

Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2020
Held at the Merrill Chamber of Commerce

Members Present: Ryan Schwartzman, Dan Wendorf, John Van Lieshout, Ernie Stender

Members Absent: Becky Roberts

Staff Present: Cheryl Skoug

Staff Absent: Debbe Kinsey

Others Present: MP3

Called to order: 10am by Dan Wendorf

Approval of Minutes from last meeting were not included in packet, will review and approve at next meeting

Overview of Commission for new members was skipped due to everyone having been on the Commission before.

Review of Budget for 2021

Reviewing of data that was provided. Dan Wendorf ask the Chamber to keep to the budget and not go over. If something major comes up, to bring it forward to the commission for voting.

Review of Applications of Grants:

Wendorf suggested the Commission discuss each request individually and make suggested award amounts during discussion. He suggested reviewing the total budget at the end of overall discussion to ensure it fits within the anticipated budget for 2021. This would allow for one motion at the end of all discussion to set the Tourism Budget for next year.

Merrill Winterfest Sled Dog Race, January 23-24, 2021: This is a fun unique event that happens here in Merrill. Asking: \$400, granted: \$400

Merrill Area Lion's Labor Day Car Show, September 6, 2021: This event is growing every year. Talked about how money is going to be spent in a different avenue this coming year. Asking: \$1060, granted: \$1000

Lincoln County Fair, August 11-15, 2021: Major event in Merrill. Will be huge if it can be held this upcoming year. Have not been turning in receipts to get reimbursed for the last few year. Asking: \$4000, granted: \$2000

Gleason Heritage Days, June 2021: Nice event that brings people to Gleason. Asking: \$400, granted: \$400

Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo, June 11-13, 2021: Brings in a lot of people to Merrill. Asking: \$6500, granted: \$4000

Central Wisconsin Concertina Festival, April 23-24, 2021: Event brings people from all over to enjoy the concertina. Asking: \$300, granted: \$300

Merrill Ice Drags January-February 2021: Canceled 2021 events.

Lincoln County Barleyfest, October 2, 2021: How could this event go on even if COVID-19 is still bad – hold it outside, certain times for people to come in, will look into if there is a need. Asking: \$2500, granted: \$1500

Pork in the Park, September 18, 2021: Bringing in the Merrill Riders Club to use the Arena during the day, craft/vendor sale and the gun show all going on at the same time. Trying new things to bring more people. Asking: \$2000, granted: \$1500

Lobsterfest, July 24, 2021: Great outdoor event that could be spread out more. Asking: \$2250, granted: \$1500

Black Squirrel Scurry, July 24, 2021: did it virtual for 2020. Every year it is getting bigger and bigger. Asking: \$1000, granted: \$500

HAVEN 2nd Annual Golf Tournament, June 19, 2021: application is not filled out completely. This event draws a local crowd. Asking \$500, granted \$250

Art Attack, August 7, 2021: New event to replace Crazy Daze. Chalk it up, community art, body painting, live music, different food trucks, and more for people to enjoy. Asking: \$2000, granted: \$1000

Merrill Area Lion's Bowling Tournament, Feb-April 2021: Merrill is lucky to have this tournament. People from all over the state will be here. People have already booked their rooms at AmericInn. Asking: \$5853, granted: \$2000

Oktoberfest, September 25, 2021: Event has happened on a small scale, now moving into a fundraiser for the church with more activities for people to enjoy. Asking: \$4000, granted: \$1000

A motion to approve the Tourism Grant amounts listed above with a total of \$17,350 awarded was made by Ryan Schwartzman, seconded by John Van Lieshout, voted and carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the total budget for the Tourism Commission along with the grant award amount included, \$56,490, was made by Ryan Schwartzman, seconded by Ernie Stender, voted and carried unanimously.

Discussion: (1) Would like that the Tourism Commission is kept in the loop of things, and if anything comes up they are made aware of. (2) A few weeks ago, AmericInn have license plates from 12 different states at one time. (3) Cobblestone is planning on re-opening. Just had open interviews.

Next meeting: Will plan for a February meeting, will set the date after the 1st of the year.

A motion to adjourn at 11:15 am was made by John Van Lieshout, seconded by Ryan Schwartzman, voted and carried.

Cheryl Skoug
Recording Secretary