

Regular March Richland Center Tourism Commission Meeting, May 1, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lenny Schaub at 4:05pm.

Members present, Lenny Schaub, Dennis Fry, Karen Tepley, and Christy Adsit. Candace Fagerlind, was absent.

Tourism Grant Applications:

The Richland County Committee of the Wisconsin High School Rodeo State Finals applied for a \$3,000 grant to support the upcoming WSHSR State Finals here in Richland Center. A roll call vote was called on the application, motion by K Tepley to approve the Tourism Grant Application, 2nd by D Fry, the motion passed unanimously.

Gray Media Report, Discussion and Action: Director Richards explained that over the past two years Greater Richland Tourism had allocated over \$22,000 each year towards digital billboard marketing in the Milwaukee, Rockford, and Rochester/Winona MN interstate areas. This year there will be more effort put towards streaming advertising, however, our focus has changed to target more primarily our resources towards direct streaming marketing on Wi-Fi devices. We initiated this effort earlier this year with the understanding if the campaign could show results, we would increase this effort. Our website traffic has increased exponentially over the past years, and we can relate that success to our streaming advertising campaign. Director Richards suggested increasing that effort from the current allocation of \$5,000 to an additional \$5,000 invested in the wifi streaming campaign. This would carry this marketing campaign into the September-October timeframe.

Member D Fry made the motion to approve the additional \$5,000 investment in online streaming advertising with Gray Media, member K Tepley 2nd that motion. A roll call vote was taken, Schaub-yes, Fry-yes, Tepley-yes, Adsit-yes. Motion unanimously passed.

Director Richards offered updates and reports on several efforts:

1. Director Richards explained the initial analytics on the new website are strong. He encouraged a longer data sample to truly understand but the traffic appears to be much stronger over the previous year's traffic.
2. The Richland Area Farmer's Market has been holding their market at the Visitor's Center and this has increased the traffic into the Visitor's Center significantly on Wednesday's. Many visitors and locals alike are stopping in to learn more about the options in the area.
3. Director Richards mentioned that summer staffing for the Visitor's Center has been strong. Former RCHS teacher Kay Niles has stepped up and covers every Friday as well as several others covering Wednesday and Saturday's.
4. Director Richards also explained there are two Richland County Townships that have been investigating the adoption of the room tax ordinance and are getting close to adopting that ordinance. He reported in March, Forest Township did adopt the room tax at their regular monthly meeting.
5. Preparations are well underway for the Dairy Days and Rodeo Parade, entries are being received, the horse contingent from area clubs and the WSHR State Finals appear to be the biggest in some time.
6. Director Richards also explained some other basic discussions:

- a. There are two Richland Center institutional lodging options that are potentially for sale.
- b. With the help of Carla Dodna and the Richland County Parks Commission a work day was held on the Pine River Bike Trail that greatly improved a section of that trail. More work needs to be done.
- c. Several videos have been completed to promote local tourism-related businesses including the Red Barn at Griff Run, Kewaydin Farms, and Chapters on the Horizon.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Dennis Fry, 2nd by Christy Adsit. Motion Carried. Meeting was adjourned at 5:09pm.