

Tourism Commission Meeting  
Monday, February 11, 2019  
8:30am

Attendees: Kristie Busch, Alderman Ken Gehl, 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, Bryan Kwapil, Executive Director, Oak Creek Community Center, 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 8:31 a.m.
2. **Approval of minutes of December 10, 2018 and January 14, 2019 meetings.** – Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the December 10, 2018 Tourism Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Clint Wills seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted unanimously. Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to approve the January 14, 2019 draft meeting minutes as submitted. Alderman Ken Gehl seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. **New Business.**
  - a. **2018 Tourism Commission recap presentation and discussion on 2019 goals.** – Kristin Craig coordinated with Katie from Savage Solutions to do a presentation at the February 5, 2019 Common Council meeting. Kristin presented similar information to the Tourism Commission. Looking back at the Commission’s 2018 goals, she listed increasing attendance at tourism events, launching an Oak Creek farmers market, growing our social marketing audience, and advertising Oak Creek as a place to live, work and play. Kristin explained that there was fifteen total Tourism events in 2018 which Savage Solutions helped brand and promote. Attendance at all major events doubled in size from 2017 to 2018, except for the Fall Fest which had inclement weather in 2018. Survey results from attendees of 2018 Tourism events included positive comments about the number of almost weekly events in Drexel Town Square, the variety of vendors, the fact that attendance is free, and there are fun activities provided for the whole family. The survey also showed that attendees thought that parking and directional signage during events needed improvement. Many attendees also wished that there were additional food and beverage options available from Drexel Town Square businesses. Kristin plans to explore the partnership with DTS restaurants to help create more special food offerings during 2019 events. The survey results showed that most event attendees learned about the Tourism Commission events through Facebook, Current and Acorn magazines, direct mailers and print collateral, and finally radio. Forty percent of the visitors to Tourism events came from outside of Oak Creek according to the survey results.

Kristin and Katie were proud to announce to the council that the Oak Creek Farmer’s Market was extremely successful for the first year, running from June 2 – October 20 on Saturdays in Drexel Town Square. The total vendor and Farmer Sales reported were \$256,157. Kristin plans to work on increasing the variety of vendors for the 2019 Farmers market. During 2018 the vendors totaled forty and included produce, meats, cheese, bakery, flowers and artisans. They maintained that vendor product types be homemade, handmade or homegrown. For 2018 the Farmer’s Market also offered chef demonstrations, face painting, and music. Media coverage for 2018 included working with Discover Wisconsin and Around the Corner with John McGivern to produce episodes featuring Oak Creek as a destination in 2019. Kristin also showed the following comparison of 2017 and 2018 statistics for social media coverage:

**2017/2018 SOCIAL AUDIENCE**  
visitoakcreek.com

	2017 Sept. 1–Dec. 31	2018 Sept. 1–Dec. 31	% Change
Users	388	9,032	+2,228%
Sessions	612	11,988	+1,859%
Pageviews	2019	22,179	+999%
<b>Traffic Sources</b>			
Organic	258	8,211	+3,083
Direct	302	1,822	+503%
Referral	11	1,225	+11,036%
Social	40	340	+750%

**FACEBOOK LIKES: 1,234**

Cory Savage of Savage Solutions emphasized the fabulous positive change in social media activity from 2017 to 2018. Savage was able to verify results with the help of real-time data analytics from Google and Agent Orange. He also thanked Leslie Flynn for her great work on the City of Oak Creek Government Facebook page, which currently has over 6000 likes since its inception nine months ago.

Looking ahead to 2019 goals, Kristin hopes to enhance current events, curate new events, and increase hotel room stays. To enhance current events, Kristin wants to increase awareness through effective media presence, build strong partnerships with local businesses that make sense at events, and partner with Oak Creek hotels to cross-promote events. The new events for 2019 will be a NEWaukee Lakefront Art Event at Lake Vista Park and an ESPN Badger Preview Party in Drexel Town Square. To increase hotel night stays in 2019 Kristin suggested partnering with established events such as the National Cornhole Tourney and other events that fit/make sense for Oak Creek that will draw in crowds. Kristin will be meeting with the Rock Sports Complex in Franklin on February 28, to discuss joint marketing and determine how their sporting events could help increase overnight stays in Oak Creek hotels. Commissioner Clint Wills said that any attempt to increase hotel stays would be appreciated, since the last few months of hotel room stays since December 2018 have been slow. He noted that February stays are trending up though and March, April, and May are starting to peak up as well.

