

## Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes December 12, 2024

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall: Conrad Talaga, Cheryl Mitchell, Courtney Krause, Melissa Lampe  
Also present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bonnie Hertel and Tourism Director Robin Kaufman

1. The meeting was called to order by Conrad Talaga at 8:00 a.m.
2. Review & Approve November Minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Courtney Krause and seconded by Conrad Talaga. The Commission voted to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
  - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the November financials was made by Conrad Talaga and seconded by Melissa Lampe. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
  - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
    1. Visitor Guides – Nothing new to report
    2. Ad opportunities – No new updates
  - c. Review and take action on mural restoration projects – Leadership Watertown will have two mural projects. One is to assist with the restoration of the ghost mural on the Bismark Bar & Grill building and the second is to create a mural on the building in the alley 1 block south of Main Street. Both murals are located in the alley of the 100 block of East Main Street.
  - d. Discuss Hotel stay updates: Final October occupancy nationally 67%, Wisconsin South 57.6%, local hotel competitive set 52.3%. November approximate occupancy nationally 59.34%, local competitive set 33.4%. December 13 & 14 are expected to be near full occupancy due to the High School Dance competition and a wedding. The rest of December's occupancy will be dependent on the weather conditions.
  - e. Discuss and take action on lodging establishments not complying with room tax requirements. Lodging establishments are required to obtain authorization from the Health Department before being open to rent to the public. The Health Department informs the City Clerk when a lodging establishment requests authorization to operate. The Tourism Commission would like to have a Watertown Health Department representative and a Finance Department representative at an upcoming meeting to provide their perspective in handling non-compliant lodging establishments to better understand what the Tourism Commission's role should be.
4. New Business
  - a. Discuss and take action on economic impact reporting. The Tourism Director is researching methods to measure the impact that tourism efforts have on the community so we can best direct our resources and show progress to interested parties. Graphs showing money spent and received, reports on cell phone data which must be purchased from a vendor, and reports from Wisconsin State Tourism which must also be purchased are a few of the ideas at present.
  - b. Review Manager's report of previous month's task – report attached.
  - c. Commission members' report - Jingle Bell on the Rock at Bentzien Town Square took place on 12/7 and the CP Rail Christmas train stopped in Watertown on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Many downtown businesses are participating in Watertown Window Wonderland. A dance competition will be held at the High School the weekend of December 13<sup>th</sup>. The Watertown school district and the City of Watertown are putting together items for students including but not limited to new/used clothing, winter gear, food, essentials, gifts, wrapping paper and more. The event is called Stuff the Bus and donations are welcome.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:54am was made by Conrad Talaga and seconded by Courtney Krause.

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 7:45am January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, via Zoom or you may attend in person at Watertown City Hall

NOTE: These minutes are uncorrected, and any corrections made thereto will be noted in the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.

Submitted by,  
Cheryl Mitchell, Secretary

Manager's Report – November

Social Media Report

Facebook: 65 new followers (Post reach 106,913)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 1547 Users – 3067 views

Instagram: 1135 followers

- ☐ Regularly posted to social media (Watertown Tourism, Riverfest)
- ☐ Represented Tourism at Wake up Watertown.
- ☐ Attended Main Street Promotions Committee meeting
- ☐ Volunteered for Women's Only Weekend
- ☐ Created voting form for Watertown Window Wonderland, recruited participants
- ☐ Updated event dates on visitwatertownwi.com
- ☐ Met with EPA's Office of Brownfield and Land Revitalization to take part in a Rock River district economic impact analysis
- ☐ Continued work on Dodge County Tourism rebrand w/State Tourism
- ☐ Continued planning Jingle Bell on the Rock in partnership with Watertown Main Street and City of Watertown
- ☐ Designed and coordinated billboards for Hwy 16/19 and I-94
- ☐ Attended Leadership Watertown class
- ☐ Visited businesses/events to take photos for future promos:
- ☐ Ready 2 Dance
- ☐ Main Street Café
- ☐ A to Z Vendors Market
- ☐ Holiday Tree Lighting
- ☐ Run Turkey Run 5k
- ☐ Watertown Christmas Parade of Lights