

TOURISM AND PROMOTION COMMISSION

March 6, 2017



Chairperson John L. Swisher called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. In attendance: Members Laurie Adams, Merisa Nicholson (arrived 5:03 p.m.), Mary Nimm, Vishal Patel, David Rousayne and ex-officio John L. Swisher. Also in attendance: Administrator Kyle Ellefson and Trustees Steve Wollin and Tim Semo.

This meeting was posted and noticed according to law.

Approve Tourism and Promotion Commission Minutes of December 5, 2016.

An Adams/Rousayne motion carried to approve the December 5, 2016, Tourism and Promotion Commission minutes.

Election of Chairperson.

An Adams/Rousayne motion carried to appoint John Swisher Chairperson of the Tourism and Promotion Commission.

Certification of Code of Ethics, Wisconsin Statutes 19.59(1)(a) – (d).

Swisher reviewed the Statutes that govern the Code of Ethics and asked if the Commission members had reviewed the Code of Ethics, and asked if they had any questions. After the members indicated they had received the Code and that they did not have any questions, Swisher indicated he would sign and submit the certification as Chairperson of the Commission.

Election of Vice-Chairperson.

An Adams/Nicholson motion carried to appoint David Rousayne Vice-Chairperson of the Tourism and Promotion Commission.

Election of Secretary.

Swisher mentioned that the Commission was created with a Secretary position appointed by and from the Commission. Since the Commission was created, the Administrator has been taking the minutes instead of the Secretary, but going forward the Secretary would have the authority and responsibility for the Commission meeting minutes. A Rousayne/Adams motion carried to appoint Merisa Nicholson Secretary of the Tourism and Promotion Commission.

Update on Financials.

Ellefson reviewed the 2016 total collections and expenditures, as well as the 2016 year-end balance and 2017 collections.

Discuss Purpose of Commission and What their Guiding Statutes Mean.

Ellefson provided information to the Commission regarding the Statutory definitions and restrictions on Room Tax dollars, and reviewed the role of the Commission in tourism grant funding decisions. Swisher provided context of how the Commission was developed, and how the Commission's focus on the impact of Tourism funding has increased over time.

Johnson Creek Chamber of Commerce Grant Request – Advertising in Jefferson County Tourism

Council Guide. Chamber Director Tammi Vetrano presented information regarding the 2017 Tourism Guide, and advertising local Chamber businesses. Vetrano presented receipts for \$1,100 for the advertising pages/printing, and \$847.35 for “Co-Op” dollars used to discount the cost for Chamber members and local businesses to advertise in the Guide. The grant request was initially for \$2,500, but since the guide did not sell as many ads, the receipts only total \$1,947.35. A Rousayne/Adams motion carried to approve a grant of \$1,947.35, consisting of \$1,100 for the Jefferson County Tourism Guide, and \$847.35 for cooperative tourism marketing discounts.

Fireman's Festival Grant Request. As the discussion regarding the grant request began, Comfort Suites General Manager Christine Aumueller informed the Commission that the hotel was booked full for the date of the Fireman's Festival, so a tourism grant could not add more "heads in beds." A discussion occurred regarding whether grants could be awarded when there were currently no available rooms to book. An Adams/Nimm motion carried to table the request and directing staff to obtain legal advice regarding the use of tourism grant funds on dates when the hotel reports all of the rooms are booked, blocked, reserved, or held.

Rob's Performance Motorsports Grant Request – Spyderfest. Chairperson Swisher reviewed the grant application, the listed uses and amounts, and allowable uses under the Statutes. Swisher mentioned that Spyderfest has the entire hotel blocked, available for reservation by Spyderfest attendees. An Adams/Nicholson motion carried to approve a grant of \$5,750, consisting of \$2,000 for printed advertising booklets, \$750 for promotional posters and business cards, and \$3,000 for promotional thumb drives to be obtained and sent to attendees with media from the 2017 event and an invitation to the 2018 event.

Jefferson County Chargers Grant Request. Tammi Vetrano spoke for the team and presented the proposed 2017 team budget, including publicity expenses. Vetrano mentioned she had already booked a block of rooms for some games, and those rooms were already reserved. The Commission discussed if tourism grants should be considered if the rooms were already blocked and reserved, as the tourism grant would not be able to increase "heads in beds," similar to the concerns with the Fireman's Festival. A Rousayne/Nimm motion carried to table the request until staff had received a legal opinion regarding use of grant funds if room reservations are not available currently.

2017 Chamber of Commerce Grant update. Chamber Director Tammi Vetrano provided an update on the 2017 Chamber of Commerce grant as required by the Tourism and Promotion Grant contract. Vetrano was questioned on her activities and work hours, and she was asked in the future to provide the information according to the contract terms, which require documentation and explanation of her time and activities broken down weekly. The Commission also questioned some of Vetrano's time that was listed for the Jefferson County Chargers under her Tourism Grant hours, and questioned if these hours should be in the Chamber Grant hours, or if that should be part of the Charger's Grant request. Swisher indicated that the Commission supported Vetrano and the Chamber of Commerce, but needed to make sure there was accountability for the use of Room Tax dollars, and asked that the next report follow the terms of the contract.

Determine Next Meeting Date – Will schedule next regular meeting for June, and may call special meeting if staff obtain additional information regarding the tabled grants.

Adjourn

A Nimm/Rousayne motion carried to adjourn at 6:45 p.m.

John L. Swisher, Chair
Tourism and Promotion Commission

Disclaimer: These minutes are uncorrected; any corrections made thereto will be so noted in the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.