Clint said that since there are now four Marriott hotels in the South Milwaukee Metro/Airport area, he is relying more on contracting with airlines, etc. to assure a more consistent number of room night stays. He also uses a company called Smith Travel Research to keep ahead of future large events coming to the area. Doug Seymour noted that Hotel/Motel room tax revenue was up last quarter, but every hotel except the new Town Place Marriott was rather flat. Commissioner Wills said that AirBNB and similar services are impacting conventional hotels and motels quite a lot. The Commissioners asked if the motels on 13<sup>th</sup> Street in Oak Creek were more airport-centric or I-94 centric. Clint Wills said they gain more business from the airport. Commissioner Jankowski thought that creating a marketing packet to sell Oak Creek hotels would be helpful. Clint said that a sell sheet has been created, but not distributed yet. Clint felt that it was important to market to the new companies coming into Oak Creek to contract for regular stays. He said that their best year ever was 2017 due to the many construction workers that were in town helping build new facilities. Cory Savage said that it is important to develop multiple day events to increase the probability of more hotel room stays. He noted that most of our Tourism Commission events are considered local or hyper-local events, with most attendees coming from the immediate surrounding area. Commissioner Kim Jankowski asked if our Commission works with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Destination Marketing Specialist, Kristin Craig, said that she does work with them. Commissioner Wills also mentioned the possibility of the Democratic National Convention coming to Milwaukee. He said that it would allow hotels to draw 4-6 night minimums during the convention. Barb Wesener, Executive Director, South Suburban Chamber of Commerce, inquired whether the Tourism Commission has any sort of marketing relationship with Travelers Aid at the Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport. Cory Savage stated that we do not have any at this time, but that Clear Channel owns all airport signage and it is very expensive to purchase.

Kristin Craig said that she and Katie from Savage Solutions received a great response from the Common Council after their presentation. City Administrator Andrew Vickers thanked Kristin for her hard work and dedication at the Council meeting. Alderman Gehl said that the Mayor and Common Council were very impressed with the presentation. And they were also pleased with the trajectory of the new events being planned for 2019, especially the NEWaukee art festival being held in cooperation with the beer garden at Lake Vista Park.

**b. Discussion and action on Oak Creek Community Center Sponsorships.** – Bryan Kwapil, Executive Director of the Oak Creek Community Center (OCCC), gave a presentation to the Tourism Commission seeking sponsorship of several of their 2019 events. Although it was too late to request sponsorship for their 2019 Winter Brews Fest, Bryan was excited to report that the one that took place on January 26, 2019 was extremely successful with 350 tickets sold and 450 total in attendance between the beer tasting and the concert by The Crisis. They plan on hosting a similar event on January 25, 2020 with sponsorship opportunities at the Presenting level of \$1500, Lead Sponsor at \$1000, and Contributing Sponsor at \$500.

Bryan also presented information on another new OCCC program for 2019. They will be hosting a Cornhole Tournament on April 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be 64 two-person teams vying for cash prizes

totaling as much as \$1280 with a portion of the proceeds going to the Oak Creek High School Bleacher Bunch, a non-profit supporting area youth baseball. There will be Competitive and Social brackets. Everyone will be guaranteed at least three games. The event will include raffles, side games with prizes, 50/50's in addition to food and a cash bar. They are offering the three levels of sponsorship opportunities for this event at the \$1,000, \$800, and \$500 levels. Each of the levels offers a commensurate amount of marketing via email blasts and social media, advertising placement on the Oak Creek Community Center website and calendar, OCCC Facebook postings to 1,600 current followers with boosted audience promotions up to 3,500 people, advertising on the Center's large electronic sign, and onsite signage the day of the event. Bryan promised to get back to Clint and the Tourism Commission on where teams come from and how many Cornhole players are expected to be overnight guests. Commissioners also suggested the possibility of distributing giveaway bags at the Cornhole Tournament that include "Things to do in Oak Creek" and/or a cornhole bean bag with an Oak Creek Logo on it.

Bryan Kwopil presented information on the Oak Creek Community Center's Summer Concert Series, which the Tourism Commission sponsored in 2018. The Center is approaching the series a little bit differently this year, holding fewer concerts, but offering bigger concerts, with bigger name bands and more extensive promotions. The Center feels that this will be their gift to the community in celebration of their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. This concert series has served nearly 1,000 people over the course of each summer for the last ten years and started offering expanded food options, ice cream, popcorn/caramel corn and even a full bar to create a true festival environment in 2017. The concert line-up for 2019 should be set by March 31<sup>st</sup>, at which time promotions will begin, including a 1,500 count distribution of program season rack cards through sponsor outlets, area bars and restaurants, and at all Center events. Sponsorship commitment is required prior to the printing dates for logo/recognition inclusion. The sponsorship levels are \$3,000 for Presenting Sponsor, \$2,000 for Lead Sponsor, \$1,000 for Supporting Sponsor, and \$500 for Contributing Sponsor. Since the Center is hosting four bands instead of six this year, they are hoping to sign bands that have a larger following, as far out as Madison, WI and Northern Illinois. During 2018, the majority of concertgoers were from the Milwaukee area. Doug Seymour recommended using some of the sponsorship money for broader marketing of the concerts.

