

Tourism Commission Meeting
Monday, February 8, 2021
8:30 a.m.

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

Also in Attendance: Laura Nelson, Tourism & Business Relations Manager, City of Oak Creek; Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, City of Oak Creek; Leslie Flynn, Communications Coordinator, City of Oak Creek; Andrew Vickers, City Administrator, City of Oak Creek; Catherine Roeske, Clerk, City of Oak Creek; Dan Bukiewicz, Mayor, 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 October 12 & December 14, 2020 meetings** – Commissioner Kim Jankowski made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Clint Wills seconded the motion. All were in favor.
3. **New Business**
 - **Introductions**
 - Laura Nelson introduced herself to the Commission. Her background includes director of sales for extended stay properties and executive director for the Wisconsin Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau. She brings with her the experience of event planning, collaborations with corporate and nonprofits. She is excited to bring her skills to Oak Creek as the new Tourism & Business relations Manager.
4. **Informational and discussion items**
 - a) **Innkeeper Engagement**
 - Laura Nelson discussed with the Commission that their purpose is to harness and make the best use of the hotel tax dollars in the community and the plan to grow that fund.
 - Meeting with innkeepers and engaging them on how to grow their revenues
 - Creating an inventory of available rooms and establishing contact with the point person at the properties
 - Collecting monthly data on activity and ADR to aide with forecasting future needs
 - Conduct quarterly meetings with innkeepers where they can provide input and determine if they could use help in any areas

b) Events Schedule/Sponsorships

- Laura Nelson discussed with the Commission her plan to work collaboratively with Carolyn (Celebrations Committee) and Dawn (Farmers Market) to keep growing the community events at Drexel Town Square.
- There is tremendous potential to expand some of the events and extending them into multiple days, hopefully generating overnight hotel room stays.
- These events would be marketed beyond the community to include nearby areas such as Madison, Chicago, etc.

c) Destinations WI/Sports ETA Memberships

- Laura Nelson explained to the Commission the potential benefits of joining these organizations.
 - Destinations Wisconsin: consists of the Tourism executives across the state, providing a forum for them to gather and discuss the industry within Wisconsin, serve as a collaborate voice to acquire more funding and grants, and garner ideas through sharing the perspectives and successes from the different communities participating.
 - Sports ETA: a list of over 900 rights holders who post events in the form of requests for proposals. Based on what the city has for sports inventory, there is potential to capitalize on that and bring in outside dollars- securing even one event has the potential to create an economic impact in the millions of dollars spread through the community.
 - Membership fees for both are relatively inexpensive: \$1000 + \$250 application fee for Destinations Wisconsin and \$795 for Sports ETA annually.

d) Budget Funding Status Report

- Doug Seymour shared a breakdown of 2020 room tax revenue totals with the Commission. The amount the city received was significantly less than in years past due to the Covid pandemic.
- Andrew Vickers further explained to the commission the city's general fund is in good standing, however with the significant hit to the room tax revenue, at this time conservatively there is \$75-80,000 available for Tourism funding.

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 9:20 a.m.

ATTEST:



Laura Nelson, Tourism & Business Relations Manager

3-10-21
Date