etc.

It is easy for kids and adults and the more quilt blocks Columbus generates, the better it acts as publicity for the city. The project will include regional events featuring traveling quilt sections prior to the Washington DC display on the National Mall in 2030. We plan on working with the Public Library, Community Center, and School District to create more Columbus themed squares and can share any leftover craft materials with them or use them for future events on the same theme.

We plan to be a sponsor for the 4th of July book as well as trying other advertising venues. We are in contact with the Wisconsin Historical Society, which is collecting / distributing info on US250 themed events around the state, but we don't yet know if there is a cost. Paper newspapers and sponsorships are the primary costs other than the printing supplies we have left from last year's events.

Supporting Materials:

- None



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Barbera Oelke

Organization Name: Wyvern's Trove

Applying for: Total of \$2,833.33 in Development Funding to help offset cost of acquiring air conditioning to improve the Wyverns Trove event facility to host tourism events.

Use of Funds: Wyverns Trove is planning to spend up to an additional \$8,500 this year to update heating and add air conditioning (AC) to allow for more indoor summer and winter events. Wyverns Trove continues to upgrade its event space and has recently replaced one of its two heaters to allow for indoor winter events. The lower-level heater was replaced this year after it failed on New Years eve and costed \$6,000. Most of the maintenance costs are utilities, but Wyverns Trove budgets around \$5,000 a year for basic maintenance and minor repairs.

The project that we are applying for reimbursement on involves new AC that must go in when the new heater goes in for the upper-level event space. Although the AC is a separate unit outside, they are inline, as they are attached inside the museum. The estimate doesn't break it down. Online listings for just the AC run \$2,500, plus labor, which may be included while replacing the heater. We're getting quotes for the heater and are currently assuming it will be similar in price to the one recently replaced.

Wyverns Trove is working on a summer quilt show that features sewing and painting activities celebrating USA 250 and looking to AC before the July event. Fans and open windows aren't enough when the temperatures are hot and sunshine last for several days in a row. We would have had to cancel last year's September event if the summer heat lasted another couple of days. We might be able to add an August event in future besides being just open more often. No one wants to come inside the museum in July or August without AC, so we only have lower-level meetings.

Supporting Materials:

- None



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Amy Jo Meyers

Organization Name: City of Columbus – Recreation Department

Applying for: Total of \$947.80 to help offset costs to replace worn-out tables and carts to improve guest experience at the Fireman’s Park Pavilion.

Use of Funds: To ensure the Fireman’s Park Pavilion continues to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all guests, we are requesting funding to help us purchase the following:

- **Rectangular Folding Tables (\$1,019.40):** 12 new 8-foot rectangular folding tables at \$84.95 each to replace worn and unstable units.
- **Storage Carts (\$1,824.00):** 3 Replacement carts designed to safely hold and transport tables and chairs, ensuring longevity and ease of setup for events. New at \$608.00 each.

These improvements total \$3,998.75 and will not only enhance the comfort and safety of our visitors but also improve the efficiency of event setup and breakdown, supporting a broader range of community and tourist-focused events at the Pavilion.

The Recreation budget is no longer part of the City’s General Fund. This means that if we spend \$20, we must generate \$30 in revenue to offset that expense. While the total budget for the Pavilion of \$21,600 may seem high, \$13,000 of it is designated solely for cleaning, with the remainder reserved for necessary pavilion maintenance and repairs. Because these costs must be covered entirely by our own revenue, we are requesting support from Tourism to help with extras.

With this grant purchase, it probably makes more sense to investigate adding folding tables. As of right now, the Pavilion has 38 rectangular tables and 22 round tables. Adding six-foot or eight-foot folding tables to replace the old tables would be beneficial as they could easily be stored in both janitors' closets and would not require a cart. Additionally, these folding tables could then easily be rented out from time to time and easily moveable on our end. I would suggest ordering 8-12 folding tables.

Secondly, the pictures don't really highlight the problems with the carts. The carts need to be only for chairs or tables. The carts that do both are not in the best condition as they have far distances to travel and carry too much weight. The casters, metal brackets, and cables have had to be replaced multiple times. With



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

that in mind we could use three table carts with casters that are anchored with four bolts on each one. There probably only needs to be one chair cart ordered.

The Fireman’s Park Pavilion is a key community and tourism venue, hosting events that attract both residents and a significant number of non-resident visitors. Our Fourth of July celebrations, Oddfellows events, and private rentals such as weddings and quinceañeras consistently draw visitors from outside our city, contributing to local tourism and economic activity—what is often referred to as “heads in beds” for nearby accommodations and spending in local businesses.

