

DE SOTO AREA TOURISM COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

President – Josh Petzel 612-232-4076

Vice President – Mitch Schiffer 608-738-9763

Secretary – Carrie Brudos 608-648-2700

Clerk Village of De Soto – Carrie Brudos 608-648-2700

Clerk Town of Wheatland – Cindy Eisenman 608-648-3583

Member – Kari Beeman

Member – Pamela Cotant

Member – Emma Justin

Member – Jenn Swiggum

Member – Janice Van Evenhoven

Member – Lacey Zitzner

DE SOTO AREA TOURISM COMMISSION MEETINGS:

Third Monday of the Month

6:00 PM De Soto Community Center

The public is welcome to attend any meeting of the Commission.

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Background:

- State of Wisconsin uses legislation to bolster the state economy.
- For many years, an important sector of revenue for the state economy has been **recreational tourism**.
- Concentration on what attracts recreational spending in Wisconsin benefits both state and local economies. Examples are: outdoor sports, game sports, live entertainment, fine dining, unique geography, fine art, unique and accessible natural settings, many things.... supported by reliable transportation, safe environments, readily available food, places to stay, a supply of goods and services.
- Tourism areas have expanded significantly beyond the traditional vacation areas of Wisconsin (Bayfield area and Lake Superior, Door County, Hayward, Lake Michigan shorelines, Wisconsin Dells, Milwaukee).
- A big reason for the expansion is the information explosion (social media, internet websites, abundant news feeds, streaming media, television, and magazines). With a little effort, it is easy to find things to do and places to go.
- Another significant reason is the COVID epidemic. What more people want in overnight accommodations has changed dramatically. The demand for “*a safe (and private) home away from home*” versus traditional motels, hotels, and large resorts, is very significant to places like the De Soto Area.
- *We are blessed to be located in the Driftless Area and on the banks of the Upper Mississippi River Valley offering beautiful scenery, lots of things to do. It's safe, has less traffic, less people, and more and more great, easy to find overnight lodging.*
- One thing that has historically plagued the region is the lack of adequate financial means to maintain superstructure, public services, and local parks, plus attract new retail businesses and other new tourism related sources of public revenue.
- In 1967, the State of Wisconsin created the Occupancy (or Room) Tax. Today, it is widely used in Wisconsin to provide the financial means to promote growth in local economies through increased tourism.