

# Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes October 22, 2019

**Members Present:** Dan Wendorf, Ernie Stender, Becky Roberts, John Van Lieshout, Debbe Kinsey

**Members Excused Absent:** Eric Ott

**Others Present:**

**Public:** Christine Vorpapel

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**Meeting was called to order** at 12.24pm by Dan Wendorf.

**Public Comment:** none at this time

A copy of the Report from ending budget from 2018 was provided. Last year was the largest budget set. This year will probably be the same. Over \$59 million was spent by visitors in Lincoln County.

**Review of Grant Applications:** Dan would like to change the wording on the application to get more information about where the funds were spent from the previous year, and what they plan on doing with the award funds.

*Sled Dogs Races* – Would like to know where they are advertising, not just a general grouping. Asking for \$400, Commission granted \$400.

*Merrill Airport Days* – Would like to see this event get bigger and create more overnight stays. AmericInn does give pilots a discount. Asking for \$900 Commission granted \$900.

*Lion's Car Show* – Event is getting bigger. Brings a lot of people to Merrill. Asking for \$1,160, Commission granted \$1,160.

*Lincoln County Fair* – Did put Merrill Chamber into their advertising. Hoping they continue to do so. Fair is not what it used to be. Needs to have more things for teenagers. Asking for \$4,000, Commission granted \$3,000

*Gleason Heritage Days & Mud Bogs*– Would like to see them advertise outside of the Merrill Area. Would also like to know where the proceeds go to. Asking for \$400, Commission granted \$400.

*Wis. River Pro Rodeo* – Big event for Merrill. Asking for \$6,500, Commission granted \$5,000

*Gazebo Night* – Get posters out to the hotels. Asking for \$500.00, Commission granted \$350.00.

*Concertina Festival* – Brings people from all over. Asking for \$380, Commission granted \$380.

*Merrill Ice Drags* – Good detail report. Longest event (6 weeks) ran in Merrill throughout the year. Some hotel stays. Asking for \$5,000, Commission granted \$4,500.

*Lincoln Lager Barleyfest* – A good event that attracts people that are coming up to close up cabins. Asking for \$2,500, Commission granted \$2,500.

*Pork in the Park Ribfest* – Adding other options to do while there (craft fair, gun show) has been great. Put up small display at hotels let people know what is going on. Asking for \$2,500, Commission granted \$2,500.

*HAVEN 2<sup>nd</sup> Golf Outing* – Replacing Love Me Tender. Asking for \$500, Commission granted \$250.

*Lobsterfest* – On a very busy weekend. Asking for \$2,250, Commission granted \$1,500.

*Merrill Tractor Pull* – More detail on how funding is used. Asking for \$500, Commission granted \$500.

*Black Squirrel Scurry* – If event was going to get bigger, would need to move to a different weekend. Asking for \$1,000, Commission granted \$1,000.

Each event was reviewed. Commission would like to see a note on all letters that go out for each application noting “Funding needs to be outside of the Merrill Area.” Debbe indicated that it already does. Also, would like to see on next year application that they provide more information about how the funds are spent for advertising.

**2018 Budget:** Review of the Budget presented from the Chamber is as follows:

- Other Promotions: Grand total of \$5,500
  - Other Promotions \$0
  - Tradeshows \$0
  - Visitor's Literature Display \$500
  - Saving Account \$5,000 \*\*
  - Discover Wisconsin \$0
- Contingency \$1,500
- Conferences \$2,500
- Additional Advertising \$15,000
- Administration & Rent \$10,000
- Marketing Support \$4,640
  - Telephone \$960

- o Postage \$2,000
- o Website/Computers \$1,680

\*\* Savings Account would be a place to keep money for the next time Discover Wisconsin would like to do a commercial with us. It would not be a big of hit to the budget with the saving account set up.

It has been a fantastic year for Merrill. A lot of growth can be seen this year. We need to give people a reason to move to Merrill. New businesses coming to Merrill along with the nice new streets are helping pave the way into Merrill.

Grand total of \$39,140 This gives a total of \$24,340 for the Grant Applications. Including the above listed number of \$39,140 and the grant applications of \$24,340 grand total of \$63,480 for the Tourism Budget for 2020. A motion to accept the grand total but of \$63,480 was made by Ernie, second by John, voted and carried.

**No Public Comment**

**Next meeting will be schedule via email at a later date.**

A motion to adjourn at 2:15pm was made by John, seconded by Ernie, voted and carried.

Cheryl Skoug  
Recording Secretary