

Approved: 07.22.2026

Posted: 07.23.2026



Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

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PEPIN TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday June 24, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Sue called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm

ROLL CALL: Sue F, Mary P, Cheryl H, Shannon V, Gabby (zoom) Lisa S (survey)

Absent: Denise, Jenny B

SECRETARY'S REPORT: A motion was made by Sue to approve the secretary's report as written, seconded by Mary. Vote called; motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

- Approval of invoices:
 - Invoice #2 Casey Byrne – The Enthusiast Collections – Illustrated Map \$230
 - A motion was made to pay this invoice by Cheryl and seconded by Sue; vote called; motion carried unanimously.
 - Invoice # 1215 HW Marketing Media – Destination Pepin (May) \$1147.50
 - A motion was made to pay this invoice for monthly May billable by Sue and seconded by Mary, vote called; motion carried unanimously.
- Financial report review: Current balance is \$52,146.29
- Room tax for the first quarter 2026 was \$17,287.58. 2nd Quarter will be reported in August.

GRANT PROPOSALS: No new grant requests to review.

Approved:

Posted:

HW MARKETING UPDATE:

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION EFFORTS

Gabby found a company (Karben Marketing) willing to work with our Tourism Commission for SEO strategy to drive people to the Destination Pepin website. They are out of Chicago but cover the Eau Claire area. She met with Chad regarding what they would cover and gave an overview on keywords, impact of web site technical errors, links and content. Budget is estimated at \$2,500-\$4,000 per month for a recommended duration of 6-9 months. Sue agreed the SEO strategy is longer term so 6-9 months is reasonable.

Mary, Gabby and Cheryl will meet with Karben Marketing to review a more detailed proposal via zoom within the next few weeks and report back at the next meeting.

AI AGENT FOR WEBSITE

Karben may be able to help with the AI agent as well.

MAPPING PROJECTS:

PRINT MAP:

Discussed final map changes (Blue icon for Harbor View Café and center back page title "Eat.Shop.Dine" plus reorder the business listings by zone 1&2). Sue made a motion to approve the paper map with those changes and order qty 6000 maps. Cheryl seconded the motion. Vote called; motion carried unanimously.

DIGITAL MAP: No action is needed; it is easy to make changes when on the website. Gabby has QR code and the QR code is on the print map.

SIGNAGE:

Will vote on Sue's idea to pay the volunteer pole painter \$100 at the July meeting.

PLANTERS:

The tourism commission agreed that without a watering plan, the installation of Hwy 35 planters cannot be accomplished at this time. Sue will give the TIF committee notice so they do not commit TIF funding to it this fall.

OTHER TOURISM BUSINESS:

Approved:

Posted:

Sue attached data regarding Wisconsin state and County tourism dollars and direct visitor spend between 2023-2025. Business sales are up 4.2% in 2024 and 3.6% in 2025. Direct visitor spend is up 4.7% in 2024 and another 4% in 2025.

Sue also created a list of Tourism Chair responsibilities.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

TABLED TOPICS:

MEETING FREQUENCY: Consider moving meeting to bi-monthly. Tabled until a new chair to replace Sue is in place.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday July 22nd, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURN: There was no further business to discuss and Sue made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Cheryl. Vote called, all ayes for unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Cheryl Herbison