

City of Rock Falls

Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 10-12-2022

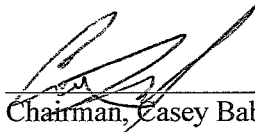
Time Meeting Started: 10:00 a.m.

Time Meeting Ended: 10:33 a.m.

Members		Also Attended	
Alderman Casey Babel - Chairman	P	Director Melinda Jones	P
Alderman Bill Wangelin	P	Dianne Bausman	P
Brian Tribley	P	City Administrator Robbin Blackert	A
Angelic Stewart	P	Deputy City Clerk Michelle Conklin	A
Bethany Bland	A	Admin Assistant Tracy Finch	P
Tom Henry	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 September 7, 2022, Tourism Committee meeting. Bill Wangelin moved to approve minutes, second by Tom Henry, Viva Voce Vote, 4 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.	Minutes Approved
Tourism Committee Updates	a. Blackhawk Waterways – Diane Bausman reviewed her report from the BWCVB (copy attached). b. Tourism Director – Melinda Jones i. Sunday-Funday Jammin’ On The Rock – September 25, 2022 – Great attendance with 8 different musicians/performers. ii. Beard Contest – October 1, 2022 at Lumberjack Show. Had 16 participants with quite a few not from the Rock Falls area. Wahl Clipper donated all the prizes. iii. Lumberjack Show – October 1, 2022 at Selmi’s Greenhouse & Farm Market was a huge success. Selmi’s said attendance was well over 1,000. Great event and looking forward to 2023. iv. Halloween Home Decorating Contest has 3 entered as of today. Prizes will be awarded to the scariest and best themed. The prizes will be gift cards from Tourism sponsors. v. Press release went out for The Traveling Vietnam Wall coming to Rock Falls September 2023. vi. 2023 Tourism Sponsorship campaign – We are beginning to work on this.	No action on any items
Marketing/Advertising/Promotions	a. Some changes have been made to the website – added tabs at top of main page for more accessible searches, added a Resources tab where applications can be found, added a page for the RB&W Sculpture Walk.	No action on any items
Façade Grants	a. Bartini’s Inc. have completed their Façade Project and is requesting reimbursement of \$2,000.00. Casey Babel moved to approve the Façade Grant payment of \$2,000.00, second by Brian Tribley, Vote, 4 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.	Façade Grant payment of \$2,000.00 approved

New Business	a. A self-service kayak rental program through Rent Fun was discussed. Melinda brought up the points about it including: i. Location at the Rt. 40 launch at the Hennepin Canal, but would have to have approval from IDNR for placement on their property. Melinda will reach out to them. ii. The program supplies all equipment including cage, locks, kayaks, and paddles which are brand new. iii. The lock system is Movatic, which is same lock company we use for the bicycles which is working well. iv. RentFun will have a local maintenance person who will take care of everything. v. An insurance/liability waiver is on the app that the rental agrees to. Any liability and insurance will be covered by RentFun. vi. If there is loss or damage to any of the equipment, RentFun will take care of contacting the renter and will not charge us for damage or loss. vii. The cost of the rental is set by us, usually ranging between \$15-25 per hour. Memberships are available. We would receive 50% of all rental revenue. viii. The cost is \$15,000 for 4 kayaks and all equipment with a 5-year contract. The \$15,000 is due up front prior to launch and does not include shipping charge. Melinda will find out an approximate shipping charge. We can renew after 5 years for another \$15,000. ix. Storage of kayaks and equipment in the winter will be stored locally and the maintenance person will take care of this. The cage will stay in its location all year long. x. Melinda will ask if we can expand to get more kayaks if we fill it is needed before the 5-year contract is up.	Discussion only
Committee Member Items	a. Angelic – Holiday Inn Express & Suites reported they are still working on trying to get the Tesla Station at the hotel. They will have 1 Tesla and 1 universal. b. Tom – Coloma Township Park District reported that John Sigel retired from the Board after 39 years. Brad Leuschke was appointed to the board. Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park plans are going well. Plan to have horse-drawn wagon rides, wagon rides, and a walk-through the display on Sunday, November 27th and Friday, December 9th. All shelters are filled with sponsors and some ground spaces are filled. About 16 business sponsors are participating. c. Bill Wangelin reported that bathrooms at the RB&W Park should be complete by the time the Vietnam Traveling Wall comes in September 2023.	
Adjournment	Casey moved to adjourn, second by Bill Wangelin, Viva Voce Vote, 4 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.	



 Chairman, Casey Babel

BWCVB Report for Rock Falls Tourism
By Diane Bausman, Executive Director
October 12, 2022

Meetings Attended:

- Sept 12-14 – UMCVB Conference in Champaign
- Sept 27 – BWCVB board meeting
- Oct 11 – Carroll County Hotel/Motel meeting

Web Site Update:

- In the last month we've had 21,044 unique visits to our website and they viewed 1.66 pages per session.
- 8.38% came as direct traffic (typed in our URL)
- 20.91% came via google ads/cpc
- 42.69% came as organic traffic via google search & keywords that clicked through to our site
- 26.70% were referrals and of those referrals 99.10% came from our Facebook posts.
- The top landing pages were (1) Discover the Great Outdoors via the QR code link from our online ads (2) Homepage (3) Events/Autumn on Parade (4) Get Our Visitor Guide (5) Lodging

Advertising, Promotion & Public Relations:

- **Requests for information:** 157 requests for Visitor Guides from our website; 54 requests from our ad in AAA Living Fall Getaways magazine; and 272 from our WGN radio adv. promotion
- **Digital Advertising:** Windycitytimes.com; wgnradio.com; AAALiving.com; silentsportsmagazine.com; and TravelTasteandTour.com
- **Print Advertising:**
 - AAA Living Fall Getaways – 1/6 pg ad + 40 words of advertorial + digital ad + reader response
 - Travel, Taste & Tour Autumn Adventures - full page ad + full pg advertorial + digital ad
 - Silent Sports – 1/3 pg ad + digital ad
 - Autumn on Parade event newspaper – ½ page ad
 - Travel Illinois Fall/Winter issue – 1/6 pg
 - SVN Neighborhood Tourist – ½ pg ad
- **Online Fall Advertising Campaign** – September report shows that our website users are up 45% over last year. 75% of our monthly budget is spent on Google display, video and SEM and the remaining 25% going towards Facebook video ads. The display ad performance breakdown is on the reverse side of this report.
- **BWCVB Social Media Report:**

Jayne posted 28 times on Facebook and 25 times on Instagram & Twitter. The latest blog on Selmi's Farm Market had a reach of 5,026 with 85 link clicks & 7 shares.

Our top FB posts in the last month:

 1. Autumn on Parade event post had a reach of 7,294 with 85 link clicks and 38 shares
 2. Rock Falls Lumberjack Show event post had a reach of 6,602 with 189 link clicks and 16 shares
 3. Bos Brothers Heritage Farm Show event post had a reach of 6,419 with 423 link clicks and 17 shares
 4. Fall Fest at Heritage Canyon event post had a reach of 5,800 with 218 link clicks and 25 shares
- **Radio shows;** WRHL 9/20; WIXN 9/9; WLLT weekly; WCCI bi-weekly. *Aroundptown.com* events are submitted weekly for their online newsletter.

SAVE THE DATE:

The 2022 Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism will be held December 5-7 at Navy Pier at the Sable at Navy Pier Chicago Hotel. Registration information along with the schedule, speaker list and more can be found by going to <https://www.ilgovconference.com/>.

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