



Hotel/Motel Tax Fund **Administration Committee Minutes**



March 24, 2025, 10:30 AM, Council Chamber Meeting Room, City Hall

Hotel/Motel Committee Members Present: Millie Youngquist-Chair, Illa Earnest, Charla Howard, Diane Gallagher, Leslie Allender

Advisory Present: Michelle Redlinger, Joe Gaa, Kathy Kron.

Absent: Isabella Santoro, Phil Minino

Chair Youngquist called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

Motion by Howard, seconded by Earnest, to accept the agenda with the amendment of adding a special presentation from the Washington County Fair board for a funding request and minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Discussion on Financials was held. Motion made by Earnest, seconded by Allender to approve payment of the final invoice for the Main Street Rebranding for \$4,256.00. Motion made by Allender, seconded by Earnest to approve payment of the final invoice for the Kiosk map for \$1,800.00

Discussion on On-Going projects was held. Redlinger reported that the Kiosk map is complete. Redlinger also reported that she's been in contact with Nick Gingerich, Joe Nichols, Mike McNurlan, and Nick Pacha regarding the speaker system at Central Park and is seeking more clarification.

Discussion on Tourism was held. Redlinger reported that there is a meeting with the First Impressions Steering Committee during the 2nd week of April. The process of First Impressions will be discussed as well as dates to provide to the First Impressions group. Redlinger shared a marketing video from the Iowa Tourism Conference of a branding "Visiting Iowa" for relaxation and connecting with family. Redlinger also reported that Iowa Tourism is seeking a new partnership with the Restaurant Association and Ag Tourism thought Washington can expand upon these.

Reports from the Sub-committees:

Drafting Policy for Financial Requests (Youngquist, Minino, Gaa) – The application has been used for the first time with the Washington County Fair board. Discussion was held to have the applications reviewed and to vote for approval of the funding request at the next meeting, unless it is time sensitive. Discussion was held to combine the multiple emails being sent with documents pertaining to upcoming meetings to one email being sent out on the Monday before the scheduled meeting (3rd Monday of the month) which will include the agenda, previous meeting minutes, financial reports, funding applications.

Researching Ad Agencies (Gallagher, Allender, Redlinger) – It was discussed that they met with Rachel Fishback. Rachel's strong points are video and social media posting and is more about experiential marketing, telling a story with emotion. The Committee would need to have groundwork done as far as a clear definition of how the HM Committee is going to market ourselves. Rachel would need direction and

a content calendar provided along with what social media platforms are going to be used. Rachel's baseline fee is \$1,200 per month which includes 3 posts and 1 video short/reel per week. It was also discussed that the First Impressions may be able to provide some helpful information and direction on social media posts.

Billboard Collaboration (Howard, Santoro, Earnest) – No current update.

Discussion was held on the Project funding request application from the Washington County Fair board for their restroom project. Also discussed was to have Kron create a Google form for the funding projections considerations portion point system of the funding request application process. The total scores will be included in these minutes and then it'll be discussed at the next meeting.

Discussion was held on collaboration with the City's current Hotels on advertising and providing some type of assistance or locating a grant to assist with simple updates such as fresh paint and carpet as well as photographing and possibly videography. Gaa will put together what a Grant for this would look like. Redlinger will reach out to the Hotel owners on this.

Next meeting will be April 28, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Kron
City Clerk