

Tourism Commission Meeting  
Monday, August 13, 2018  
8:30am

Attendees: Kristie Busch, Ken Gehl, 5<sup>th</sup> District Alderman, City of Oak Creek, Kim Jankowski, Jim Ruetz, Clint Wills

Also in Attendance: Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist, City of Oak Creek, Leslie Flynn, Communications Coordinator, City of Oak Creek, Ted Johnson, Director of Public Works, 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. **Welcome/Call to order** – Clint Wills called the meeting to order at 8:33am.
2. **Approval of minutes of July 23, 2018 meeting.** – Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the July 23, 2018 Tourism Commission meeting. Commissioner Ken Gehl seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were approved as submitted.
3. **Update on Oak Creek Farmers Market and social media analytics.** – Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist, presented information compiled by Savage Solutions on how the various social media marketing platforms had performed in promoting the Oak Creek Farmers Market between May 1 and July 31, 2018. The following information was presented:

Website & Social Media Performance 5/1-7/31

> Website Traffic (VisitOakCreek.com)

- o Users | 14,692 (+326%)
- o New Users | 14,328 (+324%)
- o Pageviews | 40,674 (+328%)

> Geography (Where Visitors Come From)

- o Oak Creek | 5,305 (+449%)
- o Milwaukee | 2,411 (+322%)
- o Madison | 616 (+465%)
- o Franklin | 461 (+361%)
- o Racine | 440 (+443%)
- o Wauwatosa | 189 (+263%)
- o West Allis | 169 (+231%)
- o New Berlin | 126 (+271%)

- > Social Media Traffic
  - o Traffic from Social Media to Website | 1,472 (+632%)
  - o Traffic from Social Media to Farmers Market Webpages | 605 (+440%)
- > Search Engine Optimization
  - o Traffic from Search Engines to Website | 9,826 (+464%)
  - o Traffic from Search Engines to Farmers Market Webpages | 2,251 (+2,107%)

Cory Savage complimented Leslie Flynn, Oak Creek Communications Coordinator, for her great work on sharing data throughout the various social media platforms. The Commissioners asked if there seemed to be better traffic at the Farmers Market as it became better known. Kristin said that Dawn Carrillo, the Farmers Market manager, reported that there had been better traffic as more produce became available and as the weather improved. She also reported that Valentine Coffee has been doing really well during Oak Creek Farmer's Market hours. The Commissioners asked Kristin Craig to come back to the next meeting with ballpark attendance figures, revenue estimates, and feedback from vendors if possible. Doug Seymour, Oak Creek Director of Community Development, suggested having Dawn Carrillo attend the November Tourism Commission meeting to give an end-of-season farmers' market report. Commissioner Ruetz reminded the others that Dawn does an unofficial survey weekly, but agrees that an official report would be good at the end of the season. The Commissioners wanted to know how the parking situation had been so far during the farmer's market season. Doug Seymour said he had been at several of the Saturday markets in Drexel Town Square between 10:30am and 1:00pm and parking seemed just fine. Kristin said that farmer's market shoppers had been using the Froedtert parking garage and the directional signage seemed to be working nicely. Doug Seymour asked Kristin if she considered the farmers market to be at capacity. He said he felt that the market looked a little sparse and could use more vendors. Kristin agreed that they were not yet at capacity. Leslie Flynn, the city's Communication Coordinator, thought it might be better to concentrate the vendors in the middle of Drexel Town Square, rather than spreading them out the way they are now with farm vendors near City Hall and the other vendors across the square near Main Street. Commissioner Kim Jankowski said that Dawn Carrillo was working to get more vendors for the market and had started contacting a list of Art in the Park vendors that Kim had shared with her. Kim said that the Saturday markets had had 30-40 vendors up until this point. Kristin Craig said that she would bring exact numbers for each market to the next Tourism Commission meeting in September.

4. **Discussion on Drexel Town Square event survey results.** – Kristin Craig presented survey results from the first major 2018 summer events in Drexel Town Square. She received 87 responses from Dog Day at Drexel and 58 responses from the Food Truck Tours. Sixty-three percent of the Food Truck Tour attendees visited a restaurant or business in the Square, while 46% of the Dog Day attendees did. Eighty-four percent of the Food Truck visitors thought parking was easily accessible, while 93% at Dog Days did. The survey showed that there were people at both events from Oak Creek, Franklin, Franksville, Milwaukee, Racine and South Milwaukee zip codes. Attendees also came from Caledonia to the Food Truck event. The Dog Day event also pulled attendees from the additional communities of Brookfield, Cudahy, Delafield, Greenfield, Hales Corners, Muskego, Neenah, Waukesha, and even out of state from Island Lake, Illinois.

