

Regular April Richland Center Tourism Commission Meeting, April 7, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Ron Fruit at 4:00 pm.

Members present are Ron Fruit, Toni McCarville, Jayme Walsh, Karen Tepley, and Dennis Fry arrived shortly after the meeting started.

Karen Tepley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the January 2025 meeting. Toni McCarvel seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment raised

Discussion and Possible Action on the 2025 WSHR Grant Request

Director Richards brought a recent grant request from the Richland Center, Wisconsin High School Rodeo Committee to be used in support of the 2025 State High School Rodeo Finals. This is a 3-day event that brings many out-of-the-area (greater than 65 miles away) visitors and typically fills short-term housing/rentals during that time. It has grown nicely over the last 3 years and appears to continue to gain interest and visitors to the area. Toni M made the motion to approve the grant request of \$2,000 by the Richland Center, Wisconsin High School Rodeo Committee to be used towards marketing of the 2025 Wisconsin High School Rodeo. That motion was seconded by J Walsh. A roll call vote was held: Fruit-yes, McCarville- yes, Walsh-yes, Tepley-yes, Fry-yes. The motion passed unanimously.

Department Updates:

Director Richards offered several updates:

- Richards stated that he is working with Brian McGraw from the Eagle Tourism Commission to update the Grant Application. It has some inconsistencies from the original intention of the form, and there is a need to put some parameters on the amount of individual and annual grant amounts.
- It was discussed that Richland County has adopted a zoning code for short-term rental properties with a minimal zoning fee and specific requirements.
- Discussed the Pine River and the concern of keeping that navigable for visitors. Southwest Partners, Friends of the Pine, and Director Richards, along with other members of the public, are working on the plan to maintain the Pine for kayak use.
- There was a substantial discussion regarding the Greater Richland Tourism Goals/Objectives discussion.
 - Director Richards recapped the past goals and objectives as discussed with past Richland Center Tourism Commissions and City Council.
 - J Walsh suggested board members bring their ideas to the table at the next meeting regarding their ideas.
 - K Tepley suggested regular ledger reviews of bills paid, much like the library works through. Director Richards mentioned that one concern is that in the clerk's office, the Greater Richland Tourism account does not have its revenues and payments accounted for in the same software. Director Richards stated we can, and have, shared the ledger accounting of the Tourism account quarterly.

Commission Member Updates/Thoughts

- K Tepley explained there is a grant for bike trail and trailhead signage that has been completed, and the goal is to have signs in place by spring.
- Chair Fruit is asking that we continue to get updates on the Pine River and the progress with getting it maintained for use. Additionally, Chairperson Fruit mentioned that the Pine River Recreation Trail is in very good condition for this time of year.

Next meeting and topics.

It was determined that the next meeting is expected to be on May 5.

The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Tepley, 2nd by Fry. Motion Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.