

TOURISM COMMITTEE
MONDAY, MAY 16, 2022 @ 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers

Mission Statement: The Committee shall foster ideas for improving existing facilities and programs to attract tourists to our community. Our purpose is to promote our various community attractions, encourage all community businesses and community-based organizations to participate, and assist in the sound development of our tourist facilities of our city.

1. The Tourism meeting was called to order by Mayor Panetti.
2. Roll Call: Jean Feldt, Wendy Spice, Ron Hayes, Lynn Hearley, Courtney Sowle, Tina Bruckner (non-voting Advisory member); Alternate Bryce Hearley and Susan K. Seidl
Also Present: Mayor J. Panetti, City Administrator/Brittney Bickel, Pat Trepanier, and one young man
3. **Mayor Panetti called for the Election of Chair to the Tourism Committee 3 times with the nomination of Hayes and vote of Courtney Sowle to the position; motion to close by Bryce Hearley and Feldt respectively.** (A Committee sign of 5 Ayes)
4. **Election of Vice Chair was also requested by Panetti 3 times. Lynn Hearley accepted the position with a call to vote and motion of Sowle and second of Feldt.** (A Committee sign of 5 Ayes)
5. **Feldt requested approval of Agenda as presented; Spice witnessed second.** (M/C)
6. **Approval of Minutes from 4/11/2022 was placed into motion by Feldt with a second call of L. Hearley.** (5 Ayes)
7. Public Input/Correspondence: Mayor Panetti explained his choice of members who attended the AARP DOWNTOWN (revitalization) SUMMIT in Appleton (May 9-10) as it was based on “last minute” knowledge of the event and time to select attendees. Note the report in 8.e. below.
8. Discussion/Recommendation/Updates on the Following:
 - a. **2022 OCEDC Joint Marketing Contribution in the amount of \$2,000 was motioned by Feldt with follow up of Hayes.** (A Committee voice vote of Aye followed)
It was explained that this has been a Tourism Committee yearly intent as City marketing is @ its best herein. Hayes clarified that last year monies were used for a City of Oconto booklet.
 - b. Waterfest 2022
 - i. **Approval of invoice from Five Star Fireworks Company in the amount of \$4,500 for the deposit on the Waterfest 2022 fireworks display came from a motion of Spice. Hayes seconded.** (5 Ayes)
 - ii. **Hayes called for approval of invoice from Steve Peterson in the amount of \$3,200 for Waterfest 2022. Hearley followed with a second.** (M/C)
A Committee poster handout accompanied: it was explained that Peterson sets up/strikes the musical event on the Beyer Home Museum lawn from mid-June to early August.
 - c. Facade Improvement Program— **Both c. and d. are to be explained @ the June meeting by OCEDC/Sam Boucher.** She also included winners of the Bounceback Grant from the WI EDC (\$10,000) of 3 Oconto recipients: Olive + Birch Boutique

(Magan Holz); Inspire Fitness (Jenny Clements); and Barn Charm: Oconto's Rustic Event Venue (Riley Sowle and Anita Jensen).

d. JEMS Grant (Deadline September 1, 2022)

e. 2022 WDAC Downtown Summit (attended by Courtney Sowle, Sammy Boucher, & Lynn Hearley)

- Sowle: explained the TOURS to the Woolen Mills (converted into apartments); Riverheath (also an apt. conversion) and a past brewery convert to hair salon recreated back into a brewery/restaurant by a father/son team. All was accomplished on the Appleton 20 Year Plan (along the river) referenced. Feldt printed Oconto City/County 20 Year Plan (completed 2007-8) from the web. (It contains some of our completions as-to-date: walk/bike path; river walk bridge, availability of bike transportation.... This will make a good reference for further Tourism meetings. It seems some of us were unaware. Hayes clarified our City brochure completed last year with Committee monies: Sowle thought it was an excellent extension of our city.
- Hearley listened to an expert on a bike/walking path: the City of Oconto has already achieved much in that category. She discussed the concept of limited traffic: Oconomowoc and Waukesha accomplished a downtown revamp due to road traffic bypasses. Murals are BIG she said: an 8x10 picture can be converted and the murals mounted on buildings can be moved periodically. She suggested a contest: Seidl suggested old photos of our City-in-action. She also learned to question what we can pin-point about Oconto: just the Walleye? (NOTE: We've had the National Tournament!) Our Smelt queen/Marsh/Bird City/Tree City are all potential. Parks are a significant call to communities. More community involvement (monthly) is advantageous. A survey of citizen likes/needs... which Hayes shared from Tourism past work (we could utilize) which had outsiders visit and give suggestions for Oconto; many of these issues have already been improved. ("Tunes on Tuesday" might be a good opportunity for Committee members to ask questions of our citizens to place on a suggestion board.) Another idea he shared was vouchers for our community. Hearley stated the importance of our businesses having a list of planned events so that they could participate (that weekend) if possible. She also spoke of 2 past medallions that were hidden in our parks for anyone to find (clues were given weekly): most of us had not heard of this from our past: perhaps we can resurrect this idea yearly with a finder's reward (leading questions were on the history of Oconto). Note: we had sesquicentennial coins... and summer geo-caching events. Hearley spoke of the AARP Grant which awards \$1000 monthly. She ended with the need to view our city in a positive manner: "Oconto is a blank slate for investors."
- Mayor Panetti was asked about the Tourism budget. He stated that the City of Oconto is waiting for the audit return: we are in critical fiscal condition. "We need to be Grant aggressive." Nevertheless, we are growing but must be vigilant, he emphasized.
- Administrator Bickel clarified budget status and language.

f. Expenditure Guidelines are to be viewed by the Committee in June.

g. Other Tourism Activities— Hearley suggested, and the Mayor supported social media and media relations.

- Mayor Panetti shared information Boucher and the Chamber organized on a FREE seminar (Learn how to leverage social media and media relations to promote your business) Tuesday, June 14 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. @ the Court House. Herein there was also discussion of hiring h. s. students to bring a “business” social media up-to-date.

9. Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday, June 13 @ 5:30 p.m.

10. Next Meeting Agenda Items: A roundtable of potential projects by Committee members

Facade Improvement Program

JEMS Grant (Deadline September 1, 2022)

Mayor Panetti ended the meeting with the intent that City Hall handle citizens as customers: taxpayers, fishermen, campers.... He also thanked the Committee for accepting this Tourism position.

11. Feldt summoned adjournment @ 7:03 p.m. Spice motioned second. (M/C)

Minutes submitted by
Susan K. Seidl