



## City of Rock Falls Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 01/10/2024

**Time Meeting Started:** 10:03 am

**Time Meeting Ended:** 11:00 am

| Members           |   | Also Attended                  |   |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Chairman Tribley  | P | Director Jones                 | P |
| Alderman Wangelin | P | Administrative Assistant Finch | A |
| Tom Henry         | P | City Administrative Blackert   | P |
| Betsy Bunning     | P | Matthew Lenox                  | P |
| Christina Wolfe   | P |                                |   |
| Sam Smith         | P |                                |   |
| Michael Myers     | P |                                |   |
| Also Attended     |   |                                |   |
|                   |   |                                |   |

| Topic            | Discussion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Plan of Action          |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Call to order    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting called to order by Chairman Tribley at 10:03 am.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                         |
| Audience Request | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                         |
| Approved Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee reviewed minutes from the October 11, 2023 Tourism Committee Meeting. Alderman Wangelin moved to approve minutes as presented, second by Christina Wolfe, motion carried.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Minutes Approved        |
| Updates          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates from Matthew Lenox from the Blackhawk Waterways CVB. Passed out the Illinois State Executive Summary to view. 2024 Visitor Guide is in drafting process now and hope to have distribution March 1<sup>st</sup>.</li> <li>Director Sam Smith from Rock Falls Chamber reported about their upcoming Rock Falls Chamber Dinner &amp; Community Award Celebration which will be February 22, 2024. All invited.</li> </ul> <p>Director Jones reported on Tourism updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dawn of the Decorations Halloween House Decorating Contest was a success with even more houses entering. Awarded for Most Scariest and Best Theme.</li> <li>Tour of Lights House Decorating Contest was a success with more houses entering. Awarded for Best Theme, Best use of Lights and Most Extravagant.</li> <li>Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park – Approximately 2,226 cars went through and donations were about \$7,800 up from \$4,500 the previous year. Six more spaces were added this year and no problem filling them. The Coloma Township Park District plans to add 7-10 more spots for 2024. Boss Roofing-Siding Experts won the Most Popular Holiday Light Display this year. Voting was done via Survey Monkey on Facebook and also voting here at City Hall.</li> <li>Kayak Rentals started June 15, 2023 and ended for the season the first of November. It generated 64 rentals for a total of \$1,701 of which we get 50% of that equaling \$850.91. We feel it was a great success with people from out of town renting the kayaks to go on the Hennepin Canal.</li> <li>Bike Rentals May through October generated 99 total rentals for a total of \$440. This is an increase from 2022.</li> <li>Sponsorship Campaign is going on now. Packets were sent out beginning of December 2023.</li> <li>Flock to the Rock '24 – February 10, 2024. Will be held at the Rock Falls Community Building from 10am to approximately 2pm. Northern</li> </ul> | No actions on any items |

