Minutes of the Concordia Tourism Meeting
Held on November 14, 2023
Beginning at 6:00 P.M.
In Room 202 of the Concordia Community Center
802 S. Gordon St.
Concordia, MO 64020

Members In Attendance

David Meyer
Diana Stumbaugh
Dwight Emde
Lavona Larimore
Beth Kruse, Aldermanic Representative

Members Absent

Lori McGinnis

Also in Attendance:

Mayor Michael Brown
Dale Klussman, Administrator

Chairman Meyer called the meeting to Order.

The Minutes of the August 8, 2023 meeting was reviewed. With no further questions, Lavona made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2023 meeting as presented. Diana seconded this motion. The motion was called and passed by unanimous consent 4/0.

Chairman Meyer recognized Administrator Klussman to begin the topics of discussion. Klussman apologized for his failure to list a request for discussion, concerns of the reputation of Concordia outside of the community and offered this time to Diana to express the concerns listed in emails distributed to Tourism Board members.

Mayor Brown and Diana felt that it would be appropriate to discuss during the "Members Comments and Questions" portion of the meeting.

Moving on, Klussman began with discussion of recently installed Christmas Street light decorations. The decorations were installed on November 9, 2023. There are a total of 52 Christmas Decorations hung. The Maintenance staff used all the snowflakes, the Christmas Tree, the Angel, and the candles, requiring the use of two wreathes to fill all available openings.

Lavona expressed her concern that the downtown area between 5th St. and 9th St. was not lit exclusively with Snowflakes, as was the intent of the Tourism Board. Klussman noted that he had failed to relay to Mitchel Dittmer that the Snowflakes were to be used exclusively in this area and apologized.

Lavona also questioned why some decorations were not working. Klussman explained that the meters needed to be activated by Evergy. The work order and date of the Downtown Christmas event has been submitted to Evergy.

Klussman then reported that, in recent action of the Board of Aldermen, the City has executed an agreement with Manneco Lighting for the storage and maintenance of approximately 40 Christmas decorations.

Under this agreement, Manneco personnel will remove the decorations in early to mid-January and store the fixtures, verify that the decorations are working, then next year, Manneco personnel will hang the decorations.

The cost of the Service Agreement is $2,500.00.

Discussion then turned to the potential marketing of old decorations. No action was taken at this time but for the request that, when we look at our next round of purchasing more snowflakes, we express our interest to Manneco in selling the old Street decorations, as well as the wreathes and the number of candles that would be replaced.

Dwight indicated that the Board has had discussions concerning decorating Southside Park. Klussman will discuss this potential with local contractor and with Hoot Mann and bring numbers back to the Tourism Board so that they can build a future recommendation to the Board of Aldermen.

It is time to begin discussion as to plans for the 2024 Concordia Farmers Market. Dwight stated that his interpretation in talking to Kelsie Rehkop, who has served as the Market Manager since inception of the Market, is that Kelsie will not take this position in 2024.

Dwight stated that Kelsie had told him that last year was very tough, as the City required vendors to fill out paperwork not required at other venues. Klussman stated that he was aware that there was paperwork related to insurance and business actions that was not usually required at a Farmers' Market, however, normally a Farmers' Market is a formed organization, acting independently of any other body.

This organization would normally take care of providing meeting business regulations, of providing liability insurance for the Market and the participants would be covered by this umbrella policy. There is no formal organization of the Concordia Farmers' Market.

As the Concordia Tourism Board is apparently the guiding organization of the Market, this means that the City must take the responsibility of managing the Farmer's Market, which means we must manage this umbrella insurance.

Our insurance policy excludes Farmers' Market activities.

Our current Codes call for a business license to be issued to people conducting business in the City of Concordia. Remember, under normal operations of a Farmers' Market, the governing organization takes care of the business regulations. Since there is no formal organization-as with the insurance, responsibility for compliance to stated Business Regulations falls on the individual vendors, meaning that the Business License Application must be filled out and submitted to the City Clerk, as required by the Concordia City Code.

So, yes, there is more paperwork at the Concordia Market than at other markets, but it is because there is no formal governing organization of the Concordia Famers' Market.

