

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

Attendees: Alderman Ken Gehl, Kim Jankowski, Jim Ruetz, Clint Wills

Also in Attendance: Katie Corbin, Savage Solutions, 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, Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, City of Oak Creek, Andrew Vickers, City Administrator, City of Oak Creek

1. **Welcome/Call to order** – Commissioner Clint Wills called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.
2. **Approval of minutes of February 11, 2019 meetings.** – Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to approve the February 11, 2019 Tourism Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Ken Gehl seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted unanimously.
3. **New Business.**
 - a. **Discussion and action on Oak Creek Franklin Foundation for Education Art in the Park sponsorship.** – Commissioner Kim Jankowski presented a request from the Oak Creek-Franklin Foundation for Education (OCFFE) in her capacity as President of the Board of Directors of the Foundation. The Foundation is asking for \$1500 from the Tourism Commission, as a presenting sponsor of the 3rd Annual Art in the Park event held Memorial Day Weekend at Henry Miller Park in Oak Creek. This is the same amount sponsored by the Tourism Commission for last year's Art in the Part Event. Kim explained the event hosted over 100 vendors in 2018 and drew over 2000 attendees from Southeast Wisconsin and Illinois. Fees for the vendors are \$50 each, with a \$2 donation asked of attendees. The OCFFE is hoping to have over 150 vendors this year and draw even more attendees. The Foundation is also planning to add some food truck vendors this year, thanks to contact information forwarded to Kim by Kristin Craig. The Art in the Park event takes place right next to Oak Creek High School, which has offered to provide an indoor venue if weather is inclement. Sponsoring this event would provide the Tourism Commission with a promotional exhibit area at the event; print advertising, social media advertising, and acknowledgement on WTMJ-620. The Tourism Commission would also be promoted via school communications and on-site signage and recognition.

Doug Seymour, City of Oak Creek's Director of Community Development, asked if any Tourism Commission sponsorships had been decided upon for 2019. Kristin said that there was \$5000 available for sponsorships, but none had been decided upon yet. The only other requests so far had come from the Oak Creek Community Center for a cornhole tournament and the summer concert series. Doug wondered if we were sponsoring on a first come first served basis.

Kim reminded the Commission of the importance of sponsoring events that encourage overnight stays. Alderman Ken Gehl likes the Art in the Park event and felt the Tourism Commission should support it again in 2019.

Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to allocate \$1500 to sponsor the Oak Creek-Franklin Foundation for Education Art in the Park event on Memorial Day weekend 2019. Alderman Gehl seconded the motion. Commissioner Jankowski abstained from voting. Commissioner Clint Wills voted in favor of the motion and it passed unanimously.

b. Discussion and action on Oak Creek Community Center Sponsorships. – Kristin Craig reminded the Commissioners that Bryan Kwapil, Executive Director of the Oak Creek Community Center (OCCC) is seeking sponsorships from the Tourism Commission for several of their 2019 events. First he is asking the Tourism Commission to sponsor a Cornhole Tournament on April 6, 2019. The indoor tournament is expected to draw 64 two-person teams from as far away as Illinois, Minnesota, and Northern Wisconsin. The \$1500 top prize is expected to draw a full capacity of teams. Clint Wills asked if Kristin was able to find out how many overnight stays had taken place at similar sized Cornhole events. Kristin had not received any exact figures from the event organizer at the Midwest Cornhole Association. Alderman Gehl wondered if an outdoor cornhole event would draw more teams. He asked whether the Organization would supply the equipment for the tournament. Commissioner Ruetz felt that an outdoor event would create a lot more problems if the weather did not cooperate. Commissioner Jankowski asked if we would have to supply equipment if we held our own tournament in Drexel Town Square. Doug Seymour thought that it could possibly work during the summer. Kristin reminded the Commissioners that the Community Center was already contemplating a Fall Cornhole Tournament, if the April event was successful. Commissioner Jankowski felt that it was important to support this event, possibly adding our branding logos to the equipment or coordinate with Oak Creek High School shop classes to build our own. She thought it would be a fairly low investment to show our commitment and help draw people from outside the immediate area. Doug said it would be a good way to get our name out there and make it more than just a Community Center event. He thought that sponsoring this first event could help us judge what future potential there could be for us to host a cornhole tournament. Doug thought we could sponsor at the \$500 level and ask for data regarding the event in return. City of Oak Creek City Clerk Catherine Roeske told the Commissioners that the Legion hosts approximately six cornhole tournaments a year already. She said they have about 30 sets of boards already stored at the Legion Post that have Oak Creek logos on them. She recommended that Kristin explore this possibility for any future DTS or Beer Garden event.

