

Tourism Commission Meeting  
Monday, December 10, 2018  
8:30am

Attendees: Kristie Busch, Kim Jankowski, Clint Wills

Also in Attendance: Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist, City of Oak Creek, Leslie Flynn, Communications Coordinator, 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. **Welcome/Call to order** – Commissioner Clint Wills called the meeting to order at 8:35am.
2. **Approval of minutes of November 21, 2018 meeting.** – Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the November 21, 2018 Tourism Commission meeting. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were approved as submitted. Kim Jankowski congratulated Cory Savage on the renewal of his contract with the Tourism Commission for 2019.
3. **New Business.**
  - a. **Art Below Zero presentation.** – Jeanne and Max from Art Below Zero presented information on the types of ice sculptures and other services they can provide for Winter Festivals. They showed numerous examples of their work on their website <https://artbelowzero.net>. The ice sculptures can include ice lounges or bars, interactive games, logo embellished frames, interactive sculptures, and even a music and laser light show by their subsidiary Ice Beat Factory. Kristin Craig mentioned that the Cubanitas ice frame was very popular at last year's Winter Festival. She also noted that the games were extremely popular and we should consider adding more to this year's festival. Max and Jeanne explained that a single block of ice for sculpturing would start out at \$350. This size stands about 3 feet tall. A frame style sculpture runs about \$500. Anything with a logo would be considered in the Premier category and cost more. Pre-ordering of the sculptures can help reduce prices. They said that the ice sculptors could stay around for the entire event if required. Art Below Zero recommends starting the festival with some completed ice sculptures and adding in others that are carved onsite during live demonstrations. They also suggested adding a punch card contest where attendees who completed visiting all the sculptures would be entered into a raffle. The ice sculptors have experience in creating ice games such as Connect 4, Bean Toss, Mini Golf, Tic-Tac-Toe, and Skee-Ball.

The Commissioners felt that this was a great opportunity for promoting Oak Creek since there are very few Winter Festivals in southeastern Wisconsin. Cory Savage of Savage Solutions agreed and said that he felt the more ice sculptures the better, with multiple smaller ones around Drexel Town

Square and one larger one in the center of the square. He also thought it would be great to have a small Ice Bar in the square. Cory suggested the Tourism Commission offer grants up to \$200 to local businesses to help get them interested in joining in the Winter Festival by sponsoring an ice sculpture. Commissioner Kim Jankowski would like to see all DTS companies take part in the festival, but also felt it was important to sell the idea to all Oak Creek businesses. Meeting attendees thought it would be great to see an American flag ice sculpture sponsored by Eder Flag or a large padlock sculpture sponsored by Master Lock. Kim said getting more companies involved could help bring more people to the festival to see their company's ice sculptures. Kim also would like to see the festival morph from just a family style event during the day into an adult style event at night. Kristin Craig said that last year the Winter Festival went from 10am to 4pm. Kim would like to see it go at least until 6pm to allow for more adult activities and more spectacular lighting of the ice sculptures after dark. Art Below Zero said that vodka companies love to sponsor ice bars at winter festivals. Cory said that Soul Boxer has also sponsored these types of activities in other cities. It was pointed out by City Clerk Catherine Roeske, however, that only beer and wine can be served in DTS by the Tourism Commission or one of its tax exempt partners. A separate hard liquor vendor could not sell in the square. Drexel Town Square restaurants, on the other hand could sell liquor products from their venue, with an extension of premise rule that allows for festival attendees to carry the alcoholic beverage into the square.

Many additional ideas for the Winter Festival were offered at the meeting. Cory Savage suggested creating Oak Creek winter hats to sell or give away at the festival. Cory liked the idea of beanies with pompoms or stocking caps. Art Below Zero suggested trapper hats because they might fit more people better. Commissioner Jankowski thought perhaps it would be better and more cost effective to have a Best Winter Hat Contest. The Commissioners liked the idea of having a sponsor wall that festival attendees could sign. Kristin Craig also reminded the Commission that ESPN would have a promotion going on the day of the Winter Festival and Art Below Zero could carve a news desk or selfie frame with the ESPN logo. Jeanne and Max suggested creating reusable wooden pedestals made out of two by fours, with a printed logo label attached on the front as a base to install the ice sculptures on. This would reduce the cost of adding premium logos to each ice sculpture. Commissioners thought this could be accomplished with the help of shop students at the high school or Boy Scouts looking to do an Eagle Scout project. Another option was using DPW personnel, but this might be difficult during the winter snow plowing season.

