



City of Rock Falls Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 06/12/2024

Time Meeting Started: 10:00 am

Time Meeting Ended: 11:05 am

Members		Also Attended	
Chairman Tribley	P	Director Jones	P
Alderman Wangelin	P	Administrative Assistant Finch	A
Tom Henry	P	City Administrator Blackert	A
Betsy Bunning	P	Director Lenox – Visit NW Illinois	A
Christina Wolfe	P		
Sam Smith	P		
Michael Myers	P		
Vickey Byrd	P		
Also Attended			
Mayor Kleckler	P	Mark Searing – Building Inspector	P

Topic	Discussion	Plan of Action
Call to order	Meeting called to order by Chairman Tribley at 10:00 am.	
Audience Request	None	
Approved Minutes	The committee reviewed minutes from the May 8, 2024 Tourism Committee Meeting. Alderman Wangelin moved to approve minutes as presented, second by Christina Wolfe, motion carried.	Minutes Approved
Updates	- Director Sam Smith from Rock Falls Chamber reported updates for Summer Splash update – dates are Friday, June 21 and Saturday, June 22. New event of Community Tours begins with the first one on July 12. Director Jones reported on Tourism updates: - Sauk Valley Talent Show update – We had 9 participants. Next one is Thursday, July 11, 2024. Great audience. - Bellson Music Fest – June 8, 2024 – Event went very well despite the rain storm that came in during 2nd band performing. Everything was then moved over to the McCormick Event Center. Attendance was really good at the RB&W District before the rain and actually better than expected at the McCormick Event Center since we could not really get it out that it was moved except for on Social Media. Drum Clinic with Steve Smith was great – had about 150 attend. Mrs. Bellson was very pleased with the event. - Sick the Mag – Monday, June 10, 2024 – Event was phenomenal! Over 300 cars came. Burnout went very good with around 18-20 cars participating. Would estimate over 1,000 people were watching the burnouts. The restaurants downtown did very well and we were told there was 1-2 hour waits for either dine in or carry out. All hotels had a lot of Sick The Mag vehicles in their lots, so know they benefited as well. We had 3 food vendors and each of those did great. Since this was the first year for this event, we will be working on details to make it better and also a more safer burnout area too. Sick the Mag was very happy and wants us to do this again in 2025! - Kayak Rentals are doing very well with 36 rentals in 2 months. - Bike Rentals – Mead's Bike Shop did maintenance on all 7 of our bikes. Four bikes are at the RB&W District and there have been rentals. Three more bikes will be down there as soon as we get new stickers on and cleaned up.	No actions on any items

Rock Falls Tourism Grants	- Event Sponsorship – Sterling-Rock Falls Jaycees Independence Day Celebration – July 3, 2024 – Requested \$500. After discussion a motion was made to approve \$500 by Alderman Wangelin, second by Sam Smith. Roll call – all in favor, motion carried. - Event Sponsorship – 71st Annual SVACC Fiesta Day Parade and Celebration Event – September 14, 2024 - Requested \$500. After discussion a motion was made to approve \$500 by Brian Tribley, second by Alderman Wangelin. Roll call – all in favor, motion carried.	Tourism Grant for \$500.00 Approved Tourism Grant for \$500 Approved
Façade Grants	7/24 Fitness on the Rock – Application for Façade Grant – requested \$10,000. Nick Pepper presented his plan for façade improvements. He was informed that the façade grant is a 50/50 match and may be reimbursed up to a max of \$5,000 per fiscal year. Discussion was made including the fact that the location of 7:24 Fitness on the Rock is in a highly visible area. Alderman Wangelin made a motion to approve up to \$5,000 for façade grant, second by Alderwoman Byrd. Roll call – all in favor, motion carried.	Façade Application in the amount up to \$5,000 approved
New Business	Veteran’s Park – Mayfire Neighborhood Revival – June 29, 2024. Motion made by Tom Henry to allow use of Veteran’s Park, seconded by Christina Wolfe. All in favor, motion carried.	Motion passed for MayFire Neighborhood Revival at Veteran’s Park
Old Business	Zoning Ordinance Regarding Short-Term Rentals. Mark Searing discussed why this ordinance is needed, including the fact that we should be collecting hotel/motel tax for them, the same as hotels are required to pay. After discussion, Brian Tribley made a motion to approve the Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance regarding Short-term Rentals and removing the R4 from it, second by Mike Myers. Roll call – all in favor, motion carried. This will be taken to next City Council meeting for final discussion and vote.	Zoning Ordinance Regarding Short-Term Rentals approved
Marketing	- Director Jones reported Website is doing well. In the last 28 days we had 6.8K visitors and 13.4K views with an average time on site at 1 minute 19 seconds. Top sites viewed were the Bellson Music Fest, Calendar of Events, St. Andrew’s Carnival and Sick The Mag event. - Facebook is doing really well with a reach of 90,656 and 25,932 engagements. New page followers in the last 28 days was 176 for a total of 8.4k followers. Sick the Mag FB posts got the most reach and engagement. - Robinson Billboard on Route 30 – we advertised the Bellson Music Fest and the Sick the Mag Block Party. - Interstate 88 Billboard – We have received numerous compliments on the Bellson Music Fest being advertised on there – many compliments came from visitors coming out this way.	No action needed
Hotels	Hotels - Michael Myers, General Manager of Holiday Inn Express & Suites, reported May was slower than expected. Looking forward to a great June, July, and August due to weddings and events. The events at the RB&W District definitely get hotel stays and the guests enjoy that there is something to do right next door. The Holiday Inn Express & Suites had quite a bit of room reservations this past weekend due to the Bellson Music Fest and Sick The Mag. Other hotels in Rock Falls should have as well.	No action needed
Committee Member Items	- Tom Henry reported they are getting a new website through Stahr Media. They are working with Rock Falls High School basketball coach for K-4th grade teams and also a 5th through 8th grade traveling team. - Mayor Kleckler brought up an issue about the Porta Potty at Lower Dam. It is very dirty with fish guts, clothes left in it, etc. It is on city property; however, Coloma Park District pays close to \$4,000 a year to	No action needed

	have it there; this includes extra fees to have it cleaned numerous times. Coloma Park District will look into this issue and consider removing it due to it not being taken care of by the public. • Tom Henry brought up the fact that the restroom facility at the Arduini Boat Launch is unlocked and Tom is receiving calls about it not being maintained. Discussion was made that it has been locked and inoperable for years. Director Jones will give Tom Henry a contact name from IDNR to contact. • Mayor Klecker reported he has been replacing boards for the benches at Veteran's Park. He placed 2 new Veteran's Bricks that Tourism sold this spring. The Kiwanis Park Pavilion needs some repairs and maintenance. Suggested maybe a group could help with manpower and financial aid to get this back in shape. • Flower pots downtown – This program is defunct. The pots that are downtown are now owned by the businesses themselves. Most of the flower pots were given to the towns of Lyndon and Prophetstown.	
Adjournment	• Alderman Wanglelin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Tom Henry. . • The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.	Meeting Adjourned

Committee Chairman