Alderman Gehl asked when Bryan needs a decision on Sponsorship. Bryan said he needs to know by the end of March for the concert series, so all sponsors can be added to the marketing program cards. Commissioner Kim Jankowski would like more information on the Cornhole Tournament before making decisions on what to sponsor with the \$5000 the Tourism Commission has budgeted for sponsorships in 2019. She thought it was nice that the event was already created and we could just get in on the marketing aspects. Doug Seymour said that first come, first served was the former way of thinking on Tourism Commission sponsorships, but said nothing was committed yet for 2019 and we could make a decision after hearing more options. Doug suggested we could add money to the purse at the Cornhole Tournament to draw more players. At this time the purse is determined by the number of teams entering at \$45 per team. Bryan expects the Cornhole Tournament to be so successful that the Center will hold two events in 2019. The Commission will get back to Bryan with their decision on Sponsorships.

c. Consider a motion to appoint the 2019 Oak Creek Farmers Market Subcommittee members. – Kristin Craig submitted a list of suggested Farmers Market Subcommittee members that were recommended to her by Dawn Carrillo for the 2019 season. See below:

Members	Term	Appoint.	Expire	Role	Paid/Unpaid
Dawn Carrillo	1 Year	Feb. 2019	Oct. 2019	Market Mgr.	Paid
Gina Goodwin	1 Year	Feb. 2019	Oct. 2019	Bus. Owner	Unpaid
Dave Kozlowski	1 Year	Feb. 2019	Oct. 2019	Vendor Rep.	Unpaid
Lora Goldensof	1 Year	Feb. 2019	Oct. 2019	Citizen	Unpaid
VACANT	1 Year	Feb. 2019	Oct. 2019	Citizen	Unpaid
Kristin Craig	1 Year	Feb. 2019	Oct. 2019	Advisory	Unpaid

Dawn said she would be willing to lead the Subcommittee for another year. Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the subcommittee members as presented for the 2019 Oak Creek Farmers Market. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor of approval.

#### 4. Informational and discussion items.

a. **Around the Corner with John McGivern Preview Event.** – Kristin Craig updated the Commission on the Monday, February 11, 2019 Around the Corner Preview Event, which was being held at the Oak Creek Community Center from 6-8pm. She had received 74 RSVP’s from City Hall Staff, businesses featured in the Oak Creek episode, and companies called on by the City Administrator and Gary Billington of Connect.the.Dots. during their business retention visits. Kristin also said that the Facebook event page showed 70 would be attending and 745 members of the public were interested in attending. Gateway also shared the event on their website. The Preview event would include cash bar and appetizers and time for networking, as well as a 30 minute film showing, followed by a question and answer session with John McGivern and John Gurda. DVD’s of the show will not be available for purchase as originally expected. After previewing the Oak Creek episode herself, Kristin said she thought it was a great episode. She thought it was wonderful how Eder Flag created a special flag with the Around the Corner Logo on it. Kristin will be handing out 500 Around the Corner t-shirts created by Oak Creek’s Redwall Screenprinting to preview attendees. She told the Commissioners that the Oak Creek episode would be aired on Channel 10 on February 14, at 7pm. After that it would be accessible on PBS.org. Commissioner Kim Jankowski thought it might be good to print some postcard sized notices saying “Sorry we’re full” and the date and time of the televised Oak Creek episode, just in case more people show up at the preview than there is room for. Kim complimented Kristin on the great job she did on organizing and overseeing the Around the Corner with John McGivern project and preview event in cooperation with the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce.

