

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes March 14, 2024

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall: Aaron David, Kristine Butteris, Conrad Talaga, and Peter Wright

Also, present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bonnie Hertel, Tourism Director Robin Kaufmann, Programming Event Coordinator Stephanie Juhl, John Luetzow representing the Midwest Masters Disc Golf tournament, and Linden Peacy, Julie Janowak, and Anna Jensen with Leadership Watertown

1. The meeting was called to order by Aaron David at 8:01 am.
2. Review & Approve January minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Kristine Butteris and seconded by Conrad Talaga. The commission moved to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the February financials was made by Kristine Butteris and seconded by Peter Wright. The Commission moved to approve the financials.
 - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
 1. Visitor Guides – Over 1,500 guides have been distributed in the Jefferson County area, Columbus, and various stops in SE Wisconsin. The guide is getting a positive response.
 2. Ad opportunities – Nothing new to present
 3. Video production – Nothing new to present. Will take this off the agenda for next month.
 - c. Review and act on Mural Restoration projects: Nothing new to present. Will keep this on the agenda.
 - d. Discuss and act on Watertown Riverfest objectives – Entertainment will be announced the first week of April. Watertown should get excited to host an event with many nationally recognized acts this year.
 - e. Discuss Hotel stay updates – Cheryl was not in attendance. No report was shared.
4. New Business
 - a. Discuss and act on Midwest Masters Grant Request – Midwest Masters Disc Golf has requested \$2,000 for its upcoming tournament to be held over Memorial Day weekend. The tournament will be hosted in Watertown for the 7th year. Grants help cover fees to run the event. There will be three sanctioned tournaments. Historically, they have drawn participants from CA, FL, CO, AL, MS, and more. The event was a B-Tier in prior years, but has been changed to a C-Tier to welcome participation from non-PDGA members. Players have already been signing up. They typically arrive Friday evening or Saturday morning, and leave on Sunday after tournament play. A motion to approve a \$1000 grant was made by Peter Wright and seconded by Kristine Butteris. The commission moved to approve.
 - b. Discuss and take possible action on Leadership Watertown's Grant Request – Leadership Watertown is working on two projects during their 2023-24 class year. They will be providing a self-serve kayak rental station at Riverside Park, and will be providing landscaping services at the Octagon House Museum. They presented a "Leadership Watertown" day to be held at the Octagon House this fall to showcase their landscaping work and promote the museum. Watertown Tourism was asked to provide \$1,000 so all those attending the event could tour the Octagon House for free. It was suggested by the Museum's president that the free day be held on Smithsonian Day, where many museums offer free tours. A motion to approve \$1,000 to cover Octagon House tours was made by Peter Wright and seconded by Conrad Talaga. Aaron David abstained. The commission moved to approve.

- c. Discuss and take possible action on Seminole Sports Grant Request – Seminole Sport, based out of Illinois, organizes baseball and softball tournaments, and will be hosting several tournaments in Watertown over the summer. They are requesting \$1,000 to bring the Milwaukee Brewer Racing Sausages to their event. They are expecting a need for 120 rooms for traveling teams. A motion was made to approve a \$1,000 grant by Kristine Butteris and seconded by Conrad Talaga. The commission moved to approve.
- d. Discuss and take possible action on geofencing/analytic services – Robin had a consultation with placer.ai and chose to discuss Watertown Riverfest attendance as a case study. She was impressed with the details the data provided, and felt it could be an incredible asset for Watertown Tourism and for the city of Watertown. The study was based on cellphone tracking data, and specified how many people attended Watertown Riverfest, where they went before and after the event, what route they took to arrive, and more. The consultant also shared that Watertown saw 93,000 visitors in 2023, with an economic impact of 45.5 million dollars. The consultant stated that their municipal clients are typically economic developers. The expense was quoted at \$19,000 a year, and Robin would like to see a partnership in obtaining a location analytics company so future decisions and planning can be based on factual data. Kristine offered to bring up the topic at the April City Leadership meeting.
- e. Review manager's report of previous months' activities – commission was asked to review the report.
- f. Commission member's report on upcoming and past events – Stephanie Juhl noted that the Bentzin Family Town Square is getting ready for a busy season. They will host Food Truck Mondays, a Thursday market, pop-up food days, and a summer music series. They are in need of produce vendors for the Thursday market, and the Park & Rec Department is in need of seasonal help. Park & Rec is also hiring an arborist and a Recreation Programmer, which is a new position to the department.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 am was made by Peter Wright and seconded by Conrad Talaga.

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 8:00 am April 11, 2024, 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, Tourism director

Social Media Report

Facebook: 50 new followers (Post reach 90,892)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 2081 Users - 8142 views

Instagram: 1103 followers

- Regularly posted to social media (Watertown, Jefferson County)
- Met with Placer.ai to discuss geofencing possibilities
- Began WTTN Visitor Guide distribution
- Attended Main Street Promotions Committee meeting
- Awarded Tourism Impact Award at Chamber Annual Dinner
- Represented Tourism at Wake up Watertown
- Continued Chamber's new website project
- Prepared Chamber/Tourism/Main Street page of the City Connection
- Updated event dates on visitwatertownwi.com
- Attended Bentzin Family Town Square Committee meeting
- Attended Digital Marketing Series w/focus on Canva
- Continued planning Watertown Riverfest 2024
- Visited businesses/events to take photos for future promos:
 - Interurban Trail