

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes January 8, 2026 8am

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall:
Courtney Krause, Ken Berg, Melissa Lampe
Also present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Linden Peacy, Tourism Director Robin Kaufmann, Park, Rec, and Forestry Director Kristine Butteris, Citizen John Kadisch

1. The meeting was called to order by Courtney Krause at 8:05 a.m.
2. Review & Approve September Minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was 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 financials was made by Melissa Lampe and seconded by Courtney Krause. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
 - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
 1. Visitor Guides – A first draft of the 2026 guide could be available for the February meeting.
 2. Ad opportunities – Nothing new to report
 3. Update on billboard commitment: There are several weeks available starting the last week of January that Robin will work to fill, or will create graphics that promote Tourism's website.
 4. Placer.ai usage updates – Discussed in later agenda item.
 5. Review and act on mural restoration projects. - No recent updates on murals.
 - c. Discuss Hotel stay updates: Cheryl Mitchell left her position at Best Western, and a hotel representative has not been designated as her replacement. Robin will reach out to the hotel for next steps.
4. New Business
 - a. Discuss and take possible action on WUSD Leadership Mini Grant
The commission decided the grant did not align with room tax expenditures, but WUSD is encouraged to apply for a Tourism grant if their projects fall under public art or other allowable expenses.
 - b. Discuss and take possible action on Jig Jog 5k sponsorship request
The race has the second largest participation in the city, and typically includes hotel stays by the timing company. Ken Berg made a motion to approve a \$500 sponsorship, with a second from Melissa Lampe. The commission voted to approve.
 - c. Discuss and review Placer.ai demonstration
Robin mirrored her laptop to the big screen to provide a demonstration that included analytics from the Bentzin Family Town Square, the Octagon House Museum property, and an overview of Tourism in the city of Watertown. The group found the data to be consistent with their knowledge of the reviewed properties, and found it to be great tool. Robin will continue to make groups aware of Tourism's ability to gather data for tourism-related businesses and organizations.
 - d. Review Manager's Report of previous months tasks
Robin attended many events in December and visited a lot of retailers for holiday promotion. The Facebook page continued to be a great asset, reaching over 600,000.
 - e. Commission Members' report.
Watertown Main Street Program will host the Downtown Sweet Stroll on January 31, and indoor Winter Markets will take place at the Watertown Public Library on select Saturdays, beginning January 17. The Octagon House Museum's Ice Cream Social will be held on July 26.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 am was made by Melissa Lampe and seconded by Courtney Krause. Meeting adjourned.

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 February 12, 2026, 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,
Robin Kaufmann, Director of Watertown Tourism

Manager's Report – December 2025

Social Media Report

Facebook: 204 new followers (Post views 603,900)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 2565 Users – 4018 views

Instagram: 1210 followers

- Regularly created content and posted to social media
- Updated events and business listings on visitwatertownwi.com
- Worked on billboard commitments (including graphic work)
- Attended Wake up Watertown
- Attended Main Street Board Meeting
- Coordinated check passing for CPKC Holiday Train Bus Shuttles
- Wrote blog pieces
- Worked with potential new food retail business
- Updated Wayfinder signs at BFTS
- Marketed and launched Watertown Window Wonderland decorating contest
- Held several meetings with PlacerAI to discuss subscription services
- Visited businesses/events for promotional purposes:
 - MBU's production of A Christmas Carol
 - WELS Live Nativity
 - Bentzin Family Town Square
 - CPKC Holiday Train
 - Clara's Antiques
 - Kraemer Wisconsin Cheese
 - Wisconsin 26 Mercantile
 - Watertown Country Club
 - Downtown for Window Wonderland