b. **Oak Creek Winterfest.** – Kristin Craig gave an update on Oak Creek’s 2019 Winterfest scheduled for Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 4pm. Outdoor activities in Drexel Town Square were to include ice carving demonstrations, ice graffiti wall, ice games, slap shot hockey, horse drawn carriages, petting zoo, drinks and mulled wine by Valentine Coffee, Cubanitas Ice Bar, Mad Science show, Young Dance Academy performance, Milwaukee Airwaves live deejay, winter vendors, and a winter hat contest on stage at 1pm. Indoor activities in the Civic Center include a

winter market, caricaturist, face painting, crafts, door prizes, library games, Friends of the Oak Creek Library book sale, and a Salvation Army/Chick-fil-A can drive. Special appearances were planned for Bernie Brewer, Yogi Bear, and Milwaukee Bucks Street Team. Vendors at the 2019 Winterfest included ESPN, Sunburst Ski Area, Pop's Kettle Corn, The Soup Market, Junior's BBQ, Milwaukee Pretzel Co., Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park, Free Spirit Siberian Husky Rescue, Ice Force Hockey, Lampe Farms, WisConian Delectables, Apple Holler, Nutman Company, Gouda Girls, Wiki Woolz, Windmill Fiberarts and Accents, Soap and Sensibility, Oberweis Dairy, and Carrie's Crispies. Sponsors lined up for the event include Art Below Zero, Cubanitas, Valentine Coffee, Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin, Connect Cell, Chick-fil-A, Camp Bow Wow, Redwall, Meijer, and Waterstone Bank. Most of them were expected to have ice sculptures at the festival. The Commissioners reminded Kristin that the Department of Public Works should not remove as much snow from Drexel Town Square as they did at last year's Winterfest. The Commissioners also wondered about the length of the horse carriage rides. Kristin had planned to keep it just one block around Drexel Town Square, but the Commissioners recommended making it a little longer so people would not get mad after waiting in line for a long time. Kristin said that 3600 people had shown interest in attending this year's event on social media, even though it was scheduled for the same day as Cedarburg's winter event. Five hundred Winterfest stocking caps were going to be given out at the DTS event. Cory Savage told Kristin she was doing a great job on the festival.

**c. NEWaukee Lake Vista Park Art Exhibition.** – Kristin explained that NEWaukee's art installation event has been scheduled for Saturday, July 20, 2019. Beer will be served at the launch party. The final day of the installation will be Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup> which is also the final day of the Lake Vista Beer Garden event. The art installations will be checked daily by NEWaukee during the three week timeframe. NEWaukee is in the process of creating a PowerPoint presentation to explain the performance/art exhibition they are designing for Lake Vista Park. It is expected to include various art forms including but not limited to music, colorful light displays, sculptures, dance, and poetry. NEWaukee will be doing an open call soon to draw artists from colleges, high schools, and middle schools to take part in the art exhibition. The event will be marketed using social media using Oak Creek's 6000 followers and NEWaukee's 26,000 followers. Commissioner Ken Gehl thought the event would be very attractive at night at the lakefront. He thought it would be great to include a few bonfires, lights on the vendor's tents, and a good amount of security to prevent vandalizing of the artwork. The contract price for the NEWaukee art event is \$15,500.

**d. 2019 Tourism Commission event calendar.** – Kristin Craig distributed an updated list of Tourism events for 2019:

Saturday, February 16 – Winterfest

Wednesday, May 22 – Food Truck Tour #1

Thursday, June 6 – Sunday, June 9 – Beer Garden #1 – Abendschein Park

Saturday, June 15 – Summer Soulstice

Wednesday, June 26 – Food Truck Tour #2  
Friday, June 28 – Outdoor Movie Night #1  
Friday, July 12 & Saturday, July13 – Dog Day at Drexel  
Wednesday, July 17 – Food Truck Tour #3  
Saturday, June 20 – Lake Vista Art Event Kick-off (art on-site July 20 – August 11)  
Friday, July 26 – Movie Night #2  
Thursday, August 8 – Sunday, August 11 - Beer Garden #2 – Lake Vista Park  
Friday, August 16 – Movie Night #3  
Wednesday, August 28 - Food Truck Tour #4  
Saturday, September 14 – Sneak Peek @ OC  
Wednesday, September 25 – Food Truck Tour #5  
Saturday, October 26 – Badger Preview Party in DTS  
Saturday, October 19 – Fall Festival  
Farmers Market – Saturdays June 1 – October 19 (no market July 13)

Barb Wesener had a brief update on the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce’s 2019 calendar. She announced that their Annual Awards Banquet would take place on Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at the Crown Plaza Hotel, 6401 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI and encouraged the Commissioners to attend. There will be three different awards given – Business of the Year, Pride in Premises, and Environmental Sustainability. Barb reminded the Commission there are several Oak Creek community entities up for consideration for the three awards. The SSCC is also cooperating with MATC for an April 4<sup>th</sup> Job Fair. Due to the large attendance expected, invitations will be going out shortly. This is in addition to the Aeronautics Job Fair taking place on April 17, 2019.

**Adjournment:** Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kim Jankowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:31am.

ATTEST:



3/11/19

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Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist

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Date