

Tourism Commission Meeting
Monday, January 14, 2019
8:30am

Attendees: Kristie Busch, Alderman Ken Gehl, Jim Ruetz

Also in Attendance: Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist, City of Oak Creek, Angela Damiani, CEO, NEWaukee, Jeremy Fojut, Chief Idea Officer, NEWaukee, Ted Johnson, Director of Department of Public Works, City of Oak Creek, Michele Perlongo, Oak Creek Resident, Catherine Roeske, City Clerk, City of Oak Creek, Cory Savage, Savage Solutions, Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, City of Oak Creek, Andrew Vickers, Administrator, 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 8:34am.
2. **Approval of minutes of December 10, 2018 meeting.** – A quorum of Commissioners that were in attendance at the December 10, 2018 Tourism Commission meeting was not present, so a vote to approve the draft minutes from the December meeting was not possible.
3. **New Business.**
 - a. **Presentation and discussion on marketing partnership with NEWaukee.** – Angela Damiani, CEO, NEWaukee, and her associate Jeremy Fojut, Chief Idea Officer, gave a video presentation to solicit a potential partnership between the City of Oak Creek Tourism Commission and their social architecture company. The purpose of the marketing partnership would be to increase hotel/motel room stays in Oak Creek by creating a major social event that would draw attendees from far beyond our usual southeastern Wisconsin drawing area. NEWaukee has developed and implemented over 100 similar events since their inception. They gave examples of three events that are being held in the Milwaukee metro area. The first example was the South Milwaukee 7 Bridges Barbecue and Bonfire on the Beach event. It started with an illuminated night trail walk with music along the trail and South Milwaukee restaurant food and drinks available at each of the bridges. The event ended with a bonfire on the beach. This event sold out of three hundred tickets for the two years that it has been in existence. NEWaukee worked with the city and county for two years before the first event took place to assure proper permitting, health department rules, and insurance protocols were being followed. NEWaukee was able to support the event with its 200,000 strong social media audience.

The second large NEWaukee event that was explained by the team was the Milwaukee Night Market that takes place one Wednesday per month, June through September, from 5-10pm on W. Wisconsin Avenue between 2nd and 4th Streets, in downtown Milwaukee. Jeremy said the event started out as an Art Prize Competition. The event was designed to activate the area, be inclusive

and diverse, create economic development, increase employee engagement, increase tourism, and create a sense of belonging. The once monthly dance, music, and vendor summer event ended up drawing 60,000 in attendance and an adding an estimated \$8.6 million in economic development. NEWaukee used RSVP's on social media to determine number and source of attendees.

NEWaukee's third nearby event takes place at Lakeshore State Park near Milwaukee's Summerfest grounds. The annual event has taken place for 8 years and is described as an Urban Island Beach Party. The event is family and pet friendly and includes live music, food and drinks, kayaking, dancing and kid events. These fundraising events have raised 1000's of dollars over the years and now draw thousands of attendees each year. The event has made the island a destination.

NEWaukee would like to create an event at Lake Vista Park for the City of Oak Creek that would engage residents, draw attendees from outside Oak Creek, be family friendly, be something unique, and would be repeated long-term. They envisioned an Art Market style event using an emerging artist(s) to create art installations during the event which could remain in place for several weeks after, drawing even more people to the Lakefront. The event would most likely take place on a Saturday afternoon and evening and may include a craft beer market as well as dance and theater entertainment options. NEWaukee has contemplated several names for the lakefront event – Bash on the Bluff, Beats on the Bluff, The UpstART Fete or UpstART Fest, Open Spaces, or Plein air in the park. NEWaukee quoted a price of \$15,500 to develop and run such an event including items such as Logistics, Permits, Installation, Security, Cleaning, Hosting Staff, Performance Fees, Project Maintenance, and NEWaukee Promotion using their 200,000 media contacts.

