



FESTUS TOURISM COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Pat Parsons at 3:00 p.m. at Festus City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pat Parsons, Melody Yesberg, Rhonda Gerstner, Mike Cage, and Rick Fischer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion was made by Rhonda Gerstner and seconded by Melody Yesberg to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made by Mike Cage and seconded by Rick Fischer to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2023, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

FUNDING REQUEST APPROVALS:

Item Funding No. 1(Barb Lowry – (\$50,100)

Barb Lowry discussed the 2023 Winterfest and counted 975 people who had signed the disclaimer for the ice rink with approximately 450-500 that came back for a 2nd time. Barb said that the ice rink was busy the entire time and that people really enjoyed it. She mentioned that the Library had counted approximately 900 coming through their doors that day, 300 at breakfast with Santa and had put out 250 candy canes and had to fill them back up four times. Barb stated that if the board wants to reduce costs that they could rent a 40x60 ice rink for \$6,000 instead of the 50x60 ice rink for \$9,000 but feels it is better to have something than nothing at all. Melody Yesberg said she watched the ice rink for one hour and said the kids were not skating but just scooting across and falling and noticed the parents making weird faces that this did not look like an ice rink. Barb said she never advertised a real ice rink by a synthetic rink. Melody questioned the \$18,000 in labor costs and Barb said that amount also includes the setup and manpower to watch the inflatables and not just for the ice rink. The \$33,000 that Barb requested included the inflatables, labor, and ice rink, which was for the 50x60 rink size.

Mike Cage suggested a tarp be placed on the wall at Schneider park to make it look more wintery and Rhonda Gerstner also thought that was a good idea.

Barb also discussed the street performers, petting zoo, and carriage rides. Pat Parsons asked the board if they wanted to discuss more signage at this time and the board discussed putting up banners at Home Depot and Lowe's and more advertising for the event. Vaughn suggested a banner along the fence line at Crites Memorial Park. The board is requesting that Barb research and get pricing for (3) large banners for

Winterfest to bring back at the next meeting and request funding. The banners should be date interchangeable or the 1st Saturday of December so they can be re-used each year.

Also discussed was possibly cutting back on future funding with not knowing the outcome of the Quality Inn and whether or not Tourism will receive the tourism tax that is currently outstanding. Pat Parsons explained that even if the Quality Inn is closed, you will have transit guests that will go to the other three hotels. Vaughn stated that the tourism budget is on track with the current budget of \$240,000 in revenue however, the budget has always come in higher than the \$240,000 but until we see what the outcome is and see the trend we might have to adjust for the next year budget.

MOTION:

Rick Fischer made the motion to approve \$47,100 with the smaller 40x60 ice rink, Rhonda Gerstner seconded the motion, Motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING:

The board scheduled the next funding meeting for Monday, June 10, 2024 and the follow-up meeting for Monday, June 17, 2024 at 3:00 pm. Pat requested that Vaughn research the terms of the current board of directors to make sure they will be able to attend the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

The motion to adjourn was made by Melody Yesberg and seconded by Rick Fischer, motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:41 pm.

