



Grinnell Hotel and Motel Tax Committee
Tentative Agenda
Tuesday, February 23, 2016
12:00 p.m.
2nd floor – Council Chambers

Roll Call:

Cirks ___ Lang ___ Nowasell ___ Smith ___ Spriggs ___ White ___ Wright ___

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approve Agenda
3. Approve meeting minutes for January 26, 2016.
4. Consider bills for March 7, 2016 council meeting.
5. Receipt of monthly reports
 - a. Monthly Budget Report –
 - ITM transfer amount increased by \$30,000.
 - b. CVB Monthly report
 - Discuss FY 17 Plan of Work Proposal.
6. Inquiries
7. Adjournment

Grinnell Hotel and Motel Tax Committee
Minutes
Tuesday, January 26, 2016

PRESENT: Cirks, Lang, Smith and Wright. Absent: Nowasell, Spriggs and White.

Also present were Mayor Canfield, Emily Counts, Christian Lutz, Russ Behrens and Kay Cmelik.

1. Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
2. Lang made the motion, second by Smith to approve the agenda. AYES: All. Motion carried.
3. Lang made the motion, second by Cirks to approve the meeting minutes for December 22, 2015. AYES: All. Motion carried.
4. Lang made the motion, second by Cirks to approve the bills for the February 1, 2016 council meeting as follows:
 - a. Grinnell Chamber of Commerce - Quarterly fee \$5,500.
AYES: All. Motion carried.
5. Receipt of monthly reports
 - a. Monthly Budget Report and FY 17 Budget –

The committee briefly reviewed the Monthly Budget report. No action was necessary.

Lang made the motion, second by Smith to recommend approval of the FY17 Hotel and Motel Committee budget to the council. AYES: All. Motion carried.

- b. CVB Monthly report ---

Emily Counts provided an update on the CVB activity.

Emily stated she is working on several groups coming to Grinnell for day trips which included the Art Institute of Chicago.

She is also working with WHO Tractor ride which will bring 600 people to Grinnell from Sunday-Wednesday.

Cirks made the motion, second by Lang to approve marketing plan as presented last month which includes two ads in the Iowan Magazine for \$1,600 and four month commitment with Madden Media for \$250 a month from April to July in the amount of \$1,000. AYES: All. Motion carried.

6. Updates on the following projects:

a. Central Park Improvement Project.

An update was provided on the Central Park Improvement Project. The project will be bid in the spring of 2016 with early construction in June. The private fundraising has reached \$550,000 to date. The plans were made available for the group to view.

b. Boutique Hotel and Event Center

An update was provided on the Boutique Hotel and Event Center. He stated we have the development agreement almost completed but the State Historic Tax Credits has caused a delay in finalizing the same. We are hopeful the tax credit issue will be resolved in June, 2016.

c. Sports Authority.

An update was provided on the Sports Authority. The Sports Authority Committee has done a great job of building momentum for promoting multiple sports events in the community. The committee does intend to apply again for the State Sports Authority grant.

It was noted there are funds available to disburse before the end of this fiscal year. Everyone was encouraged to bring any ideas to the Sports Authority Committee.

7. Inquiries - Christian Lutz inquired about the Music in the Park funding for the Grinnell Area Arts Council. The group informed him there is no longer separate funding for Music in the Park. The GAAC is required to submit a report to the Hotel and Motel Tax Committee for funding consideration.

Christian informed the group that Music in the Park will be held at Bailey and West Merrill Park this summer due to the construction in Central Park.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
P. Kay Cmelik, Secretary for the Committee.



