

Watertown Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes December 11, 2025 8am

The following Tourism Commission members were present via Zoom Meeting or in person at Watertown City Hall: Courtney Krause, Cheryl Mitchell, Ken Berg, Steven Board, Melissa Lampe
Also present; Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Linden Peacy, Tourism Director Robin Kaufmann, Park & Rec Programming Event Coordinator Stephanie Juhl, Citizen John Kadisch

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 Courtney Krause and seconded by Melissa Lampe. The Commission voted to approve the minutes.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Approve Financial Report: Motion to approve the financials was made by Steve Board and seconded by Melissa Lampe. The Commission voted to approve the financials.
 - b. Marketing Plan – review and act on marketing plan.
 1. Visitor Guides – Edits to the 2025 guide are being done to update for the 2026 version. Robin will complete edits and submit new photos in January.
 2. Ad opportunities – Nothing new to report
 3. Update on billboard commitment: WUSD is interested in securing two weeks each month starting in January and ending in March or April. Robin will resume solicitation for new commitments to fill available space.
 4. Placer.ai usage updates – Robin provided Stephanie Juhl with Bentzin Family Town Square a 3-year comparison of attendance numbers. Stephanie felt the data was very useful, including hotel stays associated with BFTS events. She planned to continue to study the data. The commission was interested in seeing the platform in real time, and it was set that Robin would provide a demonstration at the January meeting.
 - c. Review and act on mural restoration projects.
No recent updates on murals.
 - d. Discuss Hotel stay updates: November resulted in record lows. December is projecting better than November. The Watertown Blue Revue will host a competition in Watertown on December 15, with that Friday being close to full at Best Western.
4. New Business
 - a. Discuss and take possible action on approving 2026 budget.
Steve Board made a motion to approve the 2026 budget with a change to the placer.ai entry, making it a \$10,000 expense instead of \$9,000 as \$9,000 was paid in 2025, and the final balance will be paid on the two-year commitment in 2026. Melissa Lampe seconded the motion. The commission voted to approve.
 - b. Review manager's report of previous month's tasks
Robin has been attending many events and visiting many local retailers and restaurants to promote tourism destinations during the holidays. Facebook reach continues to impress at over 500,000 reached in November.

c. Commission Members' report.

A Countdown to Christmas retail event will take place on Main Street, Bentzin Family Town Square has tree voting taking place, Watertown Window Wonderland downtown window contest will continue through December 31.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 am was made by Melissa Lampe 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 January 8, 2026, via Zoom or you may attend 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 – November 2025

Social Media Report

Facebook: 204 new followers (Post views 537,400)

Visitwatertownwi.com: 2975 Users – 5066 views

Instagram: 1200 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 Wake up Watertown
- Attended Chamber ribbon cuttings for Silver Moon and Madison Crafts
- Met with Jefferson County Communications and Marketing Coordinator
- Attended Main Street Board Meeting
- Coordinated check passing for Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall
- Launched "Locals" card game
- Wrote several blog pieces
- Updated Wayfinder signs at BFTS
- Attended multi-Chamber breakfast
- Coordinated Watertown Window Wonderland decorating contest
- Attended WEDC Tourism workshop in Port Washington
- Held several meetings with PlacerAI to discuss subscription services
- Visited businesses/events for promotional purposes:
 - Far Horizons Imports
 - The Chic Boutique
 - Ava's – a posh boutique
 - Christmas Parade of Lights
 - Schultz Family YMCA
 - Silver Moon Watertown
 - The Golden Spoon Café
 - Bentzin Family Town Square
 - Madison Crafts & Fabric
- Wisconsin 26 Mercantile