

TUSCOLA TOURISM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October 15, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Present were Board Members: Drew Hoel, Devon Flesor-Story, Bill Hill, and staff Stepheny McMahon

Drew called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Devon made a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. Bill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Drew made a motion to approve the financials including the report of payments made in September. Bill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Stepheny McMahon gave a tourism report and shared updates on:

1. Open Flags are all distributed with many installed. Thanks again to Bill for the idea and helping to make it happen.
2. Coca Cola Mural is complete now and looks great.
3. Tuscola Tourism sponsored \$2500 for the IHSA basketball tournament through Experience CU. The benefits for increasing our sponsorship to \$5000 weren't of great enough value to justify an increase.
4. Halloween activities are planned for Tuesday 10/29 which is the date the library selected to have their party at the community center. Downtown decorations were purchased from Ponder Pumpkin Patch and set up by the Tuscola Arts Council and Bill Hill. It looks great.
5. Christmastown activities are being planned for the first weekend in December. We purchased lighted Christmas presents to go with the new lighted trees in the downtown flower boxes. We are planning a lighted parade on Saturday evening and in are discussion to have a wine walk on Friday evening.
6. Clanin Marketing
 - a. The Google Ad campaign promoting Tuscola to visitors to The Great Pumpkin Patch is going well and will be wrapping up soon.
 - b. We've shared photos with Clanin for use in future marketing campaigns
 - c. We're working with Clanin now to create videos of Tuscola for tourism promotion campaigns and will also be reviewing our current print ads, etc. to see how we can get more value from our advertising budget.

Other discussion items:

Devon suggested that we do more advertising in Terre Haute as we have many visitors from that area. Bill shared that the new lighted Christmas trees will need to be staked to the ground as the wind will blow them over. Denny's replacement will take care of this when installing the trees. Bill also pointed out that a new display location needs to be found for Santa and Frosty. Bill was glad to hear that new American flags have been purchased and will be installed on the streetlights after Christmas decorations are taken down. Devon questioned if we had purchased any Shop Small swag and Steph shared that she has ordered canvas bags with Shop Tuscola printed on them. Steph was asked what she knew about the Odd Market and other than what has been posted on

social media she does not have any additional information but will gather more before the next tourism meeting.

The Rural Life Antique Show will take place on November 8-9. With the election being held on Tuesday, November 5th, vendors will not be able to begin set up until after noon on Wednesday, November 6th. Bill invited anyone who is able to help set up walls Wednesday afternoon or evening to come join.

Drew gave a brief economic development update at the request of Devon and Bill.

Steph shared that Devon has made a request for the \$660 bill for Flesor's to be listed on the I57 interstate signs. Drew stated as this is an action item it will need to be added to next month's agenda for a vote.

Devon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58, Drew seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Stepheny McMahon, Tourism Director

Approved *Randy Gentry* Date *2-17-26*