The survey also asked attendees how they heard about the events. Fifty percent of the Food Truck visitors heard about it through social media, while 43% of the Dog Days attendees did. Eighteen percent of the attendees to both events heard about it from the Oak Creek Current or Acorn magazines. Similar percentages of people learned about the events from posters and banners in the community. Word of mouth was responsible for obtaining 10% of Food Truck visitors and 16% of Dog Days visitors. Only 3-5% of attendees were drawn to the events by the VisitOakCreek.com website or radio and television ads. When asked what could be improved for the next event Food Truck attendees wanted more spacing between trucks, additional seating, and shorter lines. Dog Day attendees asked for more tables with shade, additional food vendors, and more shade in general. The final question was for Dog Day visitors only and asked what day people attended. The results showed 10% attended Friday from 4-8pm, 75% attended Saturday from 10am-4pm, and 15% attended both days.

Kristin Craig also received feedback from Drexel Town Square businesses. GiGi's Cupcakes said "So far things have been positive. The only thing I would change is the restroom hours. We would extend hours past 9pm." Chick-fil-A said "We enjoyed all the events so far! Chick-fil-A would like to be more involved and have the cow mascot and digital offer cards at events." Water Street Brewery said they were just far enough off the footpath from the town square that they don't see too much of an effect on business one way or another. However they also mentioned that a few weeks ago on a Wednesday night when the food trucks were in the town square, they had anticipated a slow night but actually had a decent amount of business.

Kristin reiterated that directional signage in the square and near Froedtert was working well for DTS events. Commissioner Ken Gehl asked whether there was any progress on gaining a golf cart for transporting people between the Froedtert parking garage and Drexel Town Square events. Kristin said that Dawn Carrillo felt that we did not need it for this year. Commissioner Jankowski thought it would be a good idea to ask attendees on future event surveys how much they spent at the event. Cory Savage of Savage Solutions agreed these would be good numbers to know. Doug Seymour was impressed on how much Valentine was involved with the Farmer's Market and other Tourism events. He suggested the Tourism Commission try to get The Chocolate Factory and other DTS restaurants more involved in future events, possibly even holding a Taste of Oak Creek event. The Commissioners asked why GiGi's Cupcakes kept their outdoor sales so close to their storefront. Kristin explained that the owners were trying to cover the store and their booth at the same time and would be required to pull a \$75 Temporary Food Application for Inspection Permits annually if they moved farther into the Square. This might negate any additional sales GiGi's could potentially get by moving away from their storefront. Alderman Gehl said it might be helpful to lower the cost of the food inspections for temporary offsite sales by DTS restaurants inside the square. Commissioner Jankowski noted that the Community Center is already holding a Taste of Oak Creek event in March 2019 and that we might not have enough restaurants in Drexel Town Square to pull off this type of event yet. She also felt that the Oak Creek Farmer's Market was currently more of a Go-Shop-Leave event that could keep attendees longer if there was more to do in the square. Kristin reminded all that the Fall Festival will be taking place in DTS at the same time as the last Farmer's Market. Ted Johnson, Director of Public Works, saw weekend farmers markets as more of a quick stop on a list of many stops that people schedule on Saturdays. He thought that DTS restaurants could get more involved by selling single pieces of pizza, single tacos, etc. Kim Jankowski agreed that single serve items should be marketed more. She suggested adding a logo to the Cubanitas Bloody Mary cup to help increase sales.

Commissioner Kristie Busch asked who serves breakfast items at the farmers market. Kristin said that it was mostly Valentine Coffee that served breakfast sandwiches and bakery items. She suggested that Cubanitas might be interested in holding a pig roast in the square at some time in the future. It was also recommended that sandwich board signs be used more, helping to direct people and advertising menu items available at DTS restaurants.

- 5. South Suburban Chamber of Commerce update.** - Barb Wesener, Executive Director of the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce, updated the Commissioners on SSCC events. She reminded them how well received last fall's "Women in Business" seminar held at the Oak Creek Civic Center was. Based on that success, the Chamber is organizing a "Women in Money" seminar for Fall 2018. It will be a luncheon held on September 25 at Los Mariachis. Anne Mank of Ellenbecker Investment Group Inc. will be the keynote speaker. Anne's business is located in Pewaukee now, but an Oak Creek office is coming soon.