The fact that the Tourism Board is the driving force behind the Farmers' Market extends to other areas of activities related to running a Farmers' Market. The position of Market Manager needs to be discussed. If the Tourism Board wants to fill the job with a 1099 employee, then they would need to make a recommendation to the Board of Aldermen to advertise for this position, as the Tourism Board would have to follow the hiring procedures of the City.

This individual would be answerable to a department, have supervision and be required to time in and out.

If the position was Contract Labor, then the recommendation would be for the City to negotiate with individuals to provide specific services and a negotiated amount would be paid to the individual regardless of hours worked.

The agreed-upon contracted amounts would be paid to the individual who is responsible for paying their own employee taxes.

The Board would like to get Kelsie's input on the position and on the general operations of the Farmer's Market.

Lavona stated her belief that this position should ultimately become a contracted position, and with agreement from the other members, we will be discussing the need for a position with Kelsie and Ms. Reed, the 4-H faculty member of Concordia High School.

Klussman reminded the Board that when originally formed, the Tourism Board required submittal of requests for funding ahead of Board determinations of funding. Recently, the practice has become, not just for Tourism but for other recommending Boards of the City, that the requests are being made with little time for additional information which may be desired by Board members to be supplied.

Another criteria for submittal of request for funding was that the requester provide documentation that he/she/they had the authority of the requesting organization to make the request. Recently, we have received conflicting requests from the same organization and need to know which one is being considered.

Board members agree that we need to write application guidelines stating:

1. Applications must be submitted thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the request is being considered; and
2. That application shall contain documentation that the person writing for or appearing for the purpose of requesting funds is authorized on behalf of the organization to make such consideration of request for funds.

Mayor Brown reported that he has had conversations with Ron Cordes of the Concordia Truck and Tractor Pullers and Mr. Cordes has expressed his pleasure related to the success of the initial Concordia Truck and Tractor Pull event.

The Mayor also noted the installation of the new metal park benches which were donated by Concordia Main Street.

The Mayor finished by acknowledging the Downtown Halloween activities this year which proved very successful.

Alderman had no report.

Under member comments and questions, Diana expressed her frustration related to negativity associated with Concordia by citizens of surrounding communities. While Diana does not feel that we any more or any less racism in this community, there is a belief in cities such as Warrensburg, Knob Noster, and the Whiteman AFB community that racism is prevalent, and she was wondering how we could get communicate that these beliefs are wrong.

Many of these feelings appear to be centered on the days when the Friday night parade of the Concordia Fall Festival was marketed as the K.K.K. parade. In the German spelling, a "K" is used for the letter so the initials for the Concordia Comical Crew could be referenced as Koncordia Komical Krew, abbreviated as K.K.K.

While this marketing detail was a clever way to demonstrate Concordia's German roots, it has led to misconceptions as to the meaning of the abbreviation, to which written and verbal statements titled the Friday night Parade as a K.K.K. Parade, associating it with the Ku Klux Klan.

So, in the minds of many people outside of Concordia, the Friday Night parade is known as a racist and nasty parade. How can we change this perception.

Chairman Meyer reviewed how the Parade's name has been officially changed to the C.C.C. Parade for approximately 20 years now, and it is still referred to and understood to be the K.K.K. parade. Both Meyer and Lavona noted that the rank of Whiteman AFB continually participates in Fair activities and know that the stigma attached to Concordia is not right.

Alderman Kruse and Mayor Brown reiterated that the City has a wonderful relationship with Whiteman, and the best solution is to keep building on this relationship.

The Board felt like our best path is to represent Concordia as it is, not as it is interpreted to be. We build on the positives of our community. Some members would like to see the nastiness removed from the Friday Night Parade, as it appears to have become more prevalent in recent years, but we cannot govern good taste. We support letting the Fair Board if citizens or visitors are offended by the content of parade.

There was no other business, comments or concerns brought before the Tourism Board for discussion.

At this time, Lavona made the motion to adjourn. Diana seconded the motion, The vote carried 4/0. Meeting adjourned.

Time noted: 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dale Klussman

Person appointed to take Minutes.