

Tourism Commission Meeting  
Monday, January 9, 2023  
8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Alderman Ken Gehl, Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen, Commissioner Jim Ruetz, Commissioner Michael Grab

Also in Attendance: Paula Nevarez, Leisure Services Assistant, City of Oak Creek; Doug Seymour, Community Development Director, City of Oak Creek; Andrew Vickers, Administrator, City of Oak Creek; Catherine Roeske, Clerk, City of Oak Creek

1. **Welcome/Call to order** – Commissioner Jim Ruetz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. **Approval of minutes November 14, 2022, meeting** –Alderman Ken Gehl made a motion to approve the November 14, 2022, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen. All were in favor.

3. **New Business**

- **a) Food Truck 2023 Contract**

- Paula Nevarez presented the 2023 MilwaukeeFood.com Food Truck Night contract. She explained that the plan to use MilwaukeeFood.com was based on the good experience that they had with them last year. The plan is to renew the contract for the same amount of \$5,000 for the 2023 season. Commissioner Michael Grab spoke about his experience with MilwaukeeFood.com and said that if the City wanted to save some money, they could run the events by themselves in the future. Doug Seymour pointed out that when Tourism is fully staffed, that may be an option, but for now, the lack of staffing alone merits the expenditure.

Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen made a motion to approve the \$5,000 contract for the 2023 MilwaukeeFood.com Food Truck Night season. Alderman Ken Gehl Seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- **b) ACL Cornhole League National Tournament**

- Paula Nevarez informed the Commissioners of the plan to have the ACL Pro Play Cornhole Tournament at the Milwaukee Yard in Oak Creek. The Tournament draws 8000 players and would precede the final tournament that is to be played at the Summerfest Grounds just a few days afterward. She asked that they approve a \$10,000 sponsorship for the Tournament to take place at the Milwaukee Yard on July 7, 8, & 9<sup>th</sup>. Paula presented the different sponsorship options and

discussed offering shuttle service to and from the hotels to Summerfest. Commissioner Jim Ruetz suggested offering \$15,000 for the Presenting Sponsorship.

Commissioner Ken Gehl made a motion to approve the \$15,000 Presenting Sponsorship for the ACL Cornhole Pro Play Tournament. The motion was Seconded by Melissa Rasmussen. All were in favor.

- **c) Fire and Ice Winter Costs**

- Paula explained the City's participation in this year's winter event called Fire and Ice. The City will co-host the event with Belair Cantina. Main St. and DTS streets will be closed. There will be LED performers walking through the event and then a stage performance. Belair will be open and have food & beverages and events inside. The City will be responsible for the LED performers contract of \$1505, and the rental of tables and a bounce house. Paula does not yet have a quote from her music entertainer. Advertising costs will be shared with Belair. The event will take place February 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> from 4-8pm.

Commissioner Ken Gehl made a motion to approve the contracts for All Star Rentals and Fox valley Artists for the Fire and Ice Event. The motion was Seconded by Jim Ruetz. All were in favor.

- **d) Oak Creek Idol Prize**

- Paula introduced her plan to have a singing contest, for adults and children, at the Saturday Beer Gardens. The first Saturday will be the try outs, second, the semi-finals, and third, the finals. There will be 3 judges, an MC, and a band, all volunteers. Paula asked the commissioners to fund a \$1000 prize for the event. Doug Seymour suggested there should be 2 categories and prizes. A \$1000 prize for the adult winner, and \$500 prize for the child winner. The Commissioners agreed. Catherine Roeske offered to provide swag for the event. Alderman Ken Gehl informed all, since this will be part of the beer gardens, no approval is necessary.

#### **4. Informational and discussion items**

##### **a) Revenue and Expenditures 2022 Events**

- Paula presented the 2022 Revenue and Expenditures reports to the Commission for review. Ken asked for the Innkeeper Tax Dollar report and budget analysis for the next meeting.

##### **b) 2023 Sponsorships**

- Paula informed the Commission that the 2023 Sponsorship Booklet was mailed out the last week of December. She also informed them that Oak Creek Youth Football is sponsoring a movie night for \$1100, Eder Flag is giving \$1500 towards the Café event, Meijer gave \$1000 towards the winter event, and she is speaking with Connect Cell, Educators Credit Union,

and Martin's Law Office regarding more sponsorships. Leslie Flynn informed the Commissioners of the evolution of the Sponsorship Booklet and why it was created.

**c) Tourism and Business Relations Staffing Assessment Update**

- Andrew Vickers discussed the status of the Tourism & Business Relations position that remains vacant. He informed the Commissioners that, in addition to giving Paula a full-time position handling local events, a part-time Marketing/Social Media position, funded by the City and Tourism, has been added. He explained that there is conversation regarding the creation of an Office of Economic Development and Tourism and Office of Strategic Marketing and Communications. There are space limitations that the City is facing, and the conversation is far from over. Andrew would like the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to be more collaborative with DTS Owners Association and the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce. Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen voiced her concern that the vacant position is taking such a long time to fill. She believes that opportunities are being missed and wouldn't want to see another 6 months go by without someone in place. Andrew and Doug informed the Commissioners that they would like the position's role to be more defined, and for a decision to be made as to whether that is the only position that is needed, before hiring someone. Melissa stressed the need to keep momentum moving forward so a decision can be quickly reached.

**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 9:40 a.m.

ATTEST:

*Paula Nevarez*

Paula Nevarez, Leisure Services Assistant

03-20-23

Date