The Tourism Reserve Fund Committee Meeting was held on June 14, 2019 in Room 110 at City Hall, 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois 61602. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Don Welch.

1. Roll Call

Present: Don Welch, (Non-Voting); Bill Spears, (Voting); Marwin Spiller, (Voting); Dan Kouri, (Voting); Denis Cyr, (Voting); Gail Hedrick; Joni Staley

Absent: Denise Moore, Patrick Urich, Shawn Schoonover

Others Present: Emily Cahill, Kimberly Sanders, Shannon Cox, Holly Mosack, Jimmy Faggett, James Gilkesson

2. Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Dan Kouri and 2nd by Denis Cyr to approve the Minutes of the March 15, 2019 TRF meeting:

Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed
Yeas: Cyr, Spears, Kouri, Spiller
Nays: None

3. Financial Report

Gail Hedrick provided an overview of the Financial Report.

Local Fund:
Balance Before Approvals: $75,233
Grant Request: $21,500
Ending Balance: $53,733

10% - (Non Civic Center) Fund:
Balance Before Approvals: $5,449
Grant Request: $500
Ending Balance: $4,949

**Peoria Marketing Fund:**
Balance Before Approvals: $314,102
Grant Request: $8,375
Ending Balance: $305,727

Denis Cyr motioned to receive and file the Financial Report and 2nd by Dan Kouri.

4. Items for Approval

**Local Fund:**

4a. Peoria Park District 125th Anniversary Concert in the Park – June 22, 2019
   Amount Requested: $5,000 – **Passed**

Emily Cahill spoke on behalf of the Peoria Park District’s request for assistance for the 125th Anniversary of the Peoria Park District. Emily shared they are excited to celebrate with the community in recognizing the Peoria Park District which is the oldest and largest in the State of Illinois.

The Peoria Park District is having two (2) events on June 22nd and to help increase the exposure of the events, they are requesting support from the TRF fund. The Peoria Park District will be hosting a “Progressive Dinner” that will move through Glen Oak Park, which is the first park in their system as a Park District. They will close the evening with a “Concert in the Park” using the green space in the middle of the park and bringing the Grammy Nominated, “The Record Company”, to be their main act. There will also be a local act, Cole Hollow, and they will do an opening set.

Emily also noted that advance sales are very good for an act of this size. All proceeds from this event are sort of unique, they do not go back into the operating system, and the proceeds will go to support a longer term sustainability fund that the Peoria Park District is establishing to help with maintaining Parks and Trails. They believe this is very fitting due to the 125th Peoria Park District’s Anniversary.

Emily shared that Advanced Media Partners Radio group is assisting in sponsoring them, along with some community organizations and local businesses who are also supporting the event as sponsors. She noted a lot of the sponsors have been “In-kind” and they currently have about $8,000 in sponsorships.

A motion was made by Marwin Spiller to approve the $5,000 request and 2nd by Denis Cyr.

   **Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed**
   o Yeas: Spears, Kouri, Cyr, Spiller
Kim Sanders and Shannon Cox presented their request for the Peoria Art Guild Fine Art Fair. This year will be the 57th Annual Peoria Art Guild Fine Art Fair with artists from all over the country and one artist from Tel Aviv, Israel. Kim reported it is one of the largest events that Peoria Art Guild has done in Peoria. Last year was the first year Kim and Shannon did the Art Fair together and they had a very successful year. It was the first time they used a digital marketing and GEO-Fencing technology to try to bring Regional patrons into the Fair. It was pretty successful and they are expanding on that this year by working on a project where they have two (2) flights donated by Allegiant Airline, plus two (2) rooms to the Hotel Pere Marquette and Wildlife Prairie Park is going to put a Peoria Experience package together. They are hoping to have Allegiant advertising the Peoria Art Guild on flights flying into Peoria. The Peoria Art Guild is attempting to promote the whole Arts Experience in Peoria.

The Peoria Art Guild Fine Art Fair currently has a $19,000 marketing budget. Last year they worked closely with the visitor’s bureau and utilized some strategies to help them move further. There was discussion about the Peoria Art Guild’s profit last year; the amount of money they were given last year and the amount of money that was paid out to the Park District. According to the Peoria Art Guild, their profit from last year went to cover the cost associated with supporting the Art Fair on the Riverfront.

