

Tourism Commission Meeting
Monday, July 10, 2023
8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Commissioner Clint Wills, Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen, Commissioner Michael Grab, Commissioner Alicia Haase

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

1. **Welcome/Call to order** – Commissioner Clint Wills called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. **Approval of minutes May 8, 2023, meeting** – Commissioner Clint Wills made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen seconded the motion. All were in favor.
3. **Informational and discussion items:**
 - a) **Welcome new Tourism Commissioner, Alicia Haase** – Alicia told the members about herself. She is the currently the resident general manager at Cubanitas for 7 years and in restaurants for an additional 3 – 4 years. She grew up and lives in Oak Creek. The present members introduced and told a little bit about themselves.
 - b) **Request for Proposals (event bid prospects) for 2024/2025** – Paula gathered a lot of information from the Sports ETA symposium. Paula is very confident that the Mudgirl Run will be coming to the Rock Sports Complex in Franklin. She is confident that Turf Wars, an adult kickball league, will be coming to the city attracting about 1,000 visitors. This will be held at the Sports Complex in Franklin. The city is hosting a Grass Volleyball tournament at Abendschein on August 19, bringing about 1,000 visitors to the park and it will showcase how multipurpose and useful that park can be. This will have to be coordinated with the parking lot expansion happening at the park. Paula is negotiating with US Ultimate Frisbee to have an event at Lake Vista in 2024. Quadball Fest is in negotiations with Paula and that bid has to be in by July 28, 2023 for 2024. Abendschein is a possibility, but they are leaning more towards the Milwaukee Yard, which Paula will talk to Bill about. Paula explained that quadball is a mix between rugby and dodgeball. It is played on a table with a unique ball. The

Milwaukee Yard is a better fit for the requirements of quadball. If a city park was used, lighting, scoreboards, etc would have to be rented. It is more economical to have the event at the Yard. Paula will talk to Bill at the Yard about that event as well. Paula is negotiating to do the Disc Golf championships at Abendschein Park. Paula would like to bring the Can-Am games in 2028 to the city. The games are done every two years and 2026 is already bid on. Paula and Laura Nelson had previously met with them and were told that if the city does not call them, they will call us to host. It is usually done in Canada, but the organizers really want to bring it to the US and were very interested in Oak Creek. It's a 7-day Olympic event for Police, Fire and Paramedics. It would be a very involved event but it would be very economical for us. The event brings in about \$5 million plus. The host site gets to pick the dates for this event. It is typically held in June but is not a requirement. They can also do July, August or September. The city is looking to hold in September since June, July and August are busy for us. The first step for this event is to get a panel together of our Mayor, Franklin's Mayor, both Police Chiefs, Fire, Rescue, etc. This panel must agree to have this event and put our intent to bid in to Can-Am and then we go from there. All the events listed are from contacts made at the Sports ETA Symposium except for the Ultimate Frisbee and Grass Volleyball tournament.

- c) **American Cornhole League Tournament Recap** - The event was held July 7-9. There were not as many spectators as was hoped for, but Josh and Trey from the American Cornhole League Association were thrilled. They loved the Milwaukee Yard and our city. A swag bag was given to each player with coupons to area restaurants, etc. Friday's attendance was 250 teams, Saturday had over 500 teams and Sunday was a bit slower but was expected as it was a Singles tournament with about 200 players. There were many people from all over and were very happy with the area and the League wants to come back in February. Paula will talk to Bill about this. Oak Creek got exposure on Cornhole TV as well as having a spot on ESPN. Paula is hoping to get a copy of the ESPN spot from Josh at American Cornhole. Visitors came from Missouri, Michigan, etc. There were no complaints about the facility. Clint requested that Paula check the surrounding hotels for "pickup". Clint mentioned that it was a sold-out weekend for all of his hotels. He was just wondering about the blocks of rooms.
- d) **2018 Oak Creek Sports & Fitness Center Feasibility Study** – Per Andrew, Oak Creek had worked with a developer who wanted to site an indoor volleyball and basketball court facility. At that time as well as currently, we are attempting to attract a Fitness/Health club. The information that Andrew has is very broad yet outdated. We need to go back to the drawing board on this but he wanted the Commission know that

this was out there and to continue the conversation on how to move forward with a strategy for Oak Creek.

- e) **2020 Oak Creek Destination Assessment (WI Dept. of Tourism)** – Per Doug, it was a tourism assessment through the state which was a guided exercise asking what the city’s assets are, things of that nature. Nothing terribly surprising came out of the assessment. It was more of a point of reference. Leslie had requested the final report including the edits, but there was no response to her inquiry.

Per Andrew there are no strategic recommendations that came from the 2 studies, they were meant to be broad brush information. The city has rolled out a staffing/capacity plan. That information will come to the commission hopefully in the next month regarding staffing, etc. for tourism. Commissioner Clint Wills inquired as to the cost of the study. Andrew commented that the total was \$20,000. However, he feels that the cost of a future study would be more, with the understanding it would be more focused.

There was discussion among the commission members about the future of what a sports/fitness center may look like. In addition, there was discussion about hosting larger, multi-day tournaments for various sports. Per Andrew, the discussion for the commission at their future meetings is to discuss the scope of what the future studies should entail. There was extensive discussion about the surrounding areas and what hockey facilities are available.

- 4. **Adjournment** - Commissioner Clint Wills made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Melissa Rasmussen seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 a.m.

ATTEST:

Paula Nevarez
Paula Nevarez, Leisure Services Assistant

8/23/23
Date