Barb Wesener also updated the Commission on the upcoming Around the Corner with John McGivern Oak Creek episode which is scheduled to air on PBS on February 14, 2019. She said that they had completed filming last week on August 6-8 for all but the Oak Creek High School Marching Band footage which is scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup>. Barb has been in contact with Lois Maurer, producer at PBS, to discuss a possible preview party for the Oak Creek episode. The previews were previously hosted by PBS with appetizers and a cash bar. PBS no longer sponsors these events, but would be willing to arrange for John McGivern and additional PBS staffers to attend an event sponsored by the City of Oak Creek or the Tourism Commission. Commissioner Jankowski liked the idea and suggested labeling the preview "I Love Oak Creek". Barb Wesener suggested the Oak Creek Community Center as a great venue for the preview, handling up to 300 people with the ability to provide food and bar services as needed. Commissioners asked how many could be handled at hotel facilities in the City of Oak Creek. Commissioner Wills said that the largest hall available at Oak Creek hotels would have a 200 person capacity. Commissioner Jankowski said that the Marcus South Shore Cinema would be a great venue for presenting the film. Director of Community Development Doug Seymour agreed that would be a great place to hold the preview. Kristin Craig said that funding was available in the Tourism Commission budget for sponsoring such an event. This location would also allow for serving of food and drinks, as well as multiple screenings of Oak Creek's Around the Corner with John McGivern episode. Kim Jankowski offered to contact the Marcus Corporation to determine their interest and availability and choose a date for the screening event. Barb Wesener said she would call Lois Maurer at PBS and tell her we will host the preview event.

Barb listed several other events that the SSCC will be involved in 2018. They will be holding a "State of the Cities" event on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the Oak Creek Community Center which will include speeches by area mayors and will be emceed by reporter Steve Jagler of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. On the first Friday of December, the Chamber will be holding an event at the Polish Community Center in Franklin. The SSCC is also scheduled for a ribbon cutting event at Floor Covering International on 13<sup>th</sup> Street in Oak Creek on August 22, 2018. In addition, Barb continues to work with Kristin Craig on the Sneak Peek at Oak Creek/Doors Open Milwaukee event September 22-23.

- 6. Discussion on August Beer Garden and Lake Vista Park Grand Opening.** - Kristin Craig updated the Commissioners on the Tourism Commission's second beer garden and joint grand opening celebration for Lake Vista Park partners. She is working with Ted Johnson and Police Chief Steve Anderson on details.

The combined events start with a two hour Recognition and Celebration at 2pm on Thursday, August 23, 2018 for all entities involved in planning and construction of the Lake Vista Park at 4001 E. Lake Vista Parkway in Oak Creek. Complimentary beverages, networking, a ribbon-cutting ceremony and group photo sessions with Lake Michigan in the background will be available to invitees. At 4pm the Oak Creek Beer Garden and Park will be officially opened to the public. There will plenty of beer, food, and music available for all to enjoy. The beer garden will be open from 4-8pm on weekdays and 12-8pm on weekends through Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018. A beer trailer will be provided by Explorium Brewpub with beer providers coming from the League of Craft Brewers. Food will be available from the concession stand, with tips going to the Oak Creek-Franklin Foundation for Education. The music lineup includes the Mike Schneider Band on Thursday and Sunday evenings, the EcoLimes on Friday night and Saturday afternoon, the Doghouse Charlie Band Saturday night, and Sound Effect on Sunday afternoon. The bands range from polka music to cover bands. Pricing for the beer garden will be as follows:

Souvenir beer glass - \$7 (first beer included) with \$5 refills

Beer (plastic pint cup) - \$6

Wine - \$5

Cash and credit accepted!

This second Beer Garden will include a Sunday Chicken Roast at noon on August 26<sup>th</sup>. The chicken will be roasted on-site using a trailer from the Butcher Block Meat Market. Mayor Bukiewicz and his wife Caroline will be there volunteering. The meals will be sold out of the new concession stand window and will include sliced chicken, a roll, potato salad, and soda. One hundred chickens will be purchased for \$1000 and meals will be sold for \$8.00 each. The Tourism Commission hopes to make money on the Chicken Roast. Custard might also be donated by a local restaurant.

