

MINUTES

Evansville Tourism Commission Thursday, August 14, 2025 At Creekside Place, 102 Maple St.

1. Call to order at 6:33pm.
2. Roll call: Abbey Barnes, Jim Brooks, Shawn Dunphy, Lindsey Kennedy, Sue Berg (chair). Also present: Quinn Brooks-Ward, Colette Spranger. Excused: Ben Corridon, Brandi Vanfossen.
3. Motion to approve the agenda made by Jim Brooks, seconded by Abbey Barnes. Motion carried.
4. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes from June 12, 2025, and approve them as printed was made by Jim Brooks, seconded by Shawn Dunphy. Motion carried.
5. Citizen appearances: None.
6. Tourism Commission updates: None.
7. Old Business
 - a. Mural #3: Artist Jim Richter anticipates completing the “Rex Theater” mural by the end of August if weather cooperates. The mural fills three of the five wall “sections” of the building; the remaining two sections are not readily visible from the street. Jim has been invited to make a proposal to paint the remaining two sections in a neutral manner to complement the mural.
 - b. Mural #1: Sue Berg reported that a sign company, Sign Art Studio, has agreed to build framework and then hang the five portraits on the west wall of the Grange Building. A grant of \$1000 from “The Women’s Fund, a component of the Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin, was awarded to help cover the cost. Installation will occur mid-October. Shawn Dunphy shared that a community reception is planned for 1:30-3pm Saturday, Oct. 18, to celebrate the installation and kick off the Fall Fest starting at 3pm Oct. 18.
 - c. Website update: Analytics showing use of VisitEvansvilleWI.com indicate an upward trend as more people discover the website. On the website, activities and events draw the most traffic. Shawn Dunphy shared information provided by Paul Liess, who is managing the web site. Discussion included ways to cross-link with other websites.
 - d. Lamp post banners: The order has been placed for canvas banners depicting residents who were significant in Evansville’s history. Banner installation was discussed. Quinn Brooks-Ward offered to create narrative to be used as a promotional piece for the banners.
8. New Business
 - a. 2026 Budget: Sue Berg presented a draft for the 2026 Tourism Commission budget. The group reviewed information about the 2024 year end fund balance, current status of the collection of room tax dollars, anticipated expenses for the rest of 2025, and projected funds for 2026. Jim Brooks moved, and Abbey Barnes seconded to accept the \$34,815 budget and recommend it to the Economic Development Committee. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Hotel: Colette Spranger gave an update on the Evansville Inn & Suites by OYO. There was interest in the motel’s efforts with its renovations, its occupancy due to the extensive hailstorm-related construction work in Evansville, and the potential impact on room tax dollars. Colette Spranger will research further.

- c. Gold Tier Connect Communities <https://wedc.org/building-communities/main-street-connect-communities/>: Colette reported that Evansville is one of 10 communities to be awarded this distinction by WEDC. Discussion followed about the use of the services that come with the award (market analysis, event impact studies and design support for building improvement).
 - d. Ice Age Trail Mammoth Hike Challenge <https://www.iceagetrail.org/mammoth-hike-challenge/>: Discussion followed about volunteers and promoting the hike and Ice Age Trail. Quinn Brooks-Ward offered to explore some connections.
 - e. Tourism promotional/social media campaigns: Shawn Dunphy reported on the Chamber's work to continually promote Evansville.
9. Activities with Tourism Potential
- a. Evansville Underground Music – check calendar <https://evansvilleundergroundmusic.org/calendar/>
 - b. Concerts on Allen Creek <https://www.facebook.com/allencreekcoffeehouse>
 - c. Hop Garden music <https://www.facebook.com/HopGardenEvansville>
 - d. Evansville Jays Hometown Baseball League <https://www.facebook.com/EvansvilleJays>
 - e. Summer Used Book Sale July 31-Aug 2
 - f. Citywide Garage Sale Aug 1-2
 - g. Cruise Night and ATV/UTV Night Aug 7
 - h. History in the Park Aug 24
 - i. Cruise Night Sept 4
 - j. Ford Community Corn Roast Sept 7
 - k. Food Truck Market Night Sept 9
 - l. Creekfest Sept 20
 - m. Vintage Shop Hop Oct 3-4
 - n. Ice Age Trail Mammoth Hike Challenge October
 - o. Fall Fest Oct 18
 - p. Merchant Trick or Treat Oct 25
 - q. Olde Fashioned Christmas Nov 21-22
10. Next meeting dates are October 9 and December 11, 2025
11. Motion to adjourn at 8:08pm by Jim Brooks, seconded by Lindsey Kennedy. Motion passed.