

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes April 10, 2025

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall: Conrad Talaga, Cheryl Mitchell, Courtney Krause, Steven Board and Melissa Lampe
Also present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bonnie Hertel and Linden Peacy, Tourism Director Robin Kaufman, Park and Rec Representatives Andrea Draeger and Jarrod Folkman, EAA Chapter 320 representative Eric Wagner.

1. The meeting was called to order by Conrad Talaga at 8:00 a.m.
2. Review & Approve March Minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Steven Board and seconded by Courtney Krause. The Commission voted to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the financials was made by Conrad Talaga and seconded by Courtney Krause. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
 - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
 1. Visitor Guides – No new updates.
 2. Ad opportunities – Will discuss in Item D (Main Street needs during Hwy 16 construction)
 - c. Review and take action on mural restoration projects – Leadership Watertown’s alley way project is being designed. The city will pave the area from mid May to mid June.
 - d. Discuss and take possible action on Main Street needs during Hwy 16 construction.

In order to respond strategically and efficiently the Tourism Commission wants to set aside funds to support advertising and events that will support Main Street Businesses. Ideas include a ribbon cutting ceremony For the bridge re opening, a scavenger hunt, and advertising on the big screen at the Lake Country Dockhounds. The Dockhounds offer title sponsorship opportunities or 30 second commercials over 10 games.

Melissa Lampe made a motion to set aside funds not to exceed \$2000 for any advertising or events to support downtown businesses during the construction. Steven Board seconded and the Commission voted to approve the motion.
 - e. Discuss Hotel stay updates: Final February occupancy nationwide was 59%. Wisconsin South occupancy percentage was 45.4%. The local competitive set of hotels was 34%. March estimated national occupancy is 64%. The local competitive set of hotels is estimated at 31% occupancy. Weekday corporate/construction business is less than this time in 2024. The occupancy for the first 14 days of April is above 2024 occupancy. April weekends are better than March. May weekends are better than April. Summer weekends are looking better than in 2024.
4. New Business
 - a. Review and take possible action on Wisconsin Outlawz grant.

The softball tournament will take place June 12th – June 15th. Teams and coaches will stay in Watertown and other area hotels. A motion to approve \$1000 was made by Conrad Talaga and seconded by Melissa Lampe. The Commission approved the motion.
 - b. Review and take possible action on EAA Chapter 320 grant.

EAA Chapter 320 will hold a 3-day event called “Wings over Watertown” at Watertown Municipal airport July 17-19 before the start of the Oshkosh Fly In. Each day there will be planes on display, food and activities to draw pilots and the public. The pilots will require overnight stays in area hotels. The EAA Chapter will provide courtesy cars for the pilots to explore Watertown.

Steven Board made a motion to provide a \$1000 grant and Melissa Lampe seconded. The Commission voted to approve the funds.

- c. Review and take possible action on Seminole Sports grant. The group did not submit a grant. Tabled until the next meeting.
- d. Review Manager's report of previous month's task – report attached.
- e. Commission members' report.
Discuss past and upcoming events; Jefferson Car show takes place during the last weekend in April. The play at Maranatha is this weekend. Main Street /Chamber of Commerce are hosting the Whiskey and Wine Walk on 4/26. Maranatha's graduation week is May 8th. Small softball tournament with overnight stays 5/2

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 841 was made by Melissa Lampe and seconded by Courney 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 8 am on May 8th, 2025, via Zoom or you may attend in person at Watertown City Hall

Submitted by,
Cheryl Mitchell, Secretary

Manager's Report – February 2025

Social Media Report

Facebook: 120 new followers (Post reach 199,400)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 2059 Users – 3800 views

Instagram: 1152 followers

- ☐ Regularly posted to social media (Watertown Tourism, Riverfest)
- ☐ Represented Tourism at Wake-up Watertown Chamber's Annual Meeting
- ☐ Attended Town Square Committee meeting
- ☐ Attended Watertown Riverfest meeting
- ☐ Began creating Riverfest marketing materials for entertainment launch
- ☐ Began distribution of Tourism Guide
- ☐ Updated event dates on visitwatertownwi.com
- ☐ Attended Leadership Watertown class
- ☐ Attended digital media class on email marketing
- ☐ Created sponsorship packet for Bentzin Family Town Square committee
- ☐ Created sponsorship packet and flyer for Leadership Watertown
- ☐ Created content for Dodge County Visitors Guide
- ☐ Created Chamber/Main Street/Tourism page for City Connection
- ☐ Provided photos for Rock River District project
- ☐ Provided photos for Thrive Economic Development

☐ Provided photos for Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation

☐ Visited businesses/events to take photos for future promos:

☐ Berres Brothers Coffee Roasters

☐ Golden Spoon Café