

Tourism Commission Meeting
Monday, February 12, 2018
8:30am

Attendees: Kristie Busch, Ken Gehl, 5th District Alderman, Kim Jankowski, Jim Ruetz

Others in Attendance: Kristin Kowaleski, Destination Marketing Specialist, City of Oak Creek, Catherine Roeske, City Clerk, City of Oak Creek, Cory Savage, Savage Solutions, Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, City of Oak Creek, Barbara Wesener, Executive Director, South Suburban Chamber of Commerce

1. **Call to order and roll call** – Vice Chair Person Jim Ruetz called the meeting to order at 8:35am.
2. **Approval of minutes of January 8, 2018 meeting minutes** – Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2018 Tourism Commission meeting. Alderman Ken Gehl seconded the motion. All voted in favor of approving the minutes as submitted.
3. **Discussion and action on the 2018 Savage Solutions contract** – Cory Savage explained that Savage Solutions had provided an estimated \$60,000 worth of services to the City of Oak Creek Tourism Commission under the 2017 \$30,000 contract. The proposed 2018 contract project proposal for Marketing Services is being offered to the Tourism Commission at \$35,000 for the calendar year. Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to accept the terms and project descriptions for marketing services as proposed by Savage Solutions for 2018 in the amount of \$35,000. Commissioner Ken Gehl seconded the motion. All Commissioners present voted in favor of signing the contract for 2018. The Commissioners agreed that Savage Solutions had done an incredible job of guiding the Tourism Commission’s marketing for their first year of existence. Cory Savage thanked Kim Jankowski for the glowing report presented to the Common Council regarding their first year collaboration. The Commissioners asked Cory how many other communities Savage was marketing for. Cory explained that Savage Solutions was currently working with four municipalities – Oak Creek, West Allis, South Milwaukee, and Gateway to Waukesha. They had also done some work for Shorewood. Cory was particularly excited about their collaboration with Discover Wisconsin in the coming year, when they will be shooting footage in Oak Creek for use in promoting Tourism here in 2019. Savage Solutions will have cameras at Winter Fest on February 17, 2017.

After that Savage will keep Discover Wisconsin informed of all Oak Creek events which they will be filming for future promotional ads. Discover Wisconsin will provide signage for the events that they will be filming. Cory emphasized the broad coverage that will be provided by Discover Wisconsin advertising – not only FOX channels in the vicinity but also many stations around the Midwest.

Commissioner Ruetz asked about Savage Solutions responsibilities regarding Oak Creek website development. Cory explained that Savage Solutions had been providing, on a pro bono basis, development as well as updates for the VisitOakCreek.com event-based website as well as businessinoakcreek.com, a business based website promoting Oak Creek.

City Clerk Catherine Roeske explained that Savage's responsibilities would no longer include development or updating of the city's main website oakcreekwi.org. Instead a subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee is in the process of working with the Information Technology Department to request proposals from website developers to have the City's website redone. They are hoping to get at least three proposals to consider. The city is looking for a website that is much easier to keep updated with current information. Cory Savage recommended looking for a website developer that could offer ease of brand inclusion, as well as offering mobile-friendly use and app-forward programming. Catherine is part of the committee and will bring these concerns to the subcommittee.

- 4. South Suburban Chamber of Commerce (SSCC) update** – Barb Wesener, Executive Director of the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce gave an update on past and future SSCC events. She noted that the manufacturers' workforce development discussion held on January 18, 2018 in cooperation with MATC was very successful, with over 60 people attending. The program was well received by area business leaders. Barb thanked the Tourism Commission for sponsoring the breakfast.

After the success of that seminar, Dr. Mark at MATC suggested a similar workforce development panel focusing on the hospitality industry, potentially scheduled for March 28, 2018. He proposed Clint Wills take the lead on this panel discussion to include employment, security, transportation of employees, etc. Barb envisioned that all hotel/motel operators in Oak Creek and bordering Milwaukee areas would be invited to participate. Commissioner Ruetz and Director of Community Development Doug Seymour felt that it was important to include other hospitality businesses in the panel discussion. Kim Jankowski felt that the businesses invited should include restaurants, limousine services, and bus shuttles. Commissioners thought that students from the hospitality and culinary schools of MATC could also be included. Barb Wesener suggested that entertainment businesses like the City 13 escape room could also come under the hospitality umbrella and should be invited to participate.

