

Tourism Commission Meeting
Monday, February 13, 2023
8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Alderman Ken Gehl, Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen, Commissioner Clint Wills

Also in Attendance: Paula Nevarez, Leisure Services Assistant, City of Oak Creek; Leslie Flynn, Communications Coordinator, City of Oak Creek; Andrew Vickers, Administrator, City of Oak Creek; Catherine Roeske, Clerk, City of Oak Creek, Dawn Carrillo

1. **Welcome/Call to order** – Commissioner Clint Wills called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. **Minutes from January 9, 2023 Meeting** – Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen made a motion to hold over the minutes for approval at the March 13 meeting. Alderman Ken Gehl seconded the motion. All were in favor.
3. **New Business**
 - **a) 2023 Advertising Quote – Audacy audio/digital advertising**
 - Paula Nevarez presented the 2023 quote for advertising. She would like to continue with Audacy which is both radio and digital platforms and will include all the City’s events for 2023. Alderman Gehl received clarification that our ads will run 21 times for 15 seconds such events as the Farmers Market and then the rest of the calendar such as the Beer Garden, Food Truck Nights, CAFÉ and Dog Days are just rolled in. The ads will air on 99.1, 97.3 a sports channel and B93.3 on the radio. In addition, we are on all of their digital advertising such as their Facebook and their websites. A live appearance is an additional \$500, but Paula mentioned that it has never worked out and Paula has never gotten them to come to any event. Total investment is \$16,250 which is about the same amount that was spent in 2022. Paula thinks last year it was approximately \$18,000. This advertising was favorable to the events and helped with attendance, etc. Alderman Gehl asked if we have done a survey as to how attendees found out about the event. Paula mentioned that we have done Geofencing in the past, but it did not work well. Commissioner Wills observed that with the advertising, the goal is to drive attendance to the earlier weeks of the market this year. Paula pointed out that a page in the packet showed where and when the ads would run on the radio. Alderman Gehl verified that what was presented is what was budgeted for in 2023. Commissioner Wills asked how Dog Days attendance was in 2022. Paula responded that it was good, but probably could have been better had it not been so hot. In 2022, there were dogs passing out and exhausted. For 2023, Paula will have a vet on site as well as whirlpools and more cooling stations. Andrew interjected that every year the attendance grows, and Paula agreed. Commissioner Wills questioned whether we need to advertise for Dog Days since it is well attended and reallocate those funds to another event. Leslie mentioned that Dog Days has the most potential for attendees to do a hotel/motel overnight

stay. Alderman Gehl confirmed that Dog Days is held on both Friday evening and Saturday. The dates for 2023 are Friday, July 21st and Saturday, July 22nd.

Alderman Gehl made a motion to approve the 2023 advertising quotes for Audacy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen. All were in favor.

- **b) 2023 Pier Pups Contract – approval for \$2800**

- Paula Nevarez informed the Commissioners that the cost had increased from \$2500 in 2022 to \$2800 in 2023. The City does not get any income from Pier Pups, just from the booth fee that we charge vendors. Paula is hoping to have double the vendors from years past since the Farmers Market will not be held in addition to Dog Days.

Commissioner Clint Wills made a motion to approve the contract with Pier Pups. The motion was seconded by Alderman Gehl. All were in favor.

- **c) Farmers Market 2022 Report/2023 Preview**

- Per Dawn Carrillo, the Farmers Market will start May 6th this year. The vendors had asked for that date as the plants and flowers will be ready for Mother's Day weekend. There will be limited crops this early, but the plants will be plentiful. Due to the May 6th start date, there will be no market July 22nd. The market will go through October 21st, which is also Fall Fest. Dawn mentioned that Facebook and the newsletter have grown this past year. She hopes to introduce Instagram this year. Last year the market ran an additional 4 weeks and got \$24,000 in sponsorships. The market collaborated with the Library, the Community Center as well as other groups in the Oak Creek area. The market got an A+ rating from Independence First which evaluated the accessibility of the market and said Oak Creek was the most accessible market in the State. The market was ranked 4th in a national ranking and there was only one theft and one emergency. The market matched \$11,000 for Food Share. Therefore, \$27,000 went to the vendors and small businesses in the match program. Dawn works closely with the Police Department to have a presence in the area to deter any theft, especially from vendors and the amount of money they are taking in. The market hosts 13 farmers each Saturday and all those that have been asked to come back are doing so for 2023. Getting and keeping quality vendors is the key to the success of the market. Dawn was unable to do an attendance count at each market so she requested the vendors submit how much their sales were each week so she can track the success of the market. The market had \$700,000 in sales last year. The Farmer's Market has become a destination and the fastest growing market in Wisconsin. One in three customers are visitors to the City. The market is growing while others are closing. Dawn is estimating the revenue for sponsorship this year at \$50,000. Food share will continue for 2023 at \$15,000. The tasting tent will continue this year as well. Dawn is working with The Waters on programming such as chair yoga and cooking on the Square. Kids Coins will continue as well. This is a program where a child gets a coin worth \$2.00 to spend on fruits and vegetables to encourage healthy eating. The booth fees for the vendors increased for 2023, generating \$30,000. Alderman