Andrew Vickers, City of Oak Creek Administrator, liked the idea of drawing people to Oak Creek's Lakefront. Cory Savage of Savage Solutions agreed that having NEWaukee curate the whole event would allow us to bring in way more new people to the area. Doug Seymour thought this type of event would be the perfect type to branch out on. He said that we must be sensitive to dates of similar events when choosing a final date for a NEWaukee lakefront art event. NEWaukee foresees working closely with Kristin Kowaleski and Cory Savage on ideas for the event if the Tourism Commission decides to sign a contract with them, but NEWaukee would control the actual implementation of the event. NEWaukee was considering a late May date for the art event, but the Commissioners questioned that timing with the prevalence of "cooler near the lake" in the spring. Further discussion by the Commissioners also pointed out that the Art in the Park event hosted by Oak Creek Franklin Foundation for Education at Miller Park takes place on May 25, 2019. Commissioners thought July or August might be better for the three week installation at the lake. NEWaukee said that they could also pitch the event to corporate sponsors at the \$15,500 level. Cory felt that such an event would be a great way to promote the hidden gem of our lakefront. He recommended holding the event on the City's side of the lake park. Andrew said he felt Kristin was getting tapped out from organizing all the Tourism events currently held throughout the year and that any new major events should be organized by companies like NEWaukee that can provide staffing along with all the set-up and promotional activities involved in hosting such an event.

Oak Creek resident Michele Perlongo commented how NEWaukee's Milwaukee Night Market was wonderfully organized, safe, and enjoyable. She encouraged Oak Creek to contract with NEWaukee. The Commissioners asked Kristin if there was enough money left in the 2019 budget to fund such a NEWaukee event. She said that there is about \$10,000 left in the Event Programming budget and \$84,000 left in other various Tourism Commission accounts for 2019. Cory Savage said that he recommended contracting with NEWaukee for the lakefront event, citing the 200,000 strong email list they have available for promotion. Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to approve the NEWaukee \$15,500 contract proposal for a 2019 Lakefront Oak Creek Tourism Commission event, subject to choice of date. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

b. Presentation and discussion on 2019 Tourism advertising. – Cory handed out a breakdown of recommended 2019 Media Buys. His stated media buy goal is to drive business and tourism to Oak Creek with the majority of ads centering on events and driving traffic to those events. Cory and Savage Solutions have made recommendations for \$112,500 in media buys covering an estimated 10.8 million impressions for 2019. The media buys include advertising by television, radio, outdoor billboards, digital media, print, and through potential sponsorships/partnerships with venues such as The Rock. The budgeted amount for this year is \$125,000, compared to the \$139,000 that was budgeted in 2018. The advertising budget for 2019 is slightly higher than the Event Programming and Implementation budget of \$115,000 for 2019. Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, questioned the practicality of spending more on advertising than the actual events. Cory said that this was not that unusual based on his experience. He noted that this is the best time of year to secure media buys before the top times and locations are sold out. Cory also said that Savage Solutions gets 15% off any media buys and would be willing to offer the City of Oak Creek a 10% discount on any of the media buys they purchase for us, charging a 5% service fee. Cory said that the media buys would work in conjunction with the secondary on-site tracking done by Kristin Craig and Dawn Carrillo through social media, head counts and surveys taken at the Farmers Market and other Tourism events. It was suggested that vehicles could be tracked using traffic counters at any event at Lake Vista Park to aid in determining attendance. Cory Savage asked if he could proceed with the media allocations as listed on the handout. The Commissioners said there was no need for a motion since the 2019 budget had already been adopted. Cory said he would proceed as outlined and recommended that Kristin and Commissioner Wills meet during the off season to formulate a plan to increase heads in beds as a part of promoting Tourism events. He also recommended they look towards 2020-2022 and check into the possibility of drawing circuit type events like “corn-hole” tournaments and barbecue competitions to increase the use of the Drexel Town Square and bring in more hotel/motel room nights to the City of Oak Creek. He reminded the Commission that Reinhart was interested in organizing a BBQ competition.

c. Review and take action on 2019 Connect.the.Dots contract. – Administrator Andrew Vickers asked Doug Seymour and Alderman Gehl to discuss their experience with Gary Billington and Connect.the.Dots LLC. They noted that the business relationship had started in 2015 and that Gary had contributed a lot of time and effort to bringing development to Oak Creek. Doug and Andrew made fourteen business retention and expansion visits with Gary in 2017 and sixteen visits in 2018.