Commissioner Ruetz expressed concern that area companies, both manufacturing and hospitality, needed more guidance in preparing for large developments in the local economy (e.g. FOXCONN). He felt that many local companies do not understand the need for immediate answers to questions posed by these large international corporations, leading to many lost opportunities. Jim encouraged the SSCC and MATC to include training in this area for future business development panel discussions. He suggested Logan Dawson, Director of Corporate Expansion & Attraction at Milw 7 as a great potential speaker on this subject.

Another potential subject for discussion by the hospitality panel was suggested by Clint Wills at the January meeting and recommended by the Commissioners at this meeting. The subject would involve determining how to improve pre-marketing of hotel/motel room stays to businesses coming to Oak Creek. This would hopefully prevent loss of large numbers of hotel room night stays by building contractors, similar to what occurred when IKEA started their construction project in Oak Creek. Commissioner Jankowski emphasized the need for sharing of feedback on these development concerns by many different industries. She wondered if it would be good to compose a list of companies in Oak Creek that are eager to partner with new businesses coming to town. She also inquired if there was any Oak Creek branded marketing package that is being handed out to developers and businesses interested in coming to Oak Creek. Doug Seymour said that there was no marketing package at this time, but many developers come to town with a team already in place that they use all over the country and that that portion of the business may be more nationally driven. He thought the list of Oak Creek businesses eager to partner with new businesses might be helpful for the supply chain side of new businesses. Commissioner Gehl was concerned that a list like this might aggravate more people than it would help.

City Clerk Catherine Roeske likened the marketing packet to a New Resident packet for businesses. She noted that the City once had a Residential Welcome Packet that included information on the Community Center, non-profit organizations, churches and parishes. She felt it would not be right to back certain businesses in either an updated residential or business welcome packet. Commissioner Ruetz suggested setting up a portal with questionnaires for Oak Creek businesses to fill out akin to one that FOXCONN has set up. The businesses would populate the information, not the city. It could come with a disclaimer that the City of Oak Creek is not backing any particular company in the portal. Barb Wesener said that many SSCC members use their list of 800 members to choose doctors, dentists, business partners, etc.

Commissioner Jankowski made a motion to sponsor the next SSCC/MATC Hospitality workforce development panel discussion in the amount of \$500 for breakfast or appetizers depending on time of day. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the \$500 sponsorship

Barb Wesener will be meeting with Kristin Kowaleski, Destination Marketing Specialist and Grace Fuhr, Special Events Director, Program Manager for Doors Open Milwaukee in the next few days to discuss plans for coordinating the Sneak Peek at Oak Creek with Historic Milwaukee Incorporated's Doors Open Milwaukee event on Saturday, September 23 and Sunday, September 24th, 2018. During Barb's last discussion with Grace, it became apparent that Grace would like to highlight only 10 or 12 businesses in Oak Creek. This is something they will discuss with Grace at their next meeting. Kristin asked and received permission from the Commissioners to merge the Sneak Peek at Oak Creek with the Doors Open Milwaukee dates to create more synergy. She and Barb feel that combining with Doors Open will bring more people from out of the area and potentially put more heads in beds. Commissioner Jankowski felt it would be better to do only one day instead of two, especially if there are multiple events taking place in the Milwaukee area that weekend (e.g. Brewer Game, Packer Game, etc.) Kristin and Barb will discuss the options with Grace at their next meeting. Finally, Barb noted that the next SSCC event on the calendar is their Annual Awards Dinner at the Crown Plaza Hotel on Thursday, February 15th, 2018. There are 210 planning to attend and the City of Oak Creek is a finalist for Business of the Year!