The Tourism Commission is promoting the beer garden using all of its usual marketing companies and strategies including banners, social media events and boosted posts, WISN12 commercials, digital ads on WISN12 homepage, radio ads on 88.9 radio, posters/flyers in the community, press releases, and listings in city magazines. Kristin is working with Cory Savage on the promotions and on signage for the event. They hope to have the banners posted at Lake Vista Park, in Drexel Town Square, and all over the city sometime this week. Cory emphasized the importance of using social media to promote this event, especially after seeing that about half of the respondents from the surveys at Dog Days and the Food Truck Tours had learned about the events on social media.

- 7. Discussion on Sneak Peek at Oak Creek and Doors Open Milwaukee.** – Kristin Craig, Destination Market Specialist, told the Commissioners that applications for Oak Creek’s Sneak Peek at Oak Creek were mailed out on August 9, 2018. The Oak Creek event is taking place on Saturday September 22, 2018, the same weekend as Doors Open Milwaukee’s two-day event. The Oak Creek open house event will be held from 10am to 5pm. So far there are fourteen locations signed up to participate in the Sneak Peek event. They include Oak Creek City Hall with Department Managers in the Multi-Purpose Room and Police and Fire Departments parked outside, Oak Creek Department of Public Works, Oak Creek Water Treatment Plant, International Delivery Solutions, Three Cellars, Waterstreet Brewery, Pixology, Fairfield Inn and Suites, PPG, Pinehold Gardens, MATC, We Energies, City 13 Escape House, and J Reckner Associates. Two others have shown some interest in participating.

City Hall, PPG, Pinehold Gardens, MATC, and the OC Historical Society are being advertised in the Journal Sentinel special Doors Open section and will take part in the Doors Open Milwaukee event on Sunday as well.

Kristin explained that visitors to the Sneak Peek at Oak Creek can choose which locations they would like to visit. Maps will be available for download online and will also be available for pick up at City Hall. There will be a new opportunity for bus transportation between sites this year, as the Tourism Commission is partnering with Go Riteway to provide buses from Oak Creek City Hall to multiple locations. Online sign up will be required in advance. Two shorter buses with approximately 25 seats each will be available. Tour guides from the Oak Creek Historical Society will lead the bus tours.

Kristin and Cory Savage are working on directional signage for September 22, 18" X 24" banner signs for posting at each location two weeks prior to the event, and social, print, radio, digital and other advertising to ensure a good turnout. She said that the participating businesses seem very excited about this event and are planning to offer swag items during their tours this year. Kristin will be working extensively with We Energies to ensure proper signage is available at the large facility. She is also working on stickers, incentives, and prizes for all of the Sneak Peek at Oak Creek members. Tourism Commissioners made several suggestions regarding promotion of the event. They thought it might be good to create a social media screen, snapchat filter or hashtag for promoting Sneak Peek. Commissioner Jankowski recommended using darker print and a more colorful background for the banner signage at each location to make it more visible to the public. She also suggested using a little "Come Peek" character on the signs to make them more visually inviting. Cory Savage said he would consider all these suggestions while promoting the event. Doug Seymour suggested calling Edgerton Contractors to see if they wanted to join the Sneak Peek at Oak Creek again this year. He said they were very popular last year.

8. **Discussion and action on 2019 Tourism Commission budget.** – Kristin handed out copies of the proposed 2019 Tourism Commission budget request along with a breakdown of the major expense categories of Dues, Membership & Publications (\$30,000); Advertising and Promotions (\$125,000); Event Programming and Implementation (\$110,000); and Consulting (\$65,000). She noted that the budget was due in September and she would be talking to City Administration before final Common Council approval in November. Commissioners discussed the importance of maintaining annual \$5000 memberships in M7, MGAC, and the Water Council. Doug Seymour explained that membership in these organizations gave Oak Creek a regional presence and in turn a bigger say in regional activity. The Commissioners asked Doug how Oak Creek hotel/motel room tax figures looked for 2018 since this is where the Tourism Commission gets its funding for 2019. Doug said the 2018 room tax revenues are expected to be over \$1 million, \$557,000 of which is kept by the city. Based on first quarter revenues being about \$300,000, Doug expects that the Tourism Commission could receive approximately \$575,000 for 2019. This does not even include any carryover from the 2018 Tourism budget. At this point the Tourism budget is not divided up into specific events, but the Commissioners agreed that we might have to be more "event specific" in future budget cycles. Doug reminded the Tourism Commission that 51% of the funds received from hotel/motel room tax must help generate extra room nights in Oak Creek, while 49% must be spent on economic development.

**Adjournment:** Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Ken Gehl seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:26am.

ATTEST:



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Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist

9/10/2018

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Date