Cory Savage said it was important to create a list of the next steps needed to plan the 2019 Winter Festival on February 16<sup>th</sup>. A preliminary list included:

- 1) Create a promotional flyer for distribution by mail and email
- 2) Create a pick list
- 3) Determine what amounts to offer as grant money for sponsoring an ice sculpture
- 4) Kristin should follow-up with Art Below Zero
- 5) Find out about how to create wooden logo pedestals
- 6) Determine whether to hire Art Below Zero or other musicians for event
- 7) Check with Arenas America for heated tent rental or sponsorship
- 8) Check into cost of hats and coffee sleeves as promotional items

Final ideas for a great 2019 Winter Festival included raising the ice budget from \$12,000 to \$15,000 next year. Some thought that a DJ would be better than a band to allow for more musical variety. Kristin said that Valentine Coffee had already expressed interest in selling warm mulled wine again for the 2019 Winter Festival. The Commissioners want to make sure to include a few event logo sculptures in the order with Art Below Zero. They also thought that a \$50 grant for the single block \$350 ice sculpture and a \$100 grant for the \$500 size sculpture would be appropriate to encourage companies to sponsor an ice sculpture.

**b. Review and take action on WISN proposal.** – Cory Savage explained that the Tourism Commission had been working closely with Shamire Goodwin II and WISN12 for two years now and the \$25,000 annual contract included television commercials and almost daily promotion of Oak Creek via pictures televised during Mark Baden’s weather forecasts from the Weather Camera showing Drexel Town Square. Cory has enjoyed working with Shamire but felt that this was a huge part of the 2018 Advertising and Promotions budget for the Tourism Commission and it had limited success in drawing event attendees and out of town visitors. Cory explained that the cost ran in the \$100’s of dollars per impression versus the cost of just a few dollars per impression on social media. Cory estimated that the number of media impressions could be doubled if the Tourism Commission moved away from the WISN contract. Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, asked Cory what the new media plan would look like if we did not renew the WISN12 contract. Cory Savage said he would recommend using more radio leading up to events and increase social media placement for the Farmers Market, especially in Franklin and Caledonia. He said that he would continue to use Over-The-Top (OTT) messages, our Radio Milwaukee partnership which skews younger, and our WTMJ radio advertising which skews older. New promotional efforts recommended by Savage Solutions included looking at Digital Outdoor billboard advertising on the site near the Petit Ice Center which has the most views of any billboard in the Milwaukee area, adding social boosted posts and ad campaigns, and creating sub-plans and new signage for each Tourism event. He said that the cost per impressions would go way down with this new plan.

Commissioner Jankowski asked Cory what the cost of just leaving the camera part of the WISN12 promotional contract would be. Cory said that Shamire did not quote this part of the contract separately, so he recommended that the City of Oak Creek approach Shamire to see if this would be possible. Commissioner Kristie Busch asked Cory if the Tourism Commission will have any TV ads if this contract is not renewed. Other than the Discover Wisconsin and Around the Corner With John McGivern television episodes, Cory said we will not have any television advertising. Commissioner Clint Wills agreed with Cory’s plan to spend less money on more advertising impressions. Kristin Craig felt the Tourism Commission should do more advertising to try and increase hotel night stays in Oak Creek. Cory said hopefully this will happen as they advertise more widely to draw new and more people to the Tourism events. Cory noted that surrounding communities are starting to copy our Tourism Commission efforts, which should be taken as a compliment. Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion not to approve the WISN12 advertising contract as presented by Shamire Goodwin II. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All voted not to approve the contract as presented.

