

Tourism Commission Meeting
Monday, May 13, 2019
8:30am

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

Also in Attendance: David Spiegelberg, Regional Tourism Specialist, Wisconsin Department of Tourism; Paul Pistol, Director of Corporate Sponsorships, ROC Ventures; 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; Andrew Vickers, City Administrator, City of Oak Creek; Barb Wesener, Executive Director, South Suburban Chamber of Commerce; Ted Johnson, Director of DPW, City of Oak Creek

1. **Welcome/Call to order** – Commissioner Clint Wills called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.
2. **Approval of minutes of April 8, 2019 meeting** – Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to approve the April 8, 2019 Tourism Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Ken Gehl seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

3. **New Business**

- a. **Wisconsin Department of Tourism presentation** – David Spiegelberg explained that he represents the State of Wisconsin in a marketing, rather than regulatory, capacity. Mr. Spiegelberg gave a presentation on the Department of Tourism’s assessment process, which identifies a plan for moving forward with the City’s marketing and development goals. He presented a brief overview of the tourism assessment process, which begins by developing a task force or tourism subcommittee of approximately 9-12 individuals representing different areas of our local tourism industry (hotels, restaurants, historical society, elected officials, etc.). Research is conducted based on an economic impact study and survey results from stakeholders, residents, and visitors. This information is collected into a one-page summary. From there, the subcommittee will identify an inventory of City “assets”, such as nature-based/arts/history/sports attractions, parks, meetings/conventions, and other areas of interest. Strengths and weaknesses are discussed, as well as funding sources for future initiatives.

The subcommittee will have five meetings, most of them approximately one hour in length (the third will be a strategic meeting of approximately two and a half hours). These meetings will span a period of about four months during which different phases of the assessment process will be discussed to eventually arrive at a 30-page document summarizing options for the City to move forward. Mr. Spiegelberg emphasized that this document is not intended to

be a strategic marketing plan, and will not dictate how financial resources are to be spent. Commissioner Kristie Busch inquired as to the cost of the assessment. Mr. Spiegelberg indicated there is no cost for the assessment, just a commitment of staff time and meeting space. He is currently completing an assessment in another community and would be available to start working with Oak Creek in late July (or later if needed). Commissioner Clint Wills asked if Mr. Spiegelberg could assist in identifying potential grants available to the City for tourism promotion. Mr. Spiegelberg indicated there are multiple grant programs available through the Department of Tourism for different types of marketing, depending on the focus. Commissioner Kim Jankowski felt this was an important step forward to advocate for Oak Creek business owners who may not have time or resources to pursue their own marketing. She expressed an interest in being considered for this subcommittee, adding that it might be beneficial to include a student interested in pursuing a career in economic development to provide ideas to the subcommittee from a younger perspective. Alderman Ken Gehl, Andrew Vickers, and Commissioner Jim Ruetz felt it would be beneficial to have a mixture of current Tourism Commission members along with some new representatives.

Alderman Ken Gehl asked Mr. Spiegelberg to provide a copy of the summary and 30-page document that was recently developed for the Village of Belgium, Wisconsin. Mr. Spiegelberg will share these documents with the Commissioners, and work with Kristin on a date and agenda for the first meeting.

- b. Discussion and action on ROC Ventures proposal** – Paul Pistol, Director of Corporate Sponsorships for ROC Ventures, presented a proposal for partnership with the City for an “Oak Creek Day” event, which would take place at Routine Field in Ballpark Commons featuring a Milwaukee Milkmen baseball game, followed by a fireworks display. Although this is not a confirmed date, Mr. Pistol proposed the event for Thursday, June 27 to take advantage of the publicity for the opening of the Milkmen season, which begins on June 24. He suggested a pre-game tailgate event in Drexel Town Square with coach busses available to shuttle participants to the game. This could be marketed in various ways – either as a family-friendly event with local youth baseball teams (participants could be invited to interact with the players, or appear on field during the national anthem), or as a networking night out for business owners (featuring PA announcements advertising participating businesses, or perhaps business owners invited to throw out the first pitch). The event would be marketed through various social media platforms and the weekly “Milk On Tap!” talk show, which could be filmed on location at one of our Farmer’s Markets or another Oak Creek event. The “Milk On Tap!” segment will highlight special game day attractions.