Commissioner Jankowski made a motion to become a Contributing Sponsor at the \$500 level for the April 6th Cornhole Tournament. Commissioner Ruetz seconded the motion. All voted in favor. At this level the Oak Creek Tourism Commission would get recognition within the Event page on the Center's website and in multiple email blasts and social media posts, as well as in on-site shared sponsor signage and a sponsor table at the event.

Kristin explained the second event the Oak Creek Community Center is asking for sponsorship from the Tourism Commission is their Summer Concert Series. She reminded the Commissioners that they had sponsored the Concert Series at the \$1000 level last year and told the Commission that she hosted an information booth at four of the five OCCC concerts last year. One of the concerts fell on the same night as a DTS food truck event, so she was not able to attend. Although the Daryl Stuermer concert was rained out last year, it did take place inside the Community Center and was very well attended. Doug Seymour asked if we knew what bands we were sponsoring yet. He thought it would be nice to know what we are sponsoring. Commissioner Kim Jankowski said that this was a well-established community event and that even if they did not know the exact bands until a little later, it would be important to sponsor.

Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to be a Supporting Sponsor at the \$1000 level for the Oak Creek Community Center's 2019 Summer Concert Series. Commissioner Kim Jankowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

c. Discover Wisconsin Preview Event. – Kristin Craig told the Commission that the Oak Creek episode of Discover Wisconsin will be aired on June 1, 2019. The episode will be called Oak Creek-Reinvented and on the Rise. Discover Wisconsin would like to host a preview event from 6-8pm on Wednesday, May 29 or Thursday, May 30, 2019. Andrew Vickers thought Wednesday would be better, but said either preview date would be okay. Kristin asked the Commission what they thought about holding the event at the Oak Creek Community Center like they did for the Around the Corner with John McGivern Preview. They all thought that the space would be appropriate and of adequate size for the event. They felt there may not even be as many attending this preview as there was for the Around the Corner preview, so space should not be a concern. The Commissioners suggested Kristin asks Discover Wisconsin how many they would expect to attend. Commissioner Jankowski suggested advertising the Preview Event at the Art in the Park event; at the featured businesses in the episode – IKEA, Trattoria di Carlo, City 13, and Valentine Coffee; and through the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce. In addition, they agreed the event should be advertised locally around the city of Oak Creek. Cost of the event will be limited to event space and appetizers, served in conjunction with a cash bar. The Commissioners thought it would be important to reach out to IKEA to see what type of advertising campaign they might be planning for the preview, before the Tourism Commission designs its marketing plan. Catherine Roeske suggested that Cory Savage reach out to Jeff in marketing at IKEA to coordinate efforts. Doug Seymour has reviewed the script from the show and thought it looked really good. The Commissioners told Kristen to move forward with the Discover Wisconsin Preview Event.

d. Oak Creek Beer Gardens. – Kristin Craig told the Commission that the two beer gardens were set for Abendschein Park Thursday, June 6 – Sunday, June 9, 2019 and at Lake Vista Park Thursday, August 8 – Sunday, August 11, 2019. Times will be 4-9pm on Thursdays and Fridays and 12-9pm on Saturdays, with 12-8pm on Sundays. The 9-930pm end times are new for this year. Tourism will be renting a brand new super cold 12 tap trailer from Explorium Brew Pub this summer. Beer will be provided by the League of Wisconsin Craft brewers again.

Prices for a glass pint will be \$7 (w/ \$5 refills), plastic pints will be \$6 (w/\$6 refills), bring your own glass \$5/pint, and wine \$5. They will be using a ticket system where attendees will purchase beer tickets at one station, then drop tickets at the bar and select their beer. At the cashier station they will take money, distribute glassware, distribute tickets, and stamp hands of people 21 and over. At the bartender stations, they will take tickets and pour beer.

Community organizations will be providing food. Volunteers will sign up for a shift and the organization will keep food profits and tips from the bar. As seen below, Kristin has secured bands for all but one afternoon of the two 2019 beer gardens. They are all local Milwaukee musicians.