**Tourism YTD Budget Report
February 23, 2016**

		2014-2015 ACTUAL	2015-2016 BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	Proposed Bills list 03/07/16	2015-2016 REMAINING BUDGET
Beginning Balance		\$ 146,108	\$ 196,406	\$ 196,406		-
Revenues:						
145-3.550.2.4780	Other Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 2,542	\$ 500	\$ -		\$ -
145-3.550.4.4085	Hotel/Motel Tax	304,410	300,000	197,789		-
145-3.550.4.4300	Interest Earned	979	800	644		-
145-3.910.4.4790	H&M - Trans In (Interna	-	-	-		-
Total Revenues		\$ 307,931	\$ 301,300	\$ 198,433		\$ -
Expenditures:						
145-4.550.1.6020	Part Time Salaries	8,001	17,570	9,481	-	8,089
145-4.550.1.6210	Dues, Memberships	-	2,000	1,076	-	924
145-4.550.2.6413	Pymts to Agencies	5,000	-	-	-	-
145-4.550.2.6414	Music in the Park	3,000	-	-	-	-
145-4.550.2.6421	Consultation & Prof Fees	-	-	-	-	-
145-4.550.2.6508	Postage and Shipp	-	50	-	-	50
145-4.550.2.6513	Misc Supp & Mater	4,960	5,500	4,105	-	1,395
145-4.550.2.6525	GAAC - Projects	12,000	15,000	4,672	-	10,328
145-4.550.2.6526	Project Development/other exp	35,000	35,000	343	-	34,657
145-4.550.2.6527	Fees for Service	16,372	25,000	11,680	-	13,320
145-4.550.2.6528	Mini-Grant Awards	800	5,000	2,000	-	3,000
145-4.550.2.6529	Fireworks	10,000	10,000	-	-	10,000
Total Expenditures		\$ 95,133	\$ 115,120	\$ 33,357	\$ -	\$ 81,763
145-4.910.5.6911	TRANSFERS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
	313 ITM Museum	30,000	50,000	20,000	-	30,000
	372 Bike Trail Project	27,523	-	-	-	-
	180-146 Matching Funds/Signs	42,477	-	-	-	-
	Sports Authority	25,000	25,000	25,000	-	-
	Central Park/Gr Pls/4th Ave	-	105,000	105,000	-	-
	001 General Fund	37,500	37,500	37,500	-	-
Total Transfers		\$ 162,500	\$ 217,500	\$ 187,500	\$ -	\$ 30,000
Total Expenditures and Transfers Out		\$ 257,633	\$ 332,620	\$ 220,857	\$ -	\$ 111,763
Ending Balance		\$ 196,406	\$ 165,086	\$ 173,982		

Destination Marketing & Visitor Services - Monthly Report -

Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce

Report Period: January 22 – February 19

SOCIAL MEDIA

Objective: Increase social channel followers and engagement. Connect users to GetIntoGrinnell.com or other partner's websites. Connect with visitors from planning through their actual visit, offering them inspiration and information.

- Shared the new “Notable Grinnellians” webpage on Facebook and the post was quite popular with a total reach of 2,389 people as of February 19. Interesting content helps us tell our community’s story and is something we can incorporate into future history-related promotions.

Post Details

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

2,389 People Reached

47 Likes, Comments & Shares

33 Likes	15 On Post	18 On Shares
6 Comments	4 On Post	2 On Shares
8 Shares	4 On Post	4 On Shares

350 Post Clicks

0 Photo Views	154 Link Clicks	196 Other Clicks
----------------------	------------------------	-------------------------

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide Post	1 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

2,389 people reached

15 Likes 2 Comments 2 Shares

Like Comment Share

Boost Post

- Shared the “9 Architectural Treasures to Visit in Grinnell” blog post on Facebook and the post became one of the all-time most popular posts on our Facebook page, reaching 9,446

people as of February 19.

Post Details Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts. ✕

Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce
Published by Emily Counts [?] · February 15 at 3:15pm · 🌐

How much do you know about the architectural treasures located right in your own backyard? This blog post includes videos that share some of the history of each of these places.
<http://blog.traveliowa.com/.../9-Architectural-Treasures-To-V...>



9 Architectural Treasures to Visit in Grinnell
The next time you decide to go on a treasure hunt, Grinnell should be at the top on your list. This town is full of architectural treasures with a wide variety of architectural styles by renowned architects, and they attract visitors from around...
BLOG.TRAVELIOWA.COM

9,446 People Reached

353 Likes, Comments & Shares

261 Likes	46 On Post	215 On Shares
30 Comments	3 On Post	27 On Shares
62 Shares	61 On Post	1 On Shares

696 Post Clicks

2 Photo Views	502 Link Clicks	192 Other Clicks
---------------	-----------------	------------------

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

8 Hide Post	1 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

9,446 people reached Boost Post

46 Likes 1 Comment 61 Shares

Like Comment Share

DIGITAL

Objective: Position GetIntoGrinnell.com as the go-to source of information and inspiration about Grinnell. Increase traffic to GetIntoGrinnell.com.