There was additional discussion about where money goes when an organization make a profit and how the profits are used. According to the Peoria Art Guild, the money goes back into their Riverfront operations which are still tax subsidized – and should a particular event show a profit, it goes back into their larger budget which does not make money. The profit would also go to support the whole event and the planning for the event, which reflects the time it takes for their staff, both full and part time, to support the event. The profits will go back into the Art Guild so it can be sustained due to the Fine Art Fair being their largest event. The Peoria Art Guild count on profits to go back into payroll and operations.

A motion was made by Bill Spears to approve $8,000 and 2nd by Dan Kouri.

Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed
  o Yeas: Cyr, Spiller, Kouri, Spears
  Nays: None

Battle at the Ballpark – July 20, 2019
Amount Requested: $1,500 – Passed

There was no representative present for the Battle at the Ballpark. There was discussion about what they received previously and what they are requesting this year. It was noted that Battle
at the Ballpark received $5,000 from the 10% fund and they are requesting $1,500 out of the Local Fund this year for assistance with social media and radio advertising.

A motion was made by Denis Cyr to approve the $1,500 request and 2nd by Bill Spears.

Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed
   o Yeas: Spiller, Kouri, Cyr, Spears
   Nays: None

Constitution/Tourism Business Fund (previously called 10% Fund)

4d. Kappa Alpha Psi – Kappa Weekend – June 28-29, 2019
   Amount Requested: $500 - Passed

James Gillerson spoke on behalf of the Kappa Alpha Psi and noted he will be a 40 year member of the Kappa Alpha Psi on this year. He reported that Kappa Alpha Psi is one of the oldest and 1st African American fraternities founded in the City of Peoria and was established in 1973. He advised that the Kappa Alpha Psi is planning a Kappa Weekend event on June 28th and 29th in hopes of getting all of the fraternities in the providence to participate. The fraternities go all the way to Chicago and has people from all over come into town. Every year the event is moved around – and this year it has moved to Peoria.

This is the 1st year they are doing “Kappa Weekend” and all proceeds goes toward youth scholarships for college. During Kappa Weekend, according to Mr. Gillerson, there will be two days of events. On Friday, June 28th, there will be 9 holes of golf at Kellogg Golf Course and a Brothers Only meeting banquet which is their I-74 event. On Saturday, June 29th there will be a Day Party at Casa de Arte and the Kappa Cruise on the Spirit of Peoria.

It was noted that this is an I-74 event, where members of the Chapters in Springfield, Bloomington, Decatur, Champaign and also Peoria, are all along the I-74 corridor and invited to attend. All of the events from the Kappa Weekend will be held in Peoria and their grant request is to offset the cost of travel and lodging for the keynote speaker.

A motion was made by Denis Cyr to approve the $500 request and 2nd by Dan Kouri.

Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed
   o Yeas: Spears, Kouri, Cyr, Spiller
   Nays: None

Peoria Marketing Fund (NOT the $45,000 pot):

   Amount Requested: $8,375 - Passed

Joni Staley spoke in behalf of Enjoy Peoria regarding their request for a grant from the Peoria Marketing Fund to attend Association Forum’s 2019 Annual meeting which is called Forum
Forward. The application outlines their request amount of $8,375.00 and how it’s made up. The request is also made to send one (1) staff member from the Peoria Civic Center and one (1) staff member from the PACVB to the event which includes Joni Staley, PACVB and Jess McMullin, Director of Sales and Marketing at the Peoria Civic Center. However, the bulk of that amount is for sponsorship so Peoria will be the opening general session sponsoring partner. The goal behind being the opening general session is to bring Peoria to everyone’s attention right at the beginning of the day. This will be an opportunity for them to open up communication with the association planners throughout the day.

It was noted that the Association Convention business is very important to the Civic Center and Peoria. It was also noted that the Association Forum is the home for the Chicago Association. The Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has been a long time member of this organization and this request is to help their membership a step further in sponsoring that annual event.

There was discussion about the Civic Center’s cost and if it was included in the requested amount. It was also shared that the $8,375 includes registration for Joni Staley and also includes a negotiated registration for a 2nd registry to be included so that the Civic Center could also attend. The PACVB asked the Civic Center to cover the cost of Jess McMullin’s travel expense. Joni’s travel expense is estimated to be approximately $500 (hotel & travel) for one night.

