

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes February 13, 2025

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall: Conrad Talaga, Cheryl Mitchell, Courtney Krause and Melissa Lampe
Also present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bonnie Hertel and Tourism Director Robin Kaufmann, John Luetzow representing Rock River Disc Golf, Margaret Jaberg, owner of Rock Point Airbnb.

1. The meeting was called to order by Conrad Talaga at 8:05 a.m.
2. Review & Approve January Minutes. Motion to approve the minutes made by Melissa Lampe and seconded by Courtney Krause. The Commission voted to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the January financials was made by Melissa Lampe and seconded by Courtney Krause. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
 - b. Review and take possible action on marketing plans:
 1. Visitor Guides: The Tourism Director is editing the community pages, and the publication will soon be heading to print.
 2. Add opportunities: Nothing new to report.
 - c. Review and take action on mural restoration projects – Robin mentioned there will be a grant presented to the commission in the coming months for a new mural and a revived ghost sign in the East 100 block alleyway. The improvements are being led by Leadership Watertown.
 - c. Discuss Hotel stay updates: January final STAR reports are delayed and therefore the occupancy noted is estimated. December occupancy was flat from last year. The local hotel competitive set was approximately 30%, which is a decrease from last year. February occupancy is expected to be less than in 2024.
4. New Business
 - a. Review and take possible action on Midwest Masters and Rock River Disc Golf grants:

Usage of the disc golf course takes place year-round weather permitting.

The \$1000 grant they are seeking is for the Midwest Masters over 40 event scheduled for Memorial Day weekend. This is traditionally not a weekend at full occupancy so additional room nights are welcomed. There are approximately 100 entrants and some of the entrants will stay overnight. It has been noted for past year's events that entrants/officials have stayed in Johnson Creek hotels for what they believe is a lesser rate. The Commission believes that guest rooms for the event should be directed to book at Watertown hotels in order to provide grant money for the event. John can work with area hotels to help create and advertise group rates that can compete with Johnson Creek hotels. John will make contact with hotels to coordinate room blocks and can present the grant again once rooms are established.

The Rock River Disc Club is requesting a grant of \$2000 to help purchase 9 new baskets for the course. Additional baskets allow the players to play an alternate course, experience less traffic issues, and improve the maintenance of the course. Melissa Lampe made a motion to approve \$2000 towards the purchase of 9 new baskets. Courtney Krause seconded the motion. The commission voted to approve the funds.
 - b. Review and take possible action on Watertown Jig Jog 5K sponsorship request. The 5K race is scheduled for March 15th. In the past, the Commission has voted to approve a grant of \$250. Melissa made a motion to approve \$250 and Conrad Talaga seconded the motion. The Commission voted to approve the funds.

- c. Discuss and take possible action on Main Street grand reopening opportunities. Robin would like the commission to consider a way that Tourism could contribute to a grand reopening of Main Street once the bridge reconstruction is completed. She mentioned that it wouldn't be prudent to close the street for a large event, but would still like to see a crowd-drawing event for people to visit downtown for the occasion. The topic will be revisited in April.
- d. Review Manager's report of previous month's task – report attached.
- e. Commission members' report.
Discuss past and upcoming events; February 14 there is a synchro skating event in Beaver Dam which will impact Watertown hotels. Luther Prep's annual youth basketball tournament will impact area hotels on Thursday March 6 and Friday March 7th.
Watertown Players musical on March 7-9. Main Street Morning Mixer March 9th.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:59am was made by Conrad Talaga and seconded by Melissa Lampe.

Agenda items:

A reminder from Robin to have all requests for additions to the next meeting's agenda to her by Tuesday, the week before the meeting.

The next meeting will be at 8 am on March 13, 2025, via Zoom or you may attend in person at Watertown City Hall

Submitted by,
Cheryl Mitchell, Secretary

Manager's Report – January 2025

Social Media Report

Facebook: 120 new followers (Post reach 339,271)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 1341 Users – 2661 views

Instagram: 1151 followers

- ☐ Regularly posted to social media (Watertown Tourism, Riverfest)
- ☐ Represented Tourism at Wake-up Watertown
- ☐ Attended Chamber marketing meeting
- ☐ Attended Town Square Committee meeting
- ☐ Attended Watertown Riverfest meeting
- ☐ Submitted content and proofed first edit of 2025 Visitor Guide
- ☐ Coordinated prizes and winner announcements for Watertown Window Wonderland
- ☐ Attended multi-Chamber network breakfast
- ☐ Updated event dates on visitwatertownwi.com
- ☐ Attended Leadership Watertown class
- ☐ Visited businesses/events to take photos for future promos:
- ☐ Watertown Public Library Talk, Read, Play Center
- ☐ Maria's Mexican Restaurant