**c. Review and take action on South Suburban Chamber of Commerce (SSCC) Memorandum of Understanding.** – Kristin Craig handed out copies of the 2019 MOU between the City of Oak Creek Tourism Commission and the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce. She noted that the document if signed would be in effect from January 1 through December 31, 2019. The \$12,000 annual sum would be paid in \$1000 monthly installments. The purpose of the contract is to use the services of the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce to create and administer roundtable discussions (minimum three per year) and business recognition events/open houses within the City of Oak Creek and highlighting its businesses. SSCC Executive Director Barbara Wesener said that they would like to add more business recognition events in 2019. She also said they have a brand new event in the works that will be a Job Fair done in cooperation with Milwaukee Area Technical College. All Oak Creek businesses will be invited, not just members of the SSCC. Barb pointed out that the SSCC also provides \$500 worth of membership services and event registrations for Kristin Craig and other Tourism Commission members under the MOU. Barb reviewed the roundtable discussions that were provided under the first MOU. Those included the December 2017 Women in Business Seminar and two sessions of Women and Money Seminars. Commissioner Kim Jankowski attended the Women and Money seminar and felt that it was more of a sales piece rather than a teaching opportunity. Doug Seymour asked Barb Wesener if the SSCC could focus on entrepreneurship for a future event. Kim said that it would be great if the Chamber could offer a workshop that would allow top employees to gain extra knowledge through training. Commissioner Clint Wills recalled a seminar he attended with an action coach. He said it was very motivating to him and all of his managers and recommended something similar for a future SSCC/Tourism roundtable to enhance workforce development and networking. All Commissioners agreed we should work together to find unique ways to foster business development in Oak Creek, including training leaders, discussing customer expectations, addressing challenges of employee retention. Barb also wants to talk with the hotel/motel community to determine what they need to improve their businesses, including the effect of AirBNB on their vacancy rates. She cited an example of two businesses within the Franklin Business Park that shared employees to even out each others employment cycles and ensure that their workers had constant employment. Barb would like to host a roundtable that would promote more business collaborations like this to help address staffing and other employment issues being experienced by local businesses. Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Oak Creek Tourism Commission and South Suburban Chamber of Commerce dated January 1, 2019. Commissioner Clint Wills seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Informational and discussion items.**

**a. Oak Creek Winterfest.** – Destination Marketing Specialist Kristin Craig updated the Commission on her progress in planning the February 16, 2019 Oak Creek Winterfest. She said she had contacted a company about hiring a carriage drawn by two horses to offer rides through Emerald Preserve during the winter festival. The company quoted her a price of \$1000 for four hours, but said that the trails through Emerald Preserve would be too narrow for that type of carriage. The Commission discussed the possibility of offering rides around Drexel Town Square instead. The route would be much shorter and give more people a chance to enjoy a carriage ride.

Kristin also mentioned the idea of renting artificial ice but said that the cost remains prohibitive. The Commissioners liked the ice games at last year's Winterfest and recommended that Kristin plan even more games for the 2019 festival. City Clerk Catherine Roeske suggested contacting The Rock in Franklin to see if they could do a snowmaking demonstration. Several of the Commissioners brought up the idea of adding a curling demonstration. Communications Coordinator Leslie Flynn said that, based on her experience, curling ice is very specialized and hard to create, but said it would not hurt to contact a local curling club to investigate the idea. The Commission continued discussing whether a band or deejay would be a better fit for the festival. Kristin would like to have Apple Holler back as an indoor vendor in 2019 and repeat the Chili Cook-off again, but possibly station them outside due to spillage problems last year. Kristin has contacted the Sled Dog team again this year but has not received a response yet. She was also looking into a possible hockey game or demonstration and will be in contact with ESPN to see how they plan to set up during the Oak Creek Winterfest.

**b. 2019 Tourism Event Calendar**– Kristin Craig presented an updated event calendar which now included the three Friday night movies on June 28, July 26, and August 16, 2019. She also added the five Wednesday Food Truck Tour events on May 22, June 26, July 17, August 28 and September 25, 2019. Kristin still needs to confirm the two Beer Garden dates in June and August which will depend on when she can reserve the beer trailers. The 2019 Oak Creek Farmers Market will run every Saturday from 9am-1pm between June 1 and October 19 (no market July 13). The Badger Party in Drexel Town Square is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 26, which is an away game for the Badgers. It is hoped we will be able to draw more people to the Oak Creek Badger Party than when a game that takes place in Madison. Kristin found that an LED screen can be rented from the same provider that we rent screens for our Outdoor Movie Nights. The LED screen is much clearer for daytime viewing. Cory Savage suggested creating a red Oak Creek t-shirts to promote the event. He also recommended self-promoting the event through social channels. Finally, Kristin continues to investigate the possibility of a Barbecue Competition event. She said she has had interest from Newaukee Night Market for partnering with us on a BBQ event. Kristin thought it might be better to hold this type of large event at Lake Vista Park rather than DTS, to allow for more event space and parking availability. Kristin will check to make sure a BBQ event date does not conflict with any other DTS events or Community Center concerts.

**Adjournment:** Commissioner Clint Wills made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kim Jankowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:53am.

Submitted by Diane Robinette  
Administrative Support Assistant  
City of Oak Creek  
December 12, 2018