July 15, 2015 Chester Tourism Commission Minutes

Norma Baughman, Betty Wagner, Sandra Starr, Toni Hosick, Lauren Rinne, Linda Sympson, Pam Fraley, Bobbi Junkin, and Carol Harrison present.

1. Minutes
2. Minutes stood as read.
3. Financial report
4. The only change was a check to Sandra for Stone Cottage Expenses.
5. The balance in the bank is: $6,880.40. The balance for petty cash is: $128.88.
   1. The report was filed for audit.
6. Evergreen Cemetery Tour
7. Lauren shared notes from the June 22 meeting of the subcommittee.
8. The DAR will be involved in some way. Pam discussed lanterns.
   1. The next meeting will be July 20th.
9. Wine Down at Benson’s
10. The subcommittee is concerned about the timeframe of the event due to questions about insurance/ticket sales/etc.
11. They are setting a new meeting to discuss possibly shooting for Christmas or next year.
    1. Linda S. is contacting Benson’s and Debbie Brooks to update them.
12. River Boats
13. The tentative dates remain the same. The American Queen is changing their tours, but Patti C. is unsure of the exact details and when it will be implemented. It is likely that they are planning on shortening the Chester tour and having their representatives take guests to Ste. Gen.
14. They are also discussing adding more boats.
    1. Patti C. will provide more information as it is solidified.
15. Christmas Walk
16. The walk will be December 5th & 6th.
17. There is interest in moving it to Cole park and asking individuals to sponsor things like light displays and a mobile “Santa’s Cottage.”
18. Patti C. shared that they would like to only open the courthouse on Saturday and Sunday, and move the parade to be Saturday evening.
19. Patti C. is asking for name/theme suggestions along the lines of: “Christmas in the City” or something that really evokes historic and small city charm.
    1. Patti C. will provide more information as it is solidified.
20. Stone Cottage
21. There was a water main break that threatened to flood the cottage. Fortunately the large stones shielded the front of it and there is minimal water damage to the landscape at the side.
22. Windows have been installed. Transoms have been redone. The subcommittee worked on the floors, painted the walls, and Sandra S. submitted an article to the paper.
23. The subcommittee has proposed a sidewalk on the side of the building, but they are waiting on a resolution on a city/county ownership dispute.
24. New Projects
25. Betty W. shared how dilapidated the Pierre Menard home has become. It is in need of painting. It was discussed if it would be too far gone for the commission to be able to provide funds for improvement. Carol H. suggested looking into some fundraising projects specifically for the site.
26. Patti C. asked about something along the riverfront. Linda S. said that there is something in the works with RC renewal.
27. Linda S. mentioned the email blast she sent out to get Chester on the National Geographic (in partnership with the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative and other partners) interactive website of the Mississippi River to help tell the story of the region to visitors. There is a meeting on July 28th at 6pm in the Chester Library.
28. Welcome Center
29. New promotional material “10 Great Reasons” book came in. The welcome center is taking a few boxes and the rest will be stored.
30. Randolph Co. Tourism
31. Norma B. shared two events: a wine and cheese reception will be held at McKendree on 7/27 from 3:30 to 4:30 for the IL Roadshow (she also sent out an email), and Prairie Du Rocher will be having a meeting discussing ways to celebrate their “Year of Celebration” in 2022 for their 300th year on August 17th at 6pm at Lisa’s (can contact the chamber president with questions).
32. City Council Update
33. None.
34. Other
35. Nancy C. asked for tourism and possibly beautification to consider a work day to clean up the park behind the Cohen home.
36. There will be an Olympic style relay team raising money for veterans coming through on 10/24/15. They came last year, and felt so much support that they changed routes to come back again. There is a meeting on 8/4/15 at 12pm at the Eagles to discuss what the community can do to support them this year
37. The commission unanimously voted to approve the creation of a “Historical Preservation Fund” for upcoming fund raisers.
    1. Sandra. S. will let Linda R. know.
38. Adjournment
39. Pam F. moved to adjourn. Toni H. seconded.
40. The next meeting will be: August 19th, 10:30AM.