Andrew said he had also tasked Gary with creating a list of private investors/developers at the Lakefront and investigating night life and entertainment venues for Oak Creek. The Commissioners asked what types of businesses Gary Billington had helped bring to Oak Creek. Andrew noted that Gary worked for several years to secure the Zund America Inc. development for Oak Creek. He also got Metalspun to move its facility to make the development possible. In addition, Gary helped facilitate the development of the new Aldi store and the Drexel Ridge Apartments. Alderman Gehl said that Gary makes contact possible with many more companies than would be possible if the Administrator tried to attempt the task himself. Doug Seymour said that Gary has a skill set with the business community that we do not have, including rapport, communication, and the resources needed to connect with developers. Doug noted that the total success fees paid to Gary Billington under his contract has been less than \$20,000 to date.

Andrew Vickers said that he cleaned up the Connect.the.Dots proposed contract for 2019 and included a 5% increase of \$100 per month in the marketing retainer. Commissioner Kristie Busch made a motion to approve the Connect.the.Dots services contract as proposed by Andrew for 2019. Commissioner Ruetz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Informational and discussion items.

a. Around the Corner with John McGivern Preview Event. – Kristin Craig distributed a handout of the email invitation that was sent on Friday, January 11th to all Oak Creek City Hall staff and the Common Council for the Around the Corner with John McGivern Preview Event. Another version was expected to be emailed to Oak Creek businesses on Monday, January 14th. The event will take place on Monday, February 11, 2019 from 6-8pm at the Oak Creek Community Center. John McGivern and John Gurda will be in attendance. Cash bar and appetizers will be available. Kristin is requesting that people RSVP by email by February 4th to get a better idea of how many will be in attendance. Kristin said that there are already 200 interested and 40 shares on the Facebook event page. Kristin expects at least 50-75 attendees from city staff and local businesses. Commissioners recommended adding mention of a 300 person limit to any additional invitations or advertising distributed. Kristin added that DVD's of the Oak Creek episode will be available for sale at the preview. The city's episode of Around the Corner with John McGivern premieres on PBS on February 14, 2019.

b. 2019 Winterfest. – Kristin Craig gave any update on Oak Creek's 2019 Winterfest scheduled for Saturday, February 16th from 10am to 4pm. Kristin is still working on a possible on-stage concert with ice demo, flashing lights and band from 4-5:50pm. The event will take place in Drexel Town Square. Outdoor activities include ice carving demos, ice games, slap shot hockey, horse drawn carriages from 10am-1pm, petting zoo, Mad Science show 10-11am, Academy of Performing Arts show 11am-noon, and live DJ from noon to 4pm. Drinks and mulled wine will be provided by Valentine Coffee and Cubanitas and will be available outside, along with vendors from Milwaukee Pretzel Co., Pop's Kettle Corn, The Soup Market, Ice Force Hockey, The Rock Snow Park, Siberian

Husky Rescue, and ESPN. Six companies have signed up for an ice sculpture in Drexel Town Square – PPG, Cubanitas, Connect Cell, Froedtert, Camp Bow Wow and Meijer. Indoor activities will include a Winter Market with vendors from Lampe Farms, WisConian Delectables, Nutman Co., Apple Holler, Wiki Woolz, Windmill Fiber Arts, and Serenity Soap Works. Facepainting, games, and crafts will also be available for the children inside the Civic Center. Friends of the Library will be holding a book sale during the festival. Salvation Army and Chick-fil-A will be coordinating on a fundraiser to collect non-perishable food items, especially tomato products. Chick-fil-A will contribute vouchers for a free sandwich to those donating.