- 5. Oak Creek Winter Festival Update** – Kristin Kowaleski, Destination Marketing Specialist, gave an update on available activities for the Saturday, February 17th Winter Festival. She has added a Chili Cook-Off to the festival with local restaurants Waterstreet Brewery, Charcoal Grill and The Cellar signed on as participants. The City 13 escape room business has been added to the festival as well, offering an interactive game for attendees. The Siberian Husky Rescue has been confirmed for a meet and greet. And mascot appearances have been confirmed for Roscoe from the Milwaukee Admirals and Bango and Hoop Troop from the Milwaukee Bucks. Kristin was also able to secure personnel from the Racine Zoo to do arts and crafts as well as nature walks in Emerald Preserve. The Salvation Army has signed on to provide a Hot Chocolate Station – hot chocolate will be free with donations gladly accepted. The Oak Creek High School Hockey Team will be there to provide a slap shot hockey game. Two Olympic themed games have also been added – a team skiing race and bean bag bullseye toss. The four ice sculptures will be located in the grassy area of Drexel Town Square. Weather is expected to be 30 degrees and sunny for the festival.

The Oak Creek Winter Festival is being promoted by WISN12 commercial and digital ads, 99.1 The Mix radio ads, posters, postcards, coffee sleeves at Valentine Coffee Shop, Facebook, email blast, on Visit Milwaukee and Travel Wisconsin sites, as well as through a press release. Cory asked and received permission from Kristin to post a 30 second video on VisitOakCreek.com promoting the event. Kristin also noted that Save the Dates for the Beer Gardens would be posted soon.

Commissioners asked Kristin if Froedtert gave the Tourism Commission permission to use their parking garage for festival participants. Kristin said that they approved using the garage for the Winter Festival, but will not allow access to the surface parking lot. Froedtert said that they were still in the process of reviewing our other event dates for approval. Doug Seymour recommended that Kristin keep in close contact with Froedtert regarding use of the parking facility. He reminded her that parking garage use for City events was part of the Froedtert development deal. Kristin is also working closely with Elizabeth Ruder, Environmental Health Inspector for the City of Oak Creek, to insure the safety of Food Trucks and other food providers on the day of the festival.

Cory Savage voiced concern about the long walk from the Froedtert parking garage to Tourism events in Drexel Town Square. He recommended considering purchase of a 6-8 seat golf cart or ATV that could be used for handicap transport between the parking garage and all DTS events. There is potential for 50% grant funding from CVMIC for items that aid accessibility and/or safety in a municipal setting. Used vehicles could be purchased for \$8,000-\$9,000 through auction sites. The vehicle could be sponsored by the Tourism Commission and/or Froedtert or other DTS partners. The City of Oak Creek Department of Public Works is looking into pricing of the vehicles as well as the pros and cons of electric vs. gas carts. Brand new carts have been priced in the \$15,000-\$20,000 range. All Commissioners felt that purchasing a cart would be a good idea. They also said that its use in coordination with use of an excess inventory of police two-way radios would improve communication during festivals and aid in making them safer and more accessible.

- 6. Discussion on the 2018 Oak Creek Farmers Market** – Based on a motion made at the January 8, 2017 Tourism Commission meeting, Commissioner Kim Jankowski approached Dawn Carrillo to determine if she would be willing to accept leadership of the Farmers Market Subcommittee of the Tourism Commission for 2018 for an annual stipend of \$3500. Kim was happy to report that Dawn Carrillo accepted the job and was excited to do it. Dawn recommended four other members to work with her on the Subcommittee for the first year. She felt they represented a cross-section of people she believes the market will serve. She felt each of the four listed below brought a vision and the willingness to plan and work the Saturday events.

David Kozlowski - Pinehold Gardens - Oak Creek farmer, part of the original committee, and well versed in farmers markets and the organizing of markets.

Gina Goodwin- Burke Properties- Manager of Forge and Flare buildings, DTS business representative.

Katie Henschel - OC resident- Physical therapist, married with two grade school children in the OC school system.

Derek Mlaker - returning Oak Creek resident. Under 30 years old, married professional, specializing in social media and sales.