- Published a [“Notable Grinnellians” page](#) on our website with a list compiled by Dan Kaiser. We can continue to add to this list if others have suggestions.
- Met with Imagine Grinnell director to discuss partnering to create biking and walking routes that highlight the bike trail as well as points of interest in the community. These would be published digitally, but could also be incorporated into printed materials in the future.
- Added a special page to our website to house visitor information related to the NCAA DIII National Track & Field Championships taking place at Grinnell College March 10-12. We are working with college committee to compile information for this page over the next couple weeks. View the web page [here](#).
- Added group tour itinerary samples to the [Group Tours page](#) of our website.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Objective: Raise top-of-mind awareness of Grinnell in the state of Iowa. Build relationships and communicate regularly with Iowa media and tourism industry.

- Published a blog post titled [“9 Architectural Treasures to Visit in Grinnell”](#) on the Iowa Tourism blog. It was their highest-viewed blog post of the week. The post was shared on the Travel Iowa Facebook page on February 19 as this report is being written.
- Working with a Grinnell College alum who is a filmmaker planning to shoot her next feature film in Grinnell this July. The film is a fictional story, but features all of her favorite locations in Grinnell. Details about the film:

- The film tells the story of two sisters who reconnect with each other over their shared love of music over the course of one summer in Grinnell. Beyond telling a moving story, we would like to showcase Grinnell as a beloved, magical Midwestern town, and involve the community through the process of making a film there.
- Noga Ashkenazi is a Grinnell College alum ('09) and a Filmmaker whose previous work includes the documentary about the Grinnell Prison Program ([The Grey Area: Feminism Behind Bars](#)).

PAID MEDIA

Objective: Raise awareness about Grinnell as destination in the state of Iowa. Focus on target markets through niche advertising, centered on our three tourism strategies. Develop cooperative marketing opportunities for local businesses/attractions to increase their reach and reduce overall marketing expenses while creating a unified, intentional message and brand promise.

- Discusses search engine marketing plans with Madden Media per our marketing plan for this year. Per these discussions, we plan to contract with Madden Media for May-August at a cost is \$250 per month.
- Finishing a mock-up of the print ads for The Iowan Magazine. Will be visiting with select businesses and organizations about participating in these co-op ads.

VISITOR CENTER

Objective: Operate a physical downtown visitor center that serves as the official first point of contact, or "front door," to the community. Assist visitors and ensure they have a good experience in Grinnell. Answer requests for visitor information.

- Provided planning support to several tour planners regarding their summer group tours to Grinnell.
- Sent an email invitation to tour planners that attended the Travel Iowa Marketplace in November to welcome them to bring their groups to Grinnell this summer and fall.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Objective: Add to the vitality of the community by hosting public events. These events add activity and entertainment, and draw attendees from the surrounding area. Use events as a reason to communicate with media.

- Successfully recruited the annual WHO tractor ride to Grinnell this summer for the ride's 20th anniversary. We announced Grinnell as the location at their route announcement party February 2. Participants will be in Grinnell Sunday, June 26 through Wednesday, June 29. An estimated 600-700 tractors and 800 people will be involved in the event. We are now working with the organizers on logistics including catering, lodging, venues, etc.
- Working with the All-Class Reunion on details of their event in July.
- Working with Summer Fest organizers on details of their June event.
- Finalizing event schedule for Grinnell Games, which will be June 11-12 this year. Registration and marketing will be launched soon. We are working to cross-promote the event with Summer Fest, which is the same weekend.