There was additional discussion about why the Civic Center has not been requested to pay one half of the amount that is being requested in the Peoria Marketing Fund grant. The PACVB noted that with their current state of funding and since they are a member of the organization, they decided to cover the cost of the sponsorship and did want to ask the Peoria Civic Center to provide for their own travel expenses. There was also discussion about the Civic Center and Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau funding, it was noted that the Civic Center success is paramount to the community, the goals and activities of the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau are largely geared toward promoting the Civic Center and selling the Civic Center space. This is an important issue that this committee may want to strategize over and decide what you want to do going forward. It was suggested that a strategy session may be the best route going forward for changes that may come to pass.

A motion was made by Dan Kouri to ask Civic Center to pay for half of the sponsorship fee and their own travel, food and lodging. After discussion regarding the responsibility of the Civic Center and their funding, it was determined that funding requests next year related to the Peoria Civic Center must be cleared by the board prior to making a commitment because the Civic Center and PACVB are two separate entities. The motion by Dan Kouri was withdrawn and a Substitute Motion was made by Denis Cyr to approve the requested $8,375 and 2nd by Bill Spears.

Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed
- Yeas: Spears, Cyr, Spiller
- Nays: Kouri
4g. Virtual Tours & 360 Spins
   Amount Requested: $5,400 - Passed

Joni Staley spoke on behalf of the Virtual Tours & 360 Spins. This application request is to market Virtual Tours and 360 Spins of three (3) Peoria properties. The $5,400 is the total ask to produce the Virtual Tours and 360 Spins for the next 3 years which will provide future “client site visits” to meeting planners and sports rights holders.

The initial purpose of the Virtual Tours and 360 Spins is to take with them to Connect Marketplace which is the largest trade show that they attend. The representative of Matterport, which will produce the technology, was in attendance and will speak to the technology. The three properties in Peoria would be the Marriott Pere Marquette Hotel, Peoria Civic Center and Louisville Slugger Sports Complex.

It was explained that Connect Marketplace is a tradeshow which is funded by this committee as well, so they are representing only Peoria properties. The goal behind the Virtual Reality marketing is to do a tradeshow booth at the show for the 1st time so there will be a tradeshow booth. Having this will attract attention to their booth and create a virtual experience of the Peoria properties. The goal is to capitalize on the tradeshow booth and making them visible.

A demonstration of the technology was provided by the representative of Matterport.

   A motion was made by Dan Kouri to approve the $5,000 request and 2nd by Denis Cyr.

   Approved by Roll Call Vote: Passed
     o Yeas: Spears, Spiller, Cyr, Kouri
     Nays: None

5. Unfinished Items
   None

6. New Business

Don Welch announced this meeting would probably be his last meeting due to his plan to retire. Since the previous meeting, he has had a discussion with the City Manager about the Four Points by Sheraton and wanted to give an update. Don advised that he had heard from City Inspections this week that Four Points by Sheraton had asked for a final inspection. A report back from City Inspectors was received advising him that there are still a lot of small things that need to be done. Their thought was that it may take another 60-90 days before they could open. They have not had the elevators inspected or certified by the State nor have they had the boiler certified by the State. There have not been any inspections by Marriott International. Obviously, the property is not going to be up and ready.

Don shared that he and the City Manager discussed a very large client that has been damaged by Hawkeye Hotels by not being open. They had contracts with the client to provide a
significant number of rooms, free meeting space and free rooms for the client’s staff. He and the City Manager decided they would pay for the staff rooms and move them over to the Staybridge Suites, and the cost would be paid out of the Peoria Marketing Fund in the amount of $4,859.00.

Don advised he will suggest to his successor that they ask the TRF Committee to have Hawkeye Hotels reimburse the Peoria Marketing Fund for those dollars. Don shared that another very large client claimed damages in excess of $30,000. He spoke with them the other day and they are not planning to pursue that – they sent a request through their attorney to ask Hawkeye Hotels to reimburse them and they have not had the courtesy of a return answer to that request. He noted there are very bad business practices going on and he’s not very happy about it.

Don said his replacement will be announced next Wednesday after a full board approves the selection.

7. Public Comments

None

8. Adjournment

Denis Cyr motioned to adjourn.