Music – Beer Garden #1		
Thursday, June 6	4P-9P	Eric Algae Duo
Friday, June 7	4P-9P	Cheap Shots
Saturday, June 8	12P-3P	Joe Wray
	4P-9P	Failure to Launch
Sunday, June 9	12P-3P	Ethan Keller
	4P-8P	Alison Helf

Music – Beer Garden #2		
Thursday, August 8	4P-9P	Marr'lo Parada
Friday, August 9	4P-9P	Retreaters
Saturday, August 10	12P-3P	TBD
	4P-9P	Dog House Charlie
Sunday, August 11	12P-3P	Ethan Keller
	4P-8P	Marr'lo Parada

Kristin will be purchasing additional pint glasses with a new design for 2019. She hopes to bring new designs each year to encourage people to start a collection. She is also excited to be providing more drink options, seating and yard games this year. The new drinks will include root beer and wine on tap, in addition to fruit beers and gluten free options. Another exciting addition this year is that the last beer garden will be overlapping with the NEWaukee Art event at Lake Vista Park, which is expected to increase attendance greatly. Kristin is glad that there will be electrical outlets available at Lake Vista this year, so generators will not be needed.

The Commissioners asked if there were any baseball games scheduled during the Abendschien Park Beer Garden. Kristin said that there are none scheduled at this time. Alderman Ken Gehl said that it might be beneficial if Kristin spoke with Mary Jane Trate in the Recreation Department to make sure no rain makeup games would be scheduled in the future for June 6-9. City Clerk Catherine Roeske suggested that Kristin contact the Celebration Commission to see if the Tourism Beer Gardens could use their Cornhole, Jenga, and other large wooden yard games instead of spending additional money to rent them.

4. Informational and discussion items.

a. Around the Corner with John McGivern Preview Event. – Kristin Craig gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Tourism Commission recapping the Monday, February 11, 2019 Around the Corner Preview Event, which was held at the Oak Creek Community Center. She pointed out that the Around the Corner staff worked with the Tourism Commission and the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce to choose a list of potential businesses to highlight in the episode which advertised Oak Creek as a place to Live, Work, and Play. The episode was filmed on four different dates, filming Redwall Screen Printing and Lake Vista Park on August 6th, IKEA, Eder Flag, and City 13 on August 7th, the Sikh Temple and Drexel Town Square on August 9th, and Go Riteway, Jill and Marcus Riefel, the Academy of Performing Arts, and Oak Creek High School marching band on September 21st. The preview event which was hosted by John McGivern and his brother was open to the public and was advertised on Facebook, Current Magazine, and using an email blast. The Facebook event showed 86 people definitely attending and 816 interested. There were actually about 200 people in attendance at the preview, including the businesses featured in the episode and several businesses called on by the City of Oak Creek's Business Retention and Expansion program. Those included the following Oak Creek companies - Sudpack Corporation, Creation Technologies, WS Packaging Group, Stella & Chewy's, Nucor Cold Finish, Orthosensor, and Astronautics Corporation. The Oak Creek episode went on the air on Thursday, February 14, 2019 at 7pm on Milwaukee PBS stations and is still available at www.milwaukeepbs.org Kristin shared several photos of the preview event and city staff wearing the Around the Corner promotional t-shirts. Kristin said there were still some of the special t-shirts available if anyone was interested. Kristin Craig asked if any of the Commissioners had comments or questions about the Oak Creek Around the Corner with John McGivern. Doug Seymour suggested using a little more structured script on the Oak Creek Discover Wisconsin episode.

b. Oak Creek Winterfest. – Kristin Craig gave a PowerPoint presentation on Oak Creek's 2019 Winterfest which took place on Saturday, February 16th from 10am to 4pm. There were approximately 1000 people in attendance. The weather was 25 degrees and cloudy. Indoor activities at the event included a winter market, a caricaturist, face painting, door prizes, library games, and Friends of the Oak Creek Library Book Sale. Outdoor activities included ice carving demonstrations, ice graffiti wall, slap shot hockey, horse-drawn carriage rides, a petting zoo, drinks and mulled wine, Cubanitas Ice Bar, Mad Science Show, live music, and winter vendors. The Tourism Commission invited all local businesses to collaborate in the Winterfest event by sponsoring an ice sculpture. Different sizes were available at \$350-\$600-\$900 each. The Tourism Commission offered to subsidize the cost the different sized ice sculptures at \$50-\$100-\$200 levels. In addition to Cubanitas Ice Bar, other sponsors included Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin, Waterstone Bank, Connect Cell, Camp Bow Wow, Redwall Screen Printing, PPG, Meijer, and Chick-Fil-A. Kristin and Cory Savage designed A-frame signage to go along with each of the ice sculptures that included hashtags for posting pictures to Facebook.

