

TOURISM COMMITTEE

MONDAY, JULY 18, 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 July 18th meeting was called to order by Chairperson Courtney Sowle.
2. Roll Call: Jean Feldt, Ron Hayes, Bryce Hearley, Lynn Hearley, Courtney Sowle, Wendy Spice, Alternate Susan K. Seidl

Absent: Bryce Hearley and Tina Bruckner (non-voting)

Also Present: Mayor J. Panetti, Pat Trepanier/Waterfest coordinator, Bob LeBreck, and Diane Motiff

3. **Hayes requested approval of Agenda; Feldt supported with a second. (5 Ayes)**
4. **Approval of Minutes from 6/13/2022 was voiced by Spice with the addition that we complete 6. g. the word *monthly* @ \$60. A second was emitted by L. Hearley. (5 Ayes)**
5. Public Input/Correspondence:

- Motiff spoke for the Park and Rec. Committee City Oconto Fun Day @ City Park, August 13, 10 – 3 p.m. She requested volunteers and donation of soda: Spice offered 3/12 packs. For old photos Hayes suggested she contact the Lions Club; Trepanier suggested Sandra Lunde: a contest for the oldest picture of the area. Spice offered easels for the pictures: some could be put on the pavilion wall.
- Mayor Panetti distributed a *handout of the draft: Bay of Green Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)*. As the largest fresh water history, the State has studied our natural wetland habitats area for approximately 4 years: they too own much of the property, including a hiking and observation trail. The WI Governor will make the final decision of location at the recommendation of the UW system. Mayor Panetti felt that we are in most competition with Peshtigo. If our land were chosen this fall, it would remain the same but a research center with housing would be built for scientists all around the world to visit and study the Oconto estuarine. The Mayor sought any pros or cons the Committee might have to offer.
- Development on Main St. discussion centered on signs: were our present sign expectations determined as a safety concern? Ordinance updating through Joe Last and the Ad Hoc Committee was suggested. **Hayes motioned that Tourism is recommending the Mayor meet with Department heads to discuss signage and make approval to the Ad Hoc Committee. Feldt's second followed. (M/C)**

Sowle noted a lot of our codes are outdated and should be review and updated. L. Hearley suggested the Ad Hoc committee approval-per-sign.

6. **Discussion/Recommendation/Updates on the Following:**

a. **Waterfest 2022** Expenses were viewed within the Committee packets. Trepanier answered any questions. He recognized the present budget lacks future plans but sought to be informed if 2023 Waterfest if it is intended with at least the same support. (Trepanier himself kicked in costs where needed. \$2,620 has been added back in; \$1,500 couldn't be used for youth this year. John's Johns had a slight increase.) After this 1st year he has many details in place and will continue if that is the City intent, planning to work within budget. Trepanier has expanded his network and continues to seek safe activities for youth. He will raise food vendor rent (perhaps to \$100) and is hoping to raise an extra \$10,000 through other means. It was stated that we need outside monetary help: both the Bond Foundation and Casey Stock Foundation will be approached by Sowle. Hayes recommended we consider corporate foundations. Trepanier emphasized that Waterfest is the 1 event **for** the Community of Oconto: an entrance fee lacks good will. Trepanier had to build the band stage pre-Waterfest: the past stage was moved to Copperfest.

i. Vital Signs

ii. Kobussen Buses

iii. Five Star Fireworks Co

b. **Involvement in Copperfest 2023** will be affected by that budget as well: Mayor Panetti noted that the City donates \$1,000 plus \$4,000 in City labor time. Copperfest has a hard-working committed committee. WUMPA truck pulls are independent at the same time are monetarily successful. **Sowle made motion that Tourism supports both Copperfest and WUMPA simultaneously. Feldt seconded.** (M/C)

c. **List of Expenses Anticipated Yearly— TOURISM ACTION ITEM requests Brittney to note the Transactions Detail Budget Report with expenses through 2022 and with upcoming expenses: include the whole year.**

d. **Tourism Signs for City Marketing** have been undertaken by L. Hearley who has investigated murals on aluminum noting an estimate of \$1,500 - \$2,000. (Boucher/OCEDC set aside \$3,000 for it.) L. Hearley viewed such @ Beaver Dam Murals. Ideas, where, topics, etc. are welcome: meantime the eagle, smelting, our lumbering era, a kid mural were already suggested. Different types of murals (art, photos, paint, and aluminum) could be created throughout the City of Oconto. Hayes discussed the Chamber sign on highway 41 for which they pay to rent: it could be freshened up. Sam Boucher/OCEDC will bring her designs to the next meeting. A new Harbor Rd. sign would be welcomed and should be renewed: Mayor Panetti had someone with ideas to whom Sowle will reach out.

e. **City of Oconto Farmers Market—** OCEDC/Boucher has informed that Grants are available here but we missed the window for 2022. Sowle thought we still could have 2 in August and September: she has access to donated land, Oconto Riviera, if the City coordinated the activity. Potential vendors were discussed. Sowle would coordinate a history of the event @ the request of the Mayor. Food (veggies being a late summer to fall item), crafts, flea market are all welcome at this time. It was an independent effort in the

past. Spice suggested the Committee avoid any existing area competition. Both Sowle and L. Hearley will join forces.

f. **“Visit Oconto” Facebook & Instagram page** was given a Tourism “go” @ \$60 per month throughout the rest of 2022: **Brittney will be made aware of the payment out of our remaining \$7,000 +.** It would be interactive and updated with ideas, photos, and City activities. Any additions can be e-mailed to L. Hearley.

g. **Grants**— OCEDC/Boucher has informed that they are available here: she still awaits facade information.

h. **Expenditure Guidelines** were viewed by the Committee from their packet and it was determined that approximately \$7,000 remains in budget. **REPEAT: TOURISM ACTION ITEM requests Brittney to note the Transactions Detail Budget Report with expenses through 2022 and with future expenses: include the whole year.**

- Parking (and bus charges for Waterfest) was suggested by Spice during our budget crunch, and to encourage bus usage by local citizens.
- How about a Camper’s welcome packet from Tourism? Feldt will follow up the concept.
- Harvestfest was discussed. In the past the Woman’s Club set up corn stocks and pumpkins on Main St. It was welcoming and has been missed since. (L. Hearley offered to get the pumpkins, hay bales, and cornstalks: needs to know the expected #.) Spice will contact the Club and make the request. She noted that Freedom Park also had added décor. It was set up through Thanksgiving.

i. **Other Tourism Activities**— See above.

7. Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday, August 22 @ 5:30 p.m.

8. Next Meeting Agenda Items: much the same as herein-

Mayor Panetti had a card from Milwaukee Tool as the company came to Oconto to sell their ware @ Ace Hardware recently. He suggested they come to Harvestfest.

9. **Hayes summoned adjournment @ 7:29 p.m. Spice witnessed second. (M/C)**

Minutes submitted by
Susan K. Seidl