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|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                           | <p>IL Raptor Rehabilitation &amp; Education will do a presentation and bring live Birds of Prey. Robert Storm, ice sculptor, will do 3 carvings of birds. Rudy Vallejo (native Indian) will do a presentation including Indian dances. A few educational vendors will be set up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bellson Music Fest – June 8, 2024. Steve Smith (former drummer of the Journey Band) will be doing the drum clinic. Steve Smith and Vital Information will be our headliner band. Josh Duffee &amp; His Orchestra will return. Rock River Jazz Band and Rock Falls High School Jazz Band also in the line-up. Still working on one more band to complete the day. Mrs. Francine Bellson will be coming back for the event.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Rock Falls Tourism Grants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rock Falls Music Department – Percussion Palooza – February 25, 2024 - Requested \$300. A motion to approve \$300 to Percussion Palooza was made by Tom Henry, second by Alderman Wangelin. Roll call 7 yeas, 0 nays, motion carried.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Tourism Grant for \$300.00 approved                                                                                                                                           |
| Marketing                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook post reach was up (103.3K) – an increase of 27.4% in the last 30 days. Instagram reach was 389 – an increase of 21.2% in the last 30 days. We have 7.8K followers. The Visit Rock Falls Website year to date has had 27.6K visitors with top sites being Calendar of Events, Things to Do, Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall, Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park and Visitor Guide.</li> <li>We did a 2-page spread in the Visit NW Illinois Visitor Guide for 2024. It featured the Bellson Music Fest and Louie Bellson's Centennial birthday.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | No actions on any items                                                                                                                                                       |
| Façade Grants             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Hotels                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mike Myers, General Manager of Holiday Inn Express &amp; Suites reported they had a phenomenal finish to the year 2023. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were sold out. EV stations are up and running. There is 1 station with 2 chargers. They are level 2 chargers. These are for hotel guests only.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| New Business              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gift of money (up to \$50) to be used for The Rock Falls Birding Trail in memory of someone was discussed. Suggestions were to see about either Whiteside Area Career Center or local Boy Scouts of America building a birdhouse of which would be placed on The Rock Falls Birding Trail with a plaque on it stating name of who it is in memory of and who built it. Director Jones will work on this.</li> <li>Interstate 88 Billboard Contract. Director Jones gave rates of contract for 1 year, 2 years and 3 years. A motion was made by Alderman Wangelin to sign a 3-year contract for the Interstate 88 billboard, second by Christina Wolfe. Roll call 7 yeas, 0 nays, motion carried.</li> <li>2024 Calendar of Events. Director Jones gave dates of all events that Tourism will be doing this year. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Flock to the Rock 24 – Saturday, February 10</li> <li>b. Talent Show (official name to be determined) – Thursdays, May 30, July 11 and August 1</li> <li>c. Bellson Music Fest – Saturday, June 8</li> <li>d. Sick the Magazine Midwest – Monday, June 10</li> <li>e. Independence Day Celebration with Sterling/Rock Falls Jaycees Fireworks – date to be determined – waiting to see what night Jaycees will be doing fireworks. Band tentatively scheduled is 3 Day Rain</li> <li>f. Eats &amp; Beats @ the District – Friday, July 19 with Kirkland Band /Friday, August 16 with BAJA band.</li> <li>g. Art in the Park Outdoor Art Gallery and Sculpture Walk – Saturday, August 24</li> <li>h. Mexican Taco Fest (official name to be determined) – Friday, September 27</li> <li>i. Made About Plaid – Friday, October 4</li> <li>j. Lumberjack Show &amp; Beard Contest – Saturday, October 5</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>No action needed on birdhouse.</p> <p>Motion passed to accept 3-year contract for the Interstate 88 billboard.</p> <p>No action needed on 2024 Tourism events planned.</p> |

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|                        | <p>k. Halloween ATV-Golf Cart Lighted Parade – Dusk on Saturday, October 19</p> <p>l. Halloween House Decorating contest</p> <p>m. Christmas House/Business Decorating contest</p> <p>n. Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park with Coloma Park District – end of November through December</p> <p>Committee was excited about all the events planned for the community, as well as to promote tourism to Rock Falls.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |
| Old Business           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peace Sign. In September 2023, the Tourism Committee voted to accept the Peace of Art being donated by Gage Munroe to the City of Rock Falls. In the meantime, Director Jones has found out that Gage Munroe was a fictitious person. Mark Stach (the person who makes these) had been in contact with Director Jones and asked Director Jones to help him find a place for his remaining pieces. Mark Stach is donating one to each of the following businesses: 7:24 Fitness on the Rock, Community State Bank of Rock Falls, Boss Roofing-Siding Experts and Candlelight Inn, Rock Falls.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | No action needed  |
| Committee Member Items | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tom Henry from the Coloma Park District reported that he will be hiring the same horse wagon company that he had this year for next year's Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park. Tom stated his board was very happy with the donations that came in for the 2023 Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park and thanked Director Jones for all her help.</li> <li>Administrator Blackert reported that the restroom/utility building at RB&amp;W District will begin as soon as March and is forecasted to be complete by the time of the Bellson Music Fest. Also, Gensini will finish caps on the pillars on amphitheater stage, redo front of stage and add stars that were from the Limestone Building, fix drainage on the north river walk and add concrete bollards to keep cars off that side of the walkway.</li> <li>Administrator Blackert reported that the limestone outcroppings have been placed in the berms at the RB&amp;W District by Larry McCormick. Larry McCormick donated and planted more trees and shrubbery around the RB&amp;W District.</li> <li>Director Jones reported that the Rock Falls American Legion would like to hold their Memorial Day Ceremony at the RB&amp;W District and spread the ashes from the flowers and flags that were left at the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall over the ground of which the Wall sat.</li> </ul> |                   |
| Adjournment            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Betsy Bunning made motion to adjourn.</li> <li>Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Meeting Adjourned |

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Committee Chairman