



**MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2025
9:00 A.M.
TOURISM RESERVE FUND COMMITTEE MEETING**

The **Tourism Reserve Fund Committee Meeting** was held on April 11, 2025, at City Hall, 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois 61602. The TRF meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by J.D. Dalfonso.

1. Roll Call:

Present: J.D. Dalfonso, (Non-Voting); Patrick Urich, (Non-Voting); Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young, (Voting); Gregory Wilson, (Voting); (Voting); Dan Kouri, (Voting)

Others Present: Robin Barnes, Brittany Easton, Chunhui Pan, Lidi Chen, Mengrong Taylor, Elijah Taylor, Angela Washington, Kelsie Barnhart, Bobbi Moreland, CJ Goddard

Absent: Marwin Spiller, Council Member Michael Vespa

2. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Gregory Wilson and 2nd by Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young to approve the March 14, 2025, TRF meeting minutes.

- Yeas: All
- Nays: None
- Motion passed unanimously.

3. Financial Report:

Presented by City of Peoria Finance Manager Angela Washington. No changes to the ARPA funds - two outstanding events have money set aside. The Peoria Marketing Fund is not listed in the financial report until Angela and CJ are in alignment with the numbers. We have three local requests today totaling \$42,500. There are no Convention requests today so no changes to that fund. The March tax numbers were up from March in 2024 for both hotels and restaurant tax. PACVB is working on a long-term contract with IKWF to hopefully secure that piece of business for winter months in Peoria. The Peoria Civic Center is seeing over 100,000 people per month.

A motion was made by Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young and 2nd by Gregory Wilson to approve the financials.

- Yeas: All
- Nays: None
- Motion passed unanimously.

4. Items for Approval:

Local Fund:

4a. 2025 – Dragon Boat Races – July 19, Aug. 2, Aug. 16, Aug. 30, Sept. 13, Sept. 27 - \$7,500

We welcome back the Peoria Chinese Association to present again based on feedback from last month. After the last meeting the association has worked to secure additional funds outside of this committee and have raised \$4,200 from Peoria Park District, Global Fest, Golden Buffet, and private donations. They have been working with retired police chief Mike Johnson as he has experience doing events on the river. They have communicated with the Peoria Riverfront Market and the Peoria Art Fair to collaborate on their event dates.

JD clarified that this is now planned to correlate with Riverfront Market dates versus one date during the summer. The PACVB has been in contact with national event organizers with the hope that a national race could be held in Peoria at some point.

Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young asked how the weather would impact the dates and how Mike Johnson is involved. The Association explained that if a date is rained out, they could host on the following weekend. The association contacted him because he has connections to the Chinese community. The association has seen a lot of interest from Bradley students, the fire department, etc. in forming teams. Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young and Gregory Wilson are both appreciative of all the work that went into adjusting the application.

A motion was made by Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young and 2nd by Gregory Wilson to approve the financials.

- Yeas: All
- Nays: None
- Motion passed unanimously.

4b. 2025 - 63rd Annual Peoria Art Guild Fine Art Fair – Sept. 27-28 - \$15,000

Brittany Easton, Director of Development, from the Peoria Art Guild is here on behalf of the organization. The art guild invites 130 artists to the event and sees over 8,000 during the two-day event generating an economic impact of over \$500,000. The art guild has had meetings with the Peoria Riverfront Museum and Peoria Symphony this week to work on corresponding events. There are efforts to collaborate with Caterpillar during the event as well.

Gregory Wilson added that he attended the event last year and enjoyed it. Gregory Wilson made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Woman Bernice Gordon-Young.

Dan Kouri asked who else the Peoria Art Guild receives grants from. They applied for funds from the Community Foundation and were denied this year. Brittany plans to ask Shannon Cox for more clarity on the budget and plans to circle back around to the Tourism Reserve Fund committee. The Peoria Art Guild has lost some sponsors recently like Illinois American Water and other sponsors are lowering their sponsorship. JD asked where the profits from the event go since the financials show they are split with the Peoria Park District. Brittany clarified the event is their main yearly fundraiser

A motion was made by Gregory Wilson and 2nd by Bernice Gordon-Young.

- Yeas: All
- Nays: None
- Motion passed unanimously.

4c. 2025 - 138th Annual Central Illinois Santa Parade – Nov. 28 - \$20,000

Robin Barnes representing PACE is present at the meeting. The Central Illinois Santa Parade is viewed as the kick-off event for the holiday season in downtown Peoria. PACE worked with the Gilmore Foundation / Choose Greater Peoria last year to update some floats and have some hospitality tents at the parade. They have secured the same sponsorship from CGP for this year as well. PACE is also hoping to connect with Peoria County to include the bicentennial efforts. It costs about \$31,000 to put on the parade and they have warehouse costs as well to store the floats - the warehouse needs improvements to the roof.

JD asked what Choose Greater Peoria is contributing this year - Robin said they are giving \$2,500 compared to \$25,000 last year (in kind rather than a cash exchange). Council Member Bernice Gordon-Young said she cannot imagine Peoria without this parade. Robin asked if any has heard of plans for the Yule Like Peoria event in 2025. Kelsie shared that Elizabeth Hanley is planning to host the event again partnering with a non-profit so that there is a cause for the fundraising.

A motion was made by Gregory Wilson and 2nd by Bernice Gordon-Young.

- Yeas: All
- Nays: None
- Motion passed unanimously.

5. Unfinished Items: Continued discussion on a second revision to the TRF Local Fund Criteria for committee to review.

JD explained this second draft has been adjusted to propose a cap contribution for new events of \$5,000. The only other adjustment to this draft is the inclusion of continual support for events that include quality of life advancement. Gregory Wilson sees the need for updates to the application and takes no issue with the changes. Gregory Wilson requested to see an example of a post-event report - Kelsie will send out an example of a received report. JD asked the committee if they would like the reports sent out when received or when the group comes back for additional funding. Patrick Urich suggested

sending out the post-event reports when received. Kelsie will begin by including those received in the monthly send of documents to Michelle before the TRF meeting.

The application changes will be brought forth as an item of approval during the May 9, 2025, TRF meeting.

6. **New Business:** None

7. **Public Comments:** None

8. **Next Scheduled Meeting:** May 9, 2025

9. **Adjournment:** Adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

A Motion to adjourn was made by Gregory Wilson and 2nd by Dan Kouri.

Motion carried unanimously.