

De Soto Tourism Commission

Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2024 at 7:00 pm

Members Present: Kari Beeman, Janice Vanevenhoven, Jennifer Swiggum, Mitchell Schiffer, Regina Ray, Pamela Cotant. Absent: Joshua Petzel & Amy Boardman. Attending: Gary Mulford, Carrie Brudos, Cindy Eisenman.

=> Motion made by Janice Vanevenhoven, seconded by Mitchell Schiffer to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

=> Motion made by Janice Vanevenhoven, seconded by Mitchell Schiffer to approve the September 16, 2024 meeting minutes with one correction adding Jennifer Swiggum as absent. Motion carried

Continued topics:

=>Minutes of Last Meeting and Treasurer Report – Carrie

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. The Treasurer's report will be presented next month when we have all the room tax submittals.

=>Official Lodging Owners Roster-Janice

The roster is complete. We have a total of 32 units

=> Collection of 3rd Party Booked Room Taxes – Carrie

A reminder letter will be sent to one lodging owner who has not submitted the quarterly return

Collections from VRBO and AIRBNB etc., are still being sought. An e-mail will be sent to these entities in an attempt to resolve it.

=> Gov't Distribution of 30% of Collected Taxes – Janice/Mitch

The 30% can be distributed according to Jurisdiction or Territory. It will be put on the Town of Wheatland and Village of De Soto's next agenda.

=>Website Design Vendor Selection – All

There was discussion on which vendor to choose; WebWise or Net Solution. WebWise is closer and has done government websites. The fee scheduling is more appropriate. Both use WordPress. Maintenance of the website was also discussed. After careful consideration, motion made by Janice Vanevenhoven, seconded by Kari Beeman to accept WebWise as our website vendor. Motion carried.

New Topics:

=> Correspondence – Gary

Gary received a letter concerning a property in the Town of Wheatland. The anonymous person who sent the letter wanted the Tourism Commission to do something about it. It is being dealt with by the Town of Wheatland.

=> Revised Blighted Property De Soto Ordinance – Mitch

Ordinance #19 Blighted Property has been revised. It gives the village more leverage and enforceability by the Vernon County Sheriff's Department.

=> Kayak/Canoe Race Event Planning - All

Janice Vanevenhoven got the green light from the DNR and US Fish and Wildlife to conduct the race. We need to make sure everyone wears life jackets. It will be August 1 & 2, 2025.

=> Area Business Opportunity Ideas

Regina Ray had some ideas for attracting tourists. She went to Gays Mills and visited the Kickapoo Exchange Coop. We could look for any properties in town to start one of our own. Regina also looked at adding an electrical charging station in the village for electric cars.

=>Other Topics – Time Permitting

Motion made by Janice Vanevenhoven, seconded by Mitchell Schiffer to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The next meeting will be November 25th at 7 pm.