Several Commissioners recommended staying away from using the year on this type of signage so they could be reused in the following years. Kristin said that some of the hashtags were already taken, so that is why they added the year to the hashtag. Kristin also told the Commission about Lampe Farms, a honey vendor, that poured honey into a honeycomb shaped block of ice and served frozen honey samples from it to interested buyers. She said they sold a lot more honey than expected using this scenario. Kristin shared many pictures of the festivities, including the horse-drawn carriage rides, petting zoo, ice bar, Mad Science Show, Young Dance Academy performers wearing their Winterfest caps, children enjoying the s'mores station and slap shot hockey games, and Yogi Bear and Bernie Brewer mascots interacting with attendees. She also shared some photos of the indoor vendors and activities including the Salvation Army canned tomato product collection, where those who donated received a voucher for a free Chick-fil-A sandwich. Over 300 cans were collected. The caricaturist was particularly popular and created quite a waiting line in the Civic Center. The Commissioners recommended using the Council Chambers next year if he returns, so the line would not impinge on other vendors in the area.

Kristin offered a chance to win a door prize in exchange for collecting email addresses from Winterfest attendees. She collected 423 emails. Survey responses were collected from 130 of those attendees. Over 60% of those surveyed heard about the event through Facebook. Those surveyed were asked to rate aspects of the event on a 1-Unsatisfactory to 5-Very satisfactory scale. Over 90% rated the date chosen as 4 or 5. Ninety-nine percent rated the time frame of 10am-4pm at a 3 or higher. Seventy percent rated the food options in the 3-4 range. Half rated games and activities in the 4-5 range. When asked what those surveyed liked best about the event, they said ice sculptures, variety of activities, book sale, free admission, indoor and outdoor activities, hockey game, ice bar and carriage rides. Dislikes included not enough activities, too cold-needed warming stations, not enough food options, too spread out, and lines too long for activities. When asked if they shopped or ate in Oak Creek before or after the event, 66% of those surveyed responded yes. Fifty percent of the respondents were Oak Creek residents. Ninety-seven percent said they would attend Winterfest again next year. Besides Oak Creek, Winterfest attendees came from Franklin, South Milwaukee, West Allis, Milwaukee, Brookfield, Waukesha, Greendale, Greenfield, New Berlin, Kenosha, Kansasville, and Chicago.

Kristin also did a survey of vendors, with fourteen responding. Fifty percent of them heard about the event by email, with over 20% hearing about it on Facebook. When the vendors were asked what they liked about Winterfest, their responses were similar to those in attendance – ice sculptures, variety of activities, friendly vendors, great attendance, caricature artist, performances in the square, and availability of indoor space. Dislikes included the need for more food options, lack of cleaning off ice prior to event, lack of warming stations outside, and the fact that it was not a two day event. All of the vendors said they would be very likely or extremely likely to recommend the event to a friend. One hundred percent said they would like to participate in Winterfest again next year.

Finally, Kristin's PowerPoint presentation recapped Winterfest 2019 with the following points. Kristin felt that the new activities of carriage rides, petting zoo, and live music went very well. Commissioner Jankowski asked if the carriage route had been extended larger than just around the square. Kristin said yes the ride went down Main Street and then turned right towards Meijer. Kristin also received great feedback about the Indoor Winter Market. She said parking in the Square and at Froedtert's parking garage seemed to be working well, with no complaints received. The addition of more sponsored ice sculptures was also well received this year. In listing what to work on for Winterfest 2020, she included trying to add even more ice sculptures and carving demonstrations, adding more activities indoor and out, adding outdoor warming stations, hiring more talent to reduce line sizes, and finding additional volunteers to supervise outdoor activities. The Commissioners felt it would be good to add a larger tent with sides for the band or deejay with possible heat sources inside to aid in warming. They recommended Kristin contact Arena America to discuss options and ideas for tents/warming areas for outside vendors as well. The tent could most likely go into a corner of the square rather than right in the middle where it might break up vision lines.

Final comments regarding 2019 Winterfest included noting that Cubanitas was able to use their Ice Bar for an additional week after the festival. The Commissioners also discussed whether the 2020 Winterfest should be extended later in the day. Most said it was extremely busy early, slacking off as the day went on. Another idea rather than extending the festival in the afternoon was to have a kickoff night the evening before the main festival, for adults only. Drexel Town Square businesses could help increase the draw by offering special giveaways. Some Commissioners suggested lining up all the sculptures in a row for easier viewing. Final ideas offered were to add a nature preserve walk, a bonfire, and/or a winter dog walk.

Adjournment: Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jim Ruetz seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:29am.

ATTEST:



4/8/2019

Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist

Date