The pavilion’s current tables, chairs, and carts are worn and in need of replacement, limiting the comfort and overall experience of guests. Upgrading these amenities will enhance visitor satisfaction, support larger events, and continue to drive non-resident attendance, directly benefiting the local economy.

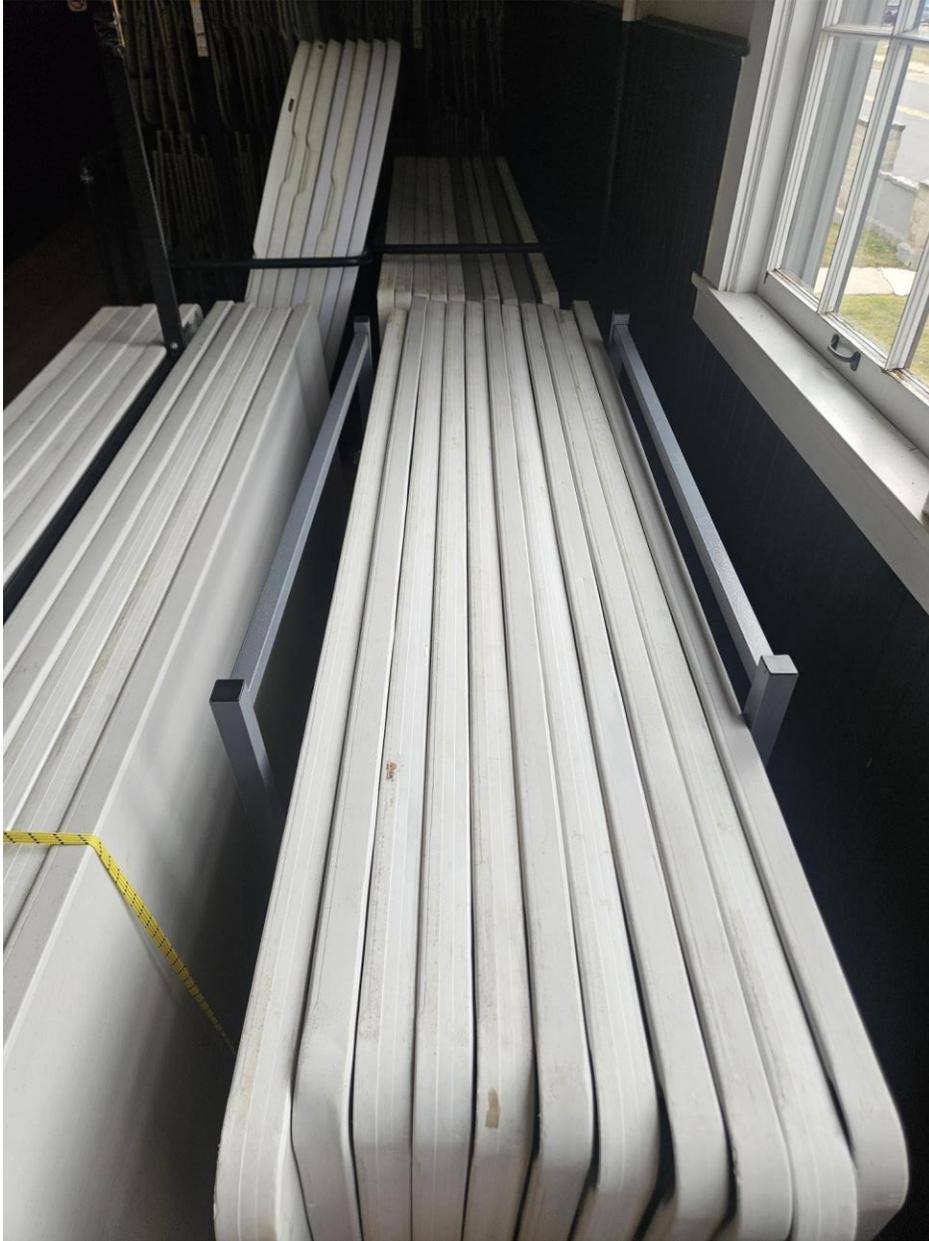
In the past, the Tourism Commission has recognized the importance of these types of improvements and has provided funding for similar enhancements, understanding that investments in event infrastructure help attract visitors and increase regional tourism activity. Replacing the pavilion tables and carts aligns with this mission, ensuring the Pavilion remains a welcoming, attractive, and functional venue for both community and tourist events.

Supporting Materials:

- Photos of current tables and carts
- Display and cost of proposed tables and carts



Current Tables and Carts





City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.





City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.