Kristin will be marketing the event using print marketing through postcards, coffee sleeves, flyers/posters, and press releases. She will also be using digital marketing through email blasts, homepage images and information on VisitOakCreek.com, on City Hall digital boards, and on online event calendars posted at Travel Wisconsin, Visit Milwaukee, and On Milwaukee websites. Kristin will also use social media by posting a Facebook event, adding content with pictures/videos from last year's Winterfest on Facebook, using social pushes, and adding Instagram content. Winterfest advertising will also be broadcast by ESPN and 99.1 TheMix.

Kristin has already received the invoice from Art Below Zero in the amount of \$11,480 for 2019 Winterfest. The six businesses that have ordered ice sculptures for Winterfest are also billed on the invoice and will reimburse the Tourism Commission for their portion less \$50 that the Commission has agreed to subsidize. That compares to the \$9,000 amount from last year. Andrew Vickers asked if this would include some ice sculpting going on during the full duration of the festival. Kristin said that she is trying to make that happen. The Commission considered commissioning two extra ice sculptures to insure that there is ice carving all day at the festival. Ted Johnson suggested possibly using a local wood sculptor to do additional ice sculptures at little or no cost. He recommended calling Leslie Flynn for contact information. The Commissioners decided there will probably be enough ice carving at the level already invoiced by Art Below Zero.

c. 2019 Tourism Commission Budget. – Kristin Craig announced that the Tourism Commission budget had been approved and posted online as a part of the 426 page 2019 City of Oak Creek Budget document. She handed out copies of the Fund 56 Tourism Commission adopted budget to the Commissioners. In general, Kristin said the budget was the similar to last year except for a \$15,000 increase in Event Programming and Implementation. Andrew Vickers asked if the magnets listing Tourism Commission Events would be produced and distributed again in 2019 as part of the Advertising and Promotions budget line item. Kristin assured him that they would be.

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

Saturday, February 16 – Winterfest

Wednesday, May 22 – Food Truck Tour #1

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

Friday, July 26 – Movie Night #2

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? (TBD) – Badger Preview Party in DTS

Saturday, October 19 – Fall Festival

Farmers Market – Saturdays June 1 – October 19 (no market July 13)

Beer Gardens – Kristin needs to confirm which weekends we can reserve the beer trailer with Explorium.

Beer Garden #1 (Abendschien Park) – Thursday, June 6 – Sunday, June 9 OR Thursday, June 20 – Sunday, June 23

Beer Garden #2 (Lake Vista Park) – Thursday, August 15 – Sunday, August 18 OR Thursday, August 22 – Sunday, August 25

The Commissioners asked Kristin to check with Mary Jane Trate in Recreation and Catherine Roeske , City Clerk, to determine what open dates are available at Lake Vista park during July and August for the NEWaukee art event. All Commissioners felt that July or August would be best weather-wise for a large art event at the lakefront. They thought that the new event could be scheduled so that the art installations would still be in place while the Lake Vista Beer Garden was being held. Catherine Roeske mentioned that she had scheduled a new event called Cuban Fest for June 23, 2019 in Drexel Town Square. The Commissioners were excited to hear about the new event.

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 20th at the Crown Plaza Hotel, 6401 S. 13th Street, Milwaukee, WI. Festivities are scheduled to start at 5pm. There will be three different awards given – Business of the Year, Pride in Premises, and Environmental Sustainability.

There are three community entities up for consideration for each of the three awards.

Business of the Year: Tri City National Bank
 Savaglia Financial Advisors
 Doug Milinovich, First Weber Real Estate

Pride in Premises: MATC, Oak Creek
 Ascension Franklin
 Faith Community Church

Environmental Sustainability: Nucor Cold Finish, WI
 Krones, Franklin
 MATC, Oak Creek

The guest speaker will be Cathy Jacobson, President and CEO, Froedtert Health.

Adjournment: Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:50am.

ATTEST:



Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist

2/20/19

Date