

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes April 9, 2026 8am

The following Tourism Commission members were present at Watertown City Hall: Courtney Krause, Steven Board, Ken Berg

Also present; Tourism Director Robin Kaufmann, Park, Rec, and Forestry Director of Senior & Enrichment Services/Office Manager Andrea Draeger, Citizen John Kadisch, Citizen Margaret Jaberg, Watertown Main Street Program Executive Director Stefanie Broere, Watertown Area Chamber of Commerce Director Linden Peacey, Best Western owner Vick

1. The meeting was called to order by Courtney Krause at 8:02 a.m.
2. Review & Approve September Minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Steven Board and seconded by Ken Berg. The Commission voted to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the financials was made by Courtney Krause and seconded by Steven Board. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
 - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
 1. Visitor Guides – Over half the guides have been distributed with a second round taking place in August. There have been a lot of individual requests, which Robin takes care of.
 2. Ad opportunities – nothing to report.
 3. Update on billboard commitment – Watertown Main Street will most likely commit to the last available three weeks of the contract.
 4. Placer.ai usage updates – Robin will be speaking at EAA Chapter 320, which will include an overview of airport patrons.
 5. Review and act on mural restoration projects. - No recent updates on murals. Robin will reach out to Paul Mueller to discuss the possibility of updating the Willkommen mural on his building.
 - c. Discuss Hotel stay updates: Vick from Best Western provided an update. March occupancy was 49.97% – same as LY. April weekends are slower than weekdays. CPKC is booking weekday stays. The last 7 days of April is projected to be the same as LY.
4. New Business
 - a. Discuss and take possible action on Watertown Wi Billiards grant request – Watertown Wi Billiards will be hosting a pool tournament on August 14-16, using 8-12 taverns, with 16 teams participating. The Watertown Tourism Commission discussed the event and decided not to approve due to the minimal impacts on overnight stays. The majority of players are within driving distance, with limited openings for participation. The organizer will be encouraged to reapply if the event evolves to meet the objectives of the Tourism grant. Steve Board made a motion to deny the application. Courtney Krause seconded the motion. All approved.
 - b. Discuss and take possible action on Leadership Watertown Grant request. – The Leadership Watertown group is working to make improvements at Fannie P. Lewis Park. Improvements include repainting the gazebo, adding interpretive signage, and improving landscaping. The group is asking for a \$1,000 contribution. Ken Berg made a motion to approve a \$1,500 contribution to the project. Courtney Krause seconded the motion. All approved.

- c. Discuss and take possible action on potential August event – Watertown Tourism, the Watertown Main Street Program, and the Watertown Area Chamber of Commerce are working to create a vendor fair/market in downtown Watertown to mitigate losses of downtown businesses due to Watertown Riverfest’s cancellation. Over 100 vendors will be recruited, with a complete street closure. It is also the group’s goal obtain a temporary DORA, which would allow patrons to visit Main Street bars and take the open intoxicants throughout the event space. Funds from Watertown Tourism will most likely be requested for upfront expenses. No action is needed at this time.
- d. Discuss and take possible action on Citywide Rummage partnership – Robin discussed that she would be having another meeting with the Watertown Daily Times and would like to be prepared to offer \$1,000 to the local newspaper for a partnership on the Citywide Rummage Sale. The partnership would include a lower cost for participants to advertise their sale, and Watertown Tourism would have access to digital and physical copies of the rummage map to provide to visitors. Steve Board made a motion to approve \$1,000. Ken Berg seconded the motion. All approved.
- e. Review Manager’s report of previous month’s tasks – Robin provided the report to the group.
- f. Commission Members’ report.
 - a. Discuss upcoming and past events – Maranatha Baptist University presents “Little Women” beginning today and running through Saturday, April 11. City Council will welcome a couple new council members. The Watertown Unified School District’s referendum passed. Spring and summer recreation programming is open for registration at Park and Rec. They are continuing building and park improvements and will welcome a new director at the end of April.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 am was made by Steven Board and seconded by Courtney Krause. Meeting adjourned.

Agenda items:

A reminder from Robin to have all requests for additions to the next meeting’s agenda to her by Tuesday, the week before the meeting.

The next meeting will be at 8 am on May 14, in person at Watertown City Hall

NOTE: These minutes are uncorrected, and any corrections made thereto will be noted in the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.

Submitted by,
Robin Kaufmann, Director of Watertown Tourism

Manager's Report – March 2026

Social Media Report

Facebook: 12,083 followers (Post views 381,100)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 1921 Users – 3352 views

Instagram: 1224 followers

- Regularly created content and posted to social media
- Updated events and business listings on visitwatertownwi.com
- Worked on billboard commitments (including graphic work)
- Attended Main Street Board Meeting
- Attended Main Street Promotions Committee meeting
- Began Visitor Guide distribution
- Coordinated multiple Watertown Tourism grant requests
- Attended Jefferson County Tourism meeting
- Met with Watertown Daily Times advertising group
- Met with Watertown Mayor to discuss potential August event
- Meet with Watertown PD to discuss potential August event
- Wrote letter of support for Airport funding grant opportunity
- Created marketing materials for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall
- Attended Chamber Marketing meeting
- Visited businesses/events for promotional purposes:
 - Rose Garden Café
 - Talk, Read, Play Center at WTTN Public Library
 - Beauty Beyond Labels
- Donny's Restaurant