



City of Rock Falls

Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 06/09/2021

Time Meeting Started: 10:00 a.m.

Time Meeting Ended: 10:52 a.m.

Members		Also Attended	
Alderman Casey Babel - Chairman	P	Director Melinda Jones	P
Alderman Gabriella Palmer	A	Diane Bausman	P
Alderman Jessica Devers	P	Administrator Blackert	P
Brian Tribley	P	Mason Deyo	P
Emily Roth	P		
Amy Williamson	P		
Bethany Bland	P		
Tom Rynott	P		

Ordinance/Topic	Discussion	Plan of Action
Call to Order	Meeting was called to Order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Casey Babel	
Approve Minutes	Committee reviewed minutes from the May 12, 2021 Tourism Committee meeting. Director Melinda Jones required a correction under Marketing/Advertising changing weekly to monthly. Bethany Bland moved to approve minutes, with the correction, as presented, second by Tom Rynott, motion carried.	Minutes Approved
Tourism Committee Updates	a. Blackhawk Waterways – Diane Bausman – Report from BWCVB was presented (copy attached) b. Bethany Bland stated that they having a good response in regards to Summer Splash which will be June 25 and 26, 2021. Starting in September the Chamber is hoping to get volunteers to help with some community projects. c. Tourism Director – Melinda Jones i. Art in the Park on May 22, 2021 went very well ii. Jammin’ on the Rock held on June 3, 2021 went well, there was more attendance than at the May event iii. The first Food Truck Friday will be held on June 11, there are 20 vendors registered iv. Art in the Park new sculpture submission were passed out to the Committee members. Director Jones asked that all committee members turn in their top 8 choices her by Monday June 14, 2021. d. Rock Falls Tourism Grants i. Sauk Valley Water Ski Show – Event Sponsorship Grant in the amount of \$500.00. Bethany Bland moved to approve the Sponsorship Grant in the amount of \$500.00, second by Tom Rynott, motion carried. ii. Rock Falls Rover Chase - Event Sponsorship Grant in the amount of \$1,000.00. Bethany Bland moved to approve the Sponsorship Grant in the amount of \$1,000.00, second by Casey Babel, motion carried.	Event Sponsorship Grant Approved Event Sponsorship Grant Approved

New Business	a. Event Permits for: i. Harvest Time Bible Church Worship Concert, July 2, 2021 ii. Young America's Foundation, July 22 & 23, 2021 iii. Yemm / Repass Wedding Ceremony, August 26, 2022 rehearsal and August 27, 2022 wedding. iv. Byers Wedding Ceremony, October 29, 2021 rehearsal and October 30, 2021 wedding. Bethany Bland moved to approve the Event Permits, second by Tom Rynott, motion carried.	Event Permits Approved
Committee Member Items	a. Casey Babel updated the Committee on the 06-08-2021 Eagle Trail Committee Meeting b. Tom Rynott – The committee discussed maintenance at the upper dam. The City had a lease with the State of Illinois for maintenance. The lease has been terminated so there is no maintenance being done by the City or the Park District. We need to consider possibly contracting with a local landscaper to maintain the property weekly. All committee members agreed that something needed to be done but this is State owned property that they will not maintain themselves. Further discussion needs to take place in the future.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.	



 Chairman, Casey Babel

BWCVB Executive Director, Diane Bausman
Report for Rock Falls Tourism Board
June 9th, 2021

Meetings Attended:

- May 18 & 19 - ICCVB state meetings in Rockford
- May 25th - BWCVB Board meeting
- May 27th - Meeting with representatives from the University of Illinois on their tourism impact study.
- June 1st - ICCVB meeting via Zoom on state funding
- June 2nd - Savanna Tourism meeting via Zoom
- June 8th - Carroll County Hotel/Motel meeting via Zoom

Web Site Update:

Visitnorthwestillinois.com - In the past month we've had 12,456 unique visits to our website which is a 7.26% increase over the previous month. Our total page views were up 9.96% and the number of pages viewed per session were up 4.5% as well. Organic traffic was up 21.43%; 7% was direct and referral traffic was up 54.4%. The top landing pages were the same as last month (1) Discover the Great Outdoors (2) lodging/cabins (3) lodging/campgrounds & state parks

Advertising, Promotion & Public Relations:

- **Requests for information:** In the last month we've had 184 requests for VG's from our website.
- **Print Advertising:** ½ page ad in the 2021 Voyager
- **Online Advertising Campaign:** The success of our online ad campaign is reflected in the continued increase in unique visitors to our website & requests for information since the campaign launched April 1st
 - Total conversions (visitor guide requests) grew 27%
 - The top campaign was the display campaign (advertising thru visuals like images or videos).
 - The 2nd most effective was SEM (search engine marketing) - our advertising strategy that generates ads in search engines such as Google, to position our brand among the others.
 - As expected, on Facebook our audience shifts heavily female & in the 35+ age group.
- **Blog:** April 27th Brienna did a blog on Brandywine Banquets and we promoted via Face Book. Our \$10 3-day boost had a reach of 2,164 with 398 engagements, 110 post clicks and 10 shares. A blog on the Midway Drive In went up on May 12th and it has a reach of 1,131 with 127 engagements, 99 post clicks and 3 shares. New blogs on Somkit, the Thai restaurant in Dixon, and Poopy's Pub & Grub in Savana are in the works and will be published soon.
- **BWCVB Social Media:** In the last month Jayne posted 27 times on FB and 25 times on Instagram. In checking our analytics for the last month, it shows that 98.23% of the referrals to our website came from our FB posts.
- Here are the top results from the FB posts we in the last month:

<u>Post</u>	<u>Total Reach</u>	<u>Engagements</u>	<u>Post clicks</u>	<u>Shares</u>
<u>White Pines re-opening</u>	1,569	369	245	18
<u>cSavanna Tubing rentals</u>	1,582	97	61	11
<u>Ax Throwing event in Rochelle</u>	1,480	77	64	5
<u>Heritage Canyon event in Fulton</u>	1,150	91	74	5

- **Radio shows:** WRHL 6/3; WIXN 5/14; WLLT weekly & WCCI bi-weekly. Another avenue for promotion of our regional events - starting May 17th, I am also submitting weekly event information for the ***Aroundptown.com*** online newsletter that is put out by Dan Eyrich from Prophetstown.
- **WREX TV:** I was interviewed for a segment on the re-opening of the White Pines Lodge

Other Updates:

The BWCVB Board of Directors voted at our recent meeting voted to cancel our annual dinner that had been tentatively scheduled for August 26th in Rochelle. The decision was made due to the restrictions on the number of people allowed at an indoor gathering that are currently still in effect which complicated planning for our event. It was decided that we will definitely plan to have it August 25, 2022 in Rochelle so mark your calendar!

Blackhawk Waterways CVB Mission Statement

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