

City of Rock Falls Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 05/13/2020

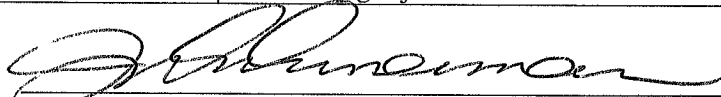
Time Meeting Started: 10:06 a.m.

Time Meeting Ended: 11:08 a.m.

Members		Also Attended	
Alderman Jim Schuneman	P	Mayor Wescott	P
Alderman Glen Kuhlemier	A	Megan Horsman	P
Brian Tribley	P	Robbin Blackert	P
Mike Sterba	A	Melinda Jones	P
Amy Williamson	P		
Tom Rynott	P		
Bethany Bland	P		

Topic	Discussion	Plan of Action
Call to Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Rock Falls Tourism Committee Meeting was held electronically (via Zoom) due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Illinois Governor Pritzker's stay at home order. The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. 	
Minutes of the March 11, 2020 Tourism Committee Meeting		Approve the March 11, 2020 Minutes
Tourism Committee Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diane Bausman was unable to attend, update from BWCVB attached Rock Falls Chamber – Bethany Bland – Chamber has been busy supporting the business in Rock Falls and planning different options for Summer Splash. The Rock Falls Chamber Board feels that the community needs something to get excited about. Tourism Director – Megan Horsman – Following the Governor's Restore Illinois Plan even if we get to Phase 3 by June 1 we will still not be able to have large gatherings so we need to decide if we want to move forward with events for this summer. Also, we have been getting inquiries for using the RB&W Park for events but not sure how to handle this. Tom Rynott stated that the Coloma Park District is using the Restore Illinois plan and are working towards the Fall Recreational season. The Parks are still closed to the public. Committee discussed the 2020 events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Truck Fridays Water Ski Show Summer Splash Big Cat Quest Art in the Park 	Food Truck Fridays and Big Cat Quest will be cancelled, Art in the Park will move forward but will be discussed again at the June meeting, Summer Splash will move forward with 3 versions of the plan and the Water Ski Show will move forward.
Event Sponsorship for Summer Splash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsorship request from the Rock Falls Chamber of Commerce is \$7,000.00 for fireworks and other activities. 	Approved the Rock Falls Chamber Sponsorship request in the amount of \$1,500.00
Event Sponsorship for the Sauk Valley Water Ski Show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsorship request from Sauk Valley Water Ski Show in the amount of \$500.00 	Approved the Sauk Valley Water Ski Show Sponsorship request of \$500.00, contingent on the event happening

Rock Falls Chamber application for the use of RB&W Park for Summer Splash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bethany Bland is not sure if Summer Splash will be able to be held as normal so the Park may or may not be used.	Approved use of the RB&W Park for Summer Splash
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.	



Jim Schuneman, Committee Chairman

BWCVB Executive Director Report for Rock Falls Tourism Brd
May 13th, 2020

Meetings Attended:

- Every Monday - ICCVB Zoom meeting for state tourism updates
- Apr 13 - Conference call with Rep Sheri Bustos
- Apr 14 - Great River Road Scenic Byway board meeting conference call
- Apr 15 - Dixon Chamber/Main Street webinar
- Apr 16,28 & May 6 - US Travel Assoc webinars
- April 29 - BWCVB Brd meeting via Zoom
- May 7 - Illinois Hotel/Lodging Assoc webinar
- May 7 - Virtual Town Hall mtg with Illinois House of Rep. Travel & Tourism Caucus members
- May 12 - Carroll County Hotel/Motel mtg via Zoom

Web Site Update:

Visitnorthwestillinois.com - On the state Zoom mtg on Monday, May 11th it was noted that travel sites across the nation are already seeing an increase in google searches for travel and our website reflects that. In the last month we had 9,756 unique visits which is up slightly as compared to last year during the same time period but the searches have changed from events and festivals to cabins and cottages, camping, state parks and our "Discovering the open road" landing page was way up.

Advertising, Promotion & Public Relations:

- **Advertising and promotion for the Spring:** We have ads in Silent Sports Magazine which includes a web ad, Midwest Living/Best of the Midwest, Adventure Outdoors magazine which includes a web ad and the Enjoy Illinois Spring-Summer State Travel Guide. We also ran the 1st phase of our Spring online ad campaign during March but starting due to the state shutdown of non-essential promotion beginning April 1st it was discontinued for the rest of the campaign.
- **Requests for information:** Since March 1st we've sent out 142 Visitor Guides as a result of requests off the website, Midwest Living and the Enjoy Illinois Travel Guide. We also had 4 requests for group tour information.
- **BWCVB Facebook page:** The state is letting us use grant funding to continue with our Facebook page after April 1st because it's deemed essential to keeping our CVB presence viable. During March we had 36 posts, 10 prior to March 15th and the rest between the 15th and 31st because we were posting about cancellations of upcoming events. During April, we did 11 posts and since all of our events were cancelled, we concentrated our posts on outdoor activities that were still allowed and other 'feel good' posts. So far in May we've had 4 posts including ones on the re-opening of the area state parks which had a reach of 14,205 and the reopening of the Midway Drive-In which had a reach of 13,515.
- **BWCVB Blog:** During March Brienna did a blog on the Rustic River Cabins in Savanna and we did a FB post on it that had a reach of 4,913 with 1,042 engagements and 57 shares. Since blogging was one of the promotion categories that was deemed non-essential after April 1st, the regular blogs were discontinued.
- **MISC UPDATES:**
 - * All radio shows done to promote events in our region were discontinued as of March 20 but on May 8th I did a 45 minute interview with Steve Marco on WIXN on the state of tourism in our region and across the state.
 - * All statewide Tourism Information Centers were closed as of April 1st
 - * Per the state shutdown mandate, our office is Polo remains closed but Patha & I are working from home and if you would need to contact me please feel free to call my cell 815-275-4868.

Blackhawk Waterways CVB Mission Statement

To increase the economic impact to the four counties represented through promotions, advertising and providing information to potential visitors.