Proposed Tables and Carts



8 Feet Foldable Table with
Built in Handle & Steel Legs ...

Options: 7 sizes

4.6 ★★★★★ (3.2K)

\$84⁹⁵



[+1 other color/pattern](#)

Sponsored ⓘ

Folding Table 6ft Heavy Duty
Portable Table Indoor...

4.4 ★★★★★ (797)

700+ bought in past month

\$79⁹⁹ List Price: \$89.98



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.



Only
\$609.00/Each
4 interest-free payments of \$152.25 [Apply Now](#) [Credit K](#)

1 [Add to Cart](#)

Earn up to \$18.27 back (1,827 points) with a [Webstaurant Rewards Visa® Credit Card](#)

[Add to Wish List](#)

Usually Ships in **1-2 Business Days** from manufacturer
Lead times vary based on manufacturer stock

Product Overview

- ✓ Durable, black powder-coated steel construction
- ✓ Holds up to 84 folding chairs
- ✓ 4" casters offer easy mobility
- ✓ Space-saving storage and transport solution



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Catherine Brick

Organization Name: Columbus Public Library

Applying for: Total of \$150 in Event Funding to help offset cost of producing a new Library event featuring Mark Moran, an appraiser from Antiques Roadshow.

Use of Funds: The Library will spend \$450 to fund a library program featuring Mark Moran, who is an expert antiques/collectibles appraiser who has published several books on the subject and was an appraiser on the PBS program "Antiques Roadshow" for nine years.

There is a budget for adult programs at the library that covers preparation of the promotional material and its distribution, as well as the \$450 fee that we have contracted for with the presenter. We would use the funds from this grant to supplement the promotional costs, if possible, to broaden the scope of our advertising.

As with many of our adult programs, the purpose of the event is to bring people into the library who may not typically show up at our door. We try to present programs with popular presenters on subject matter that appeals to a wide range of interests. The program with Mr. Moran promises both.

Mark has a long list of items that he will appraise, and items that he will not. When he was here in the past, some people brought large items, and they may or may not have come to Columbus the night before to aid in getting here in a timely manner. (The program runs from 10 AM to 1 PM and is kept to a very strict appointment schedule.) The presenter drives here from his Wisconsin home and does not stay overnight.

In the past, the Friends of the library prepared food for sale at this event, but we no longer do that. Instead, since the event takes place over the noon mealtime and patrons can come and go as they observe the program, we recommend all the nearby eateries to attendees if they want to get some lunch.

We keep data on attendance of all library programs and will for this one. The last time Mr. Moran presented this program here, our attendance was listed as 66. We had a full roster of appraisals, as well as people who just came to observe the live valuations. We keep track of the attendance by means of the pre-registration and a head count (to the best of our ability) during the event itself.

Mark is well-known as a former Antiques Roadshow appraiser. He is also a popular presenter at area libraries, and his events are always well attended wherever he goes.



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

The program will take place on Saturday, May 30, from 10 AM to 1 PM.

The program will be promoted on social media on the library's Facebook page and website. We add articles about our programs to The Commotion. I have asked Kristi to submit an article to the Daily Citizen, which they may or may not choose to publish. Same with WBEV. The program will be listed on the library's digital and print monthly newsletters.

Supporting Materials:

- None



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Julie Belschner

Organization Name: Redbud Players

Applying for: Total of \$6,833.33 in Event Funding to help offset cost of producing a larger theatrical production. The Redbud Players are planning to spend up to \$20,500 for the production.

Use of Funds: We will use the funds to create and promote a large theatrical production by the Redbud Players. This year's play will be bigger and better. In the past we've had numerous people attend from out of town, staying overnight - including at the local hotel and other rental units, as well as buying gas, food, etc. We will be promoting it to a large area of southern Wisconsin as well as to friends and family of participants, regardless of location. We will be buying ads in print publications plus promoting heavily in social media. We'll be doing a digital campaign plus more. We will have concessions and raffle baskets. There will be at least six performances.