Dawn has already attended a three day seminar on Wisconsin Farmers Markets and is prepared to share her notes. She made many contacts at the seminar that have helped her identify potential issues in setting up a farmers market. Dawn submitted a report to the Tourism Commission updating them that 22 vendors had applied for full or half season as of 1/30/18. Dawn received inquiries from 5 additional vendors who are interested and are filing applications. The new committee plans to discuss weekly limited spots at the OC market. They will also address solicitation of specific vendor categories starting in late February. Dawn Carrillo plans to make safety a top priority at the markets, using the WI Farmers Market Coalitions best practices to put action plans in place. The new subcommittee will review all plans with the OC Fire and Police departments. Dawn's goals for the subcommittee include plans to:

1. Create a mission statement
2. Design and measure the area to create a layout for the vendors.
3. Create a well-rounded group of vendors. Review applications, and accept vendors.
4. Identify volunteer needs.
5. Create and submit budget for approval to the Tourism Commission.
6. Identify MATC's role in the market with weekly seminars.

Doug Seymour pointed out that the marketing of the Oak Creek Farmers Market would be a function of the Tourism Commission, not the Subcommittee. Kristin will meet with Dawn to keep up-to-date on what transpires at the Farmers Market Subcommittee meetings. The Tourism Commission's plan is for Dawn to remain in close contact with Kristin, Leslie Flynn and Catherine Roeske.

Cory Savage noted that the billboard campaign for the Oak Creek Farmers Market would not start until a week or two into the season to make sure all the bugs are worked out before a major advertising campaign is initiated. Kristin is hoping for 35-40 vendors as the long term goal for the market. Doug Seymour was asked about the availability of water and electricity for the Farmers Market vendors. He said that the vendors were responsible for supplying their own water and electricity at this time. Commissioner Gehl was hoping that there would not be a multitude of generators at every Saturday market due to the noise that can be associated with them. The subject of closing down streets in Drexel Town Square also came up in discussion. Kristin said that they are not planning on closing streets in DTS each weekend because of the bus routes that need to keep running. Doug also mentioned that we must be cognizant of permanent DTS businesses.

Commissioner Jim Ruetz complimented Kristin Kowaleski on her great work organizing fourteen events plus the 20 Farmers Markets for 2018. He was very impressed with all of the events sponsored by the Tourism Commission in its short time of existence.

- 7. Consider a motion to appoint the 2018 Oak Creek Farmers Market Subcommittee members** – Alderman Ken Gehl made a motion to approve the four members recommended by Dawn Carrillo to join the Farmers Market Subcommittee of the Tourism Commission for one year, subject to them passing their background checks. Commissioner Ruetz seconded his motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

- 8. General discussion topics and Adjournment** – Commissioner Jankowski asked Cory Savage about the algorithm for calculating the value of the Tourism Commission sponsoring Art In the Park with the Oak Creek – Franklin Foundation for Education in the amount of \$5000. Cory said he would email a valuation summary to Kristin Kowaleski before the March 12, 2018 Tourism Meeting. The Commissioners asked Kim to send Kristin a copy of the OCFE's Tax Form 990 Return of Organizations Exempt From Income Tax.

City Clerk Catherine Roeske brought up several anniversaries that are being celebrated in the City of Oak Creek in 2018. Trattoria Di Carlo is celebrating fifteen years in business in Oak Creek and offering \$15 meals. Catherine asked if the City/Tourism Commission would be willing to share this on its social networking sites. The consensus was that they should. She also explained that The Lions are celebrating 60 years in the city this year and the American Legion is celebrating 100 years. Commissioner Jankowski saw great potential in partnering with these two organizations on future events. She thought especially the Lions Club would be a good partner since they already support the City at National Night Out, the Bike Blessing, and Oak Creek Youth Football and Baseball teams. Catherine explained that the City sold the Lions the property on Shepard for \$1 and that the annual Lions Fest money goes to updating their facilities. She said for that reason Tourism would not need to donate equipment but would do better to coordinate with the Lions on promotion, event planning, and as a co-sponsor. Some Commissioners thought helping with off-premise signage for events would be a good way to coordinate with the Lions and Legion. Doug Seymour said that sometimes non-profits over use this type of promotion. Catherine noted that the City had donated the electronic sign from the old city hall to the Legion which is located on the same property as the Lions and it still has not been installed. She suggested contacting Steve Kohnke, Street Lighting and Electrical Inspector for the City of Oak Creek to determine if the sign is still salvageable. He is a Legion member as well as electrical inspector.

Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to adjourn the Tourism Commission meeting. Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:37am.

ATTEST:



Kristin Kowaleski, Destination Marketing Specialist

3/19/18

Date