Gehl inquired as to how much the cost of DPW, Dawn's fees, etc. is for the Farmer's Market. Andrew stated he could get that information from the budget. There are special days at the market to make it more fun; Pickle Day, Corn Day, Chess Club Day, etc. Also, the puzzle exchange has been very popular. This might be opened up to games as well this year. More special days have been added for 2023 for a total of 17. Chess Day will be back, Hatch chili roasting and Potato Day are new this year. Alderman Gehl commented that it would be great if the radio ads would promote the special days at the market as they draw near. Paula will check in to this. In the past, Dawn advertised the special days in her newsletter as well as on the Facebook page. Alderman Gehl asked Leslie if the City promotes the market as well on their Facebook page and the Visit page. Leslie indicated that it can be done. Dawn thinks there are about 3,000 or 3,500 subscribers to the newsletter as well as the market Facebook page. In 2023 there will be approximately 55 vendors each week, which is an increase of 10 from last year. There will be live music, the Kids Coins and the Kids Sprout activity again this year. The Kids Sprout activity is put on by an Oak Creek business, one each week for a total of 24 for the season. Each of the 17 special days mentioned above cost \$1,000 to sponsor and the money covers the cost of the pickle costume and those types of things. The market is also doing partnerships this year with YogaSix, Board and Brush, etc. The market offers a single non-profit spot every market for an agency to come in and talk to the community about their organization. Each market offers the bottled water sales to local kids organizations. Approximately 117 local businesses will participate in the market each year. Dawn keeps track of all databases and makes contact with all vendors, businesses, etc. for the market. Dawn is hoping to have the Kids Sprout area be a bit more about learning and healthy this year, not just a quick craft project.

New this year, there are 2 indoor pop-up markets; March 4th and April 8th that will be held at D'Vine on 27th Street. D'Vine is donating their space for the market and there is no fee for the vendors as well. The vendors would like the City to investigate having an indoor Winter Market. Dawn thought we would try these two pop-up markets and see if this is something the community will support. Dawn believes she has 45 vendors, (who will also be regular weekly vendors this summer) already signed up for the pop-ups. D'Vine will have their bar open offering various beverages. There will be very little advertising cost, vendors will advertise on their websites, displayed on screens at the Civic Center, etc.

There will be a new market day coordinator who will set up the market on Saturday mornings. This position will be paid with funds saved from other positions within the City. Dawn will get a laptop and be able to keep track of the budget better and her feeling is that the market will be removed from the Tourism area and become its own entity. Online applications are now available for the vendors. All paperwork is sent electronically and kept by the City. Dawn is working on getting an event trailer which will contain all items needed to set up the market each week and not have to rely on DPW. This trailer will go to all events, not just the market. Andrew stated that the trailer has been donated. It will be wrapped with the OC logo, etc. and will be well utilized. Dawn is looking at selling Oak Creek merchandise and gift cards soon. There are also new safety barriers that will be used.

4. Informational and discussion items

a) **ACL Cornhole Tournament**

- Paula informed the committee that the contract is now signed between the Milwaukee Yard and ACL. The sponsorship contract for \$15,000 from the ACL can be expected in the next three weeks. In turn we are getting 30 commercial units per hour on ACL Cornhole Tournament during the entire tournament including the celebrity one that is happening downtown. Included will be logo overlays, courtside frames, center logo on every board that is being used, 4 VIP tickets and a commercial promoting the City. The commercial needs to be shot highlighting whatever we choose. It's a great opportunity to make Oak Creek a destination. The commercial will play all three days of the tournament as well as at the tournament downtown. Also intro and outage footage of any location of our choice by ESPN broadcasters. There are numerous tournaments like this held throughout the year. There is the possibility that the City can bid on future tournaments as well.

b) **Room Tax Revenue History**

- Andrew presented documents showing Oak Creek's room tax revenue that was requested at a previous meeting. There are allocations to 2 tax increments that will provide additional revenue down the road for the Tourism Commission. Andrew will investigate whether there is a grant component involved in the numbers presented. There was discussion among the Commission on the numbers that were presented as well as how tax increment funds and hotel motel revenue work.

Adjournment: Alderman Ken Gehl made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

ATTEST:



Paula Nevarez, Leisure Services Assistant

03-20-23

Date