Estimated costs:

Cost of yard signs for fall production 2026 - \$1,600

Cost of flyers for fall production 2026 - \$1,200

Advertising - \$6,000

Scripts, etc. - \$2,500

Set construction, etc. - \$3,000

Needed supplies - \$2,500

Concessions - \$1,500

Costumes, etc. - \$1,200

Misc. - \$2,000

Total - \$20,500

Supporting Materials:

- Previous event analytics
- Previous event photo



Previous Production Analytics

- Total Paid Attendance: 554
- Where Attendees Came From:
 - Local (Columbus, Watertown, Sun Prairie, Beaver Dam, Lake Mills, Lodi, Fall River, Lowell, Rio, Marshall, Waterloo, Hustisford)
 - State (Waupun, Two-Rivers, Fort Atkinson, Berlin, Stoughton, Menomonee Falls)
 - Out-of-State Visitors (Virginia, Illinois, New York, Kansas, Washington, Oregon, Minnesota, Iowa, North Carolina, Missouri, Nevada, Georgia, Utah, Michigan, North Dakota)
- Overnight Visitors: 13
- Economic Impact: 39

Previous Performance Photo





City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Katie Nichols

Organization Name: Columbus Chamber Choir

Applying for: Total of \$2,008.66 in Event Funding to help offset cost of producing and marketing concerts. The Columbus Chamber Choir are planning to spend up to \$6,026.00 for the production.

Use of Funds: The Columbus Chamber Choir is a mid-sized choral ensemble dedicated to the celebration of varied cultural, sacred, religious, spiritual and community musical traditions through the presentation of works from a variety of genres that are composed by music-makers associated with a host of unique and popular styles. We have been performing together since the spring of 2023, and each year we present Columbus with one winter and one spring concert at a local venue. We are a volunteer directed and managed choir, comprised of a dedicated group of volunteer singers. Our concerts have remained free to the public since we began performing, in the spirit of generosity and community. Our main funding sources include donations and sponsorships from local businesses.

Our concerts garner 150 - 200 audience members, drawing local and out of town guests to watch us perform. We invite special guest musicians to enhance the concert-goer experience and broaden our reach. These area acts have included the Portage-based Candlelight Ladies, the Madison Brass Quintet, and Vox string quartet. Their contributions bring unique cultural experiences to Columbus and attract concert goers from out of town to our city.

If awarded, room tax funds would help us fund and promote our local concerts. In order to gauge the impact of these events, we will develop a short concert goer survey to gather information on out-of-town visits generated and the economic impact for businesses that provide services other than lodging. Our expenses for these events include:

Estimated costs: \$6,026 TOTAL

- \$590 for Music
- \$1,400 for Pianist
- \$590 for Uniforms
- \$500 for Guest Musicians
- \$1,000 for Venue
- \$1,000 for Promotion / Marketing
- \$600 for Refreshments
- \$21 for Program Printing
- \$325 for Sound / Lighting



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Item #2.

Our concerts not only draw visitors from out of town, but they also provide opportunities for people in our community to take in a unique cultural experience, right here in Columbus. Through sponsorship of our concerts, local businesses can take advantage of much needed promotional opportunities by getting their business name and/or services out to potential customers.

Through serving as a venue, various community sites and businesses also enjoy promotion. For example, our 2025 winter concert took place at the Fireman's Park Pavilion. It was very well attended and gave our community a reason to enjoy this historic community asset. Our upcoming spring concert will take place at the newly revamped Columbus High School, providing an opportunity for the public to inhabit a new community asset. Columbus Chamber Choir also performs outside of Columbus, promoting our community as a place where the arts are valued and thriving. We were recently honored as guests of the Candlelight Ladies in Portage and of Oakwood Village in Madison.

Room tax funding will help the Columbus Chamber Choir continue to grow in reach. Additional funds for concert development and promotion will allow us to advertise more broadly, pulling in more out of town visitors to see what Columbus has to offer, and more local community members to feel engagement and pride in their hometown.

Supporting Materials:

- None



City of Columbus, Wisconsin
Tourism – Room Tax Fund Reimbursement Grant Application

Item #2.

Applicant Name: Patti Walker

Organization Name: Columbus WI Area Chamber of Commerce

Applying for: Total of \$300 in Marketing Funding to help offset cost of promoting Redbud Days.

Use of Funds: The reimbursed funds will be used to pay for marketing of the Redbud Days activities, including print and digital marketing and signage.

The Chamber plans to spend \$1,000 on marketing in the Shopping Reminder, Badgerland Values Dodge County publication, and digitally on wiscnews.com and Madison.com. Additional marketing will be done via the Chamber website and Facebook pages along with community partners.

Redbud Days has been a longstanding tradition in the Columbus community, with events centered around the city's tree, the Redbud. This year the event is being held the same weekend as the citywide garage sales and the OddFellows food truck festival.

The chamber's goal is to provide additional options for travelers including Pie & Ice Cream Social and a vendor fair. Additional conversations are in progress regarding a food stand by the local scouts and a new attraction: The Budding Artists Open Jam - for new and upcoming local artists to share their talents in a friendly forum.

The Open Jam will take place in the Columbus City Hall courtyard by the new mural, providing a beautiful backdrop for the artists.

Supporting Materials:

- None