Commissioner Kristie Busch commented that the proposed timing of this event in June could conflict with the baseball seasons of many of our local teams, so it may not make sense to market it as a family-friendly event. Commissioner Kim Jankowski agreed, adding that since the City already has so much programming geared toward families, she felt the event would have greater impact with a business focus, and asked if the facility has interior space for networking. Mr. Pistol indicated they do have space inside for this purpose.

Mr. Pistol commented that ticket pricing is affordable, there is no fee to park, and depending on the package, could have a food and drink inclusion. A block of fifty tickets would constitute an investment of \$2000. Tickets including food and drink would cost \$5000, or with total access to the “Hop Yard”, an all-you-can-eat beer garden area with a 400-person capacity, would cost \$6000.

Commissioner Clint Wills expressed that he didn’t feel this type of event would have that great an impact on tourism within the City. Kristin Craig commented that tickets for the event could be given away at other previous tourism-promoting events. Commissioner Kim Jankowski inquired what the purpose is of beginning the event with tailgating at Drexel Town Square, when this time could be used on-site as networking time. Andrew Vickers commented that he liked the idea of having a “happy hour” in Drexel Town Square to reinforce the Oak Creek connection to the event, and felt that the time on the bus would also provide some networking time for participants. However, he felt that the City would need a minimum 60-day window to coordinate such an event, so the proposed June 27 date may be too early. Mr. Pistol indicated this date is flexible. Alderman Ken Gehl asked Mr. Pistol to provide a schedule of already programmed dates so that we could pick an alternate date if needed.

Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to move forward with the ROC Ventures proposal, at an investment not to exceed \$6,000. Commissioner Jim Ruetz seconded. All voted in favor.

c. Discussion on WISN12 Drexel Town Square partnership – Andrew Vickers gave a brief overview of the proposal to reinstate the WISN 12 Weather Camera. Andrew currently serves on a partnership committee of DTS owners – the association stakeholders were disappointed that the weather camera contract had not been renewed and would like to see it reinstalled at Drexel Town Square. This partnership has approximately \$30,000 for cost-sharing with the DTS owner’s association. With this cost-sharing option, the City’s former \$48,000 contract for the weather camera would be cut down to \$16,000, representing 1/3 of the cost, with the owner’s association paying the remaining 2/3 cost of \$32,000.

Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the reinstallation of the WISN12 Drexel Town Square weather camera, in partnership with the Drexel Town Square Owner’s Association. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded. All voted in favor.

d. Discussion and action on Milwaukee DNC Advertising – Katie Corbin of Savage Solutions presented a number of advertising opportunities with Clear Channel during the Democratic National Convention, being held July 13-16, 2020. One proposal is billboard advertising in high-traffic downtown areas – currently the I-43 & McKinley and I-94 & Clybourn billboards are available, at a cost of \$7,000 and \$4,800 respectively. McKinley was preferred based on its location for traffic moving north from downtown, but Commissioner Kim Jankowski mentioned that the Clybourn location would catch the attention of motorists headed toward Miller Park. The

stadium will be hosting several special events during the Democratic National Convention, so this would capture the attention of motorists traveling toward the stadium. Specific messaging has not yet been decided, but the goal is to attract travelers visiting Milwaukee for the convention to the Oak Creek area during their stay.

Commissioner Clint Wills stated that the hotels will have 90% of their rooms allocated to convention attendees and they are requiring a minimum 5-night stay during the convention, which should leave visitors time to do other things while they are in the Milwaukee area. He felt that in-house advertising to hotel patrons would be a better use of funds than the billboards, for instance, a brochure provided to patrons highlighting Oak Creek restaurants, shopping attractions, or City events being held during the convention week.

