

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes June 12, 2025, 8 am

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall:

Cheryl Mitchell, Melissa Lampe, Ken Berg

Also present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Linden Peacy, Tourism Director Robin Kaufman, Kristine Butteris and Jarod Folkman from Park and Rec, Steve Zillmer from the American Legion, Gary Stueber from Local Marine Corps Detachment #349, Karen Lanser from Local Marine Corps Detachment and Heroes for Heroes and Shellie and Jeremy Schmidt from Watertown Wi Billiards

1. The meeting was called to order by Melissa Lampe at 8:00 a.m.
2. Review & Approve May Minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Ken Berg and seconded by Cheryl Mitchell. The Commission voted to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the financials was made by Ken Berg and seconded by Melissa Lampe. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
 - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
 1. Visitor Guides – The next round of guides will go out in July.
 2. Ad opportunities – Nothing new related to the Tourism Commission
4. Update on billboard commitment: \$8000 in funds was approved last month. The new contract date is June 17th. The billboards are on I-94 near HWY F and on Hwy 26 near the Jefferson Dog Park. Many local Businesses are interested in purchasing advertising time.
 - c. Review and take action on mural restoration projects
The 1st street mural is nearing completion.
 - d. Discuss Hotel stay updates: May and June 2025 weekends will be stronger occupancy than 2024 for the local market area. Sunday – Thursday weekdays will be lower occupancy than 2024 in spite of several Construction projects in the area. May Wisconsin South occupancy was 55%. Local competitive hotel occupancy was 52.4%. The 10 days of the EAA event have not reached high occupancy as of this day.
5. New Business
 - a. Review and take possible action on Wisconsin Billiards Grant request: Billiard Leagues have been in Watertown since 1978. Watertown Billiards will host an event that will take place August 23 and 24th 2025. 18 local bars would participate. 16-24 teams are expected and half will be local teams. 8-12 overnight rooms are anticipated.
Ken Berg made a motion to approve a \$500 grant and Melissa Lampe seconded. The Commission voted to approve the funds.
 - b. Review and take possible action on Vietnam Memorial Wall funding assistance. There are 3 mobile Vietnam Memorial walls and Watertown has the opportunity to have one installed permanently at Aero Park. Veteran's groups including Watertown American Legion and Marine Corps League Detachment #349 are fundraising for the purchase of the Memorial Wall. The Tourism Commission will keep this item on the agenda as we search for the best form of support to provide the organizations.
 - c. Review and take possible action on board positions. Tabled until the July meeting.

- d. Review and take possible action on tournament fee mitigation. The Tourism Commission receives grant proposals from various traveling youth sport organizations throughout the year. The Commission will explore providing funds directly to the Park and Rec department to administer “scholarships” or grant awards to attract or maintain tournament relationships.
- e. Review Manager’s report of previous month’s task – report attached.
- f. Commission members’ report.
Girls fast pitch tournaments June 12-14 and 26-28th. Music at the Museum 6/16. Grand opening for the 1st Kindergarten is 8/2. Pastors Convention 6/12-13 at Maranatha.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 am was made by Melissa Lampe and seconded by Ken Berg.

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 July 10th, 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 – May

Social Media Report

Facebook: 196 new followers (Post reach 199,053)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 987 Users - 2,089 views

Instagram: (1058 followers – 15 new)

- ☐ Regularly posted to social media (Watertown, Jefferson County, Watertown Riverfest)
- ☐ Gave presentation on Tourism at Wake up Watertown
- ☐ Continued Tourism Guide distribution
- ☐ Attended Bentzin Family Town Square Grand Opening
- ☐ Attended Watertown Riverfest weekly meetings
- ☐ Wrote article for Inspire Magazine
- ☐ Created marketing material for Bentzin Family Town Square Grand Opening
- ☐ Created marketing material for Bentzin Family Town Square Summer Concert Series
- ☐ Visited businesses/events to take photos for future promos:
 - o Bentzin Family Town Square Grand Opening
 - o Watertown Farmers Market
 - o Chandler House Bakery
 - o Fuelify
 - o Memorial Day Ceremony
 - o Art Walk