Additionally, Katie Corbin proposed airport advertising where out-of-town visitors are likely to see them. One option is an LCD screen near the baggage claim area; however Alderman Ken Gehl felt this area might be overlooked as airport travelers would be focused on watching for their luggage at this location and may not pay much attention to the LCD display. Other options include a large video wall at \$3,700 or the smaller LCD screen at \$3,300. These are positioned in Concourses C and D, which are the higher traffic concourses with the more prominent airlines.

Andrew Vickers felt that making a commitment on the billboards is more urgent at this time than the airport advertising, as billboard availability is limited. Commissioner Kristie Busch suggested doing one billboard location and one airport video display.

Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to approve one billboard up to \$7000 and one airport video display up to \$3700 to advertise during the Democratic National Convention. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded. All voted in favor.

- e. **Consider a motion to approve the purchase of a John Deere HPX615E gator** – Kristin Craig introduced a proposal to purchase a John Deere HPX615E gator that would be used for transporting event supplies and equipment. Kristin has already discussed storage of the vehicle in the City Hall parking garage with Facilities Manager Dick Kulka. It would also be accessible to the DPW department if not needed for Tourism events. Ted Johnson reported that DPW currently owns two similar vehicles, but during the summer months, they are used almost exclusively for watering services around the City and by landscaping staff to maintain street median spaces and are therefore rarely available for other uses. The vehicle has a two-person cab and a sizable bed that would be large enough to transport tables and other large items. Per a state contract, Ted Johnson indicated that the vehicle could be purchased at a cost of \$11,025 (representing an approximate \$3-\$4,000 savings). In the past, the DPW has trailered vehicles to the work site.

Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the purchase of a John Deere JPX615E gator to be used for transporting Tourism event supplies and equipment. Commissioner Kristie Busch seconded. All voted in favor.

4. Informational and discussion items

a. Discover Wisconsin Preview Event – The event will be held May 29 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Oak Creek Community Center, and will be structured very similar to the “Around the Corner with John McGivern” event. Seats will be reserved for featured business sponsors and City officials, but the event will be open to the general public. Commissioner Kim Jankowski asked if the event will include time for businesses to network. Kristin Craig indicated that there would be networking time. The program will air on Saturday, June 1.

b. Oak Creek Farmers Market – The first Farmer’s Market date will be Saturday, June 1. 99.1 the Mix radio station will be on-site with the Dells coupon book giveaway. Kristin Craig reported that we have a very broad range of vendors this year, and Dawn Carrillo is coordinating a children’s area which will be staffed by Ebenezer Child Care, as well as an area for seniors with a drop-off area where volunteers will be available to assist visitors getting on and off the bus. There will also be special seminars offered in the Multi-Purpose Room geared toward seniors.

c. Food Truck Tour – The first event will be held on Wednesday, May 22 from 4:00 – 9:00 p.m. Additional trucks will be added this year at no extra cost to the City, and Andrew from Milwaukee Food will be bringing additional high-top table seating. The events will feature live music, yard games, and sidewalk chalk. All food truck vendors have worked with Dale Pittman, City Sanitarian, on required health inspections.

d. Oak Creek Beer Garden – Kristin Craig reported that the first Beer Garden event will be held at Abendschein Park from June 6 – 9. The ending time on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights will be extended to 9:00 based on visitor feedback from last year’s beer garden event. We have a great lineup of live music, but are still looking for more volunteers for Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Kristin has reached out to some non-profit groups to run the concessions areas – they will provide the food for sale, and retain all profits and tips.

Swearing in of Commissioners: City Clerk Catherine Roeske swore in Commissioners Kristie Busch, Kim Jankowski, Jim Ruetz, and Clint Wills.

Adjournment: Commissioner Jim Ruetz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Ken Gehl seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 am.

ATTEST:



Kristin Craig, Destination Marketing Specialist

6/10/2019

Date