Destination Marketing & Visitor Services Proposal

Grinnell Convention & Visitors Bureau Plan Of Work 2016-17

Prepared by Emily Counts, Tourism Director
Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau

PART I

OVERVIEW

Tourism is the intentional branding of a community. We work hard to strategically increase awareness of Grinnell as a travel destination. Whether that be placing an ad, securing a regional meeting, or hosting a regional sporting event, these are all opportunities to tell Grinnell's story.

Tourism impacts the community in many ways, such as through the number of visitors who travel to Grinnell or the dollars they spend or the hotel stays they generate. When tourism can provide a unique experience for visitors, one that brings economic prosperity to our community, we also create a positive experience for those who call Grinnell home. By supporting businesses, events, and organizations that make this community vibrant, the quality of life and the opportunities available to residents increases.

➤ **Partnering with the Chamber of Commerce**

The Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce is committed to the success and growth of the Grinnell community. We have operated the Grinnell Convention and Visitors Bureau for several years and propose continuing our public/private partnership with the City of Grinnell's Hotel/Motel Tax Committee for fiscal year 2016-17.

Many communities have found that the best way to provide destination marketing and visitor services is through a well-established organization that offers a trusted "chamber of commerce" brand. This is helpful because of the Chamber's relationships with the business community and community at large. There is synergy and efficiency in one organization operating business, tourism, and branding functions for a community.

Why the Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce?

- Represent the largest collective voice of business in the city and county, with 300 members who represent a workforce of more than 6,000.
- Provide a qualified, experienced team that efficiently operates as an in-house marketing agency. The staff has expertise in hospitality, marketing, event management, and customer service.
- Build awareness about Grinnell through our digital marketing channels, especially GetIntoGrinnell.com and our weekly e-newsletter.
- Manage social media channels in an effort to increase awareness about Grinnell. Success in managing social media tourism goals is illustrated through the receipt of the "2014 Outstanding Social Media Execution Award" from the Iowa Tourism Office.
- Proven track record with event management and involvement with the majority of tourism events in the community.
- Maintain relationships with the Iowa Tourism Office and regularly work with their staff to gain exposure for Grinnell.
- Maintain memberships in several tourism organizations including Central Iowa Tourism Region, Travel Federation of Iowa, and Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance. Attend the annual Iowa Tourism Conference hosted by the Iowa Tourism Office.
- Maintain efficiencies by operating both the Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau, which complement each other.

PART II

TOURISM STRATEGIES

With the approval of the Grinnell Hotel-Motel Tax Committee, we propose continuing our strategic direction for the fiscal year 2016-17. These three key tourism strategies were outlined this past year, and we we feel they should remain our areas of focus.

This proposal outlines the individual components of a fully integrated destination marketing and visitor services program designed to ultimately increase hotel/motel tax revenues and sales tax revenues, in alignment with the goals and objectives set by the Grinnell Hotel/Motel Tax Committee.

➤ STRATEGY #1

Position Grinnell as a sports and recreation hub in Iowa.

Grinnell is an ideal location for youth and collegiate sporting events in the region because the city boasts a large inventory of sporting event venues.

Tactics:

1. Collaborate with the Grinnell Sports Authority committee in an effort to provide support to sporting events/tournaments and sport facilities.
2. Expand information about local sporting facilities on GetIntoGrinnell.com.
3. Continue to grow Grinnell Games as Iowa's Family Sports Festival.
4. Grow awareness of Grinnell as destination for gravel bike riding enthusiasts.

Target Markets:

1. Tournament managers
2. Coaches and team leaders
3. Gravel bike riding enthusiasts
4. Athletes
5. Runners

PART II (conintued)

TOURISM STRATEGIES

► STRATEGY #2

Position Grinnell as a regional dining destination in central Iowa.

As Grinnell's reputation for dining continues to grow, our city is poised to offer travelers an authentic culinary tourism experience. We will strive to elevate Grinnell's reputation as a dining destination. We will use dining as a driver and point of differentiation to grow visitation to Grinnell.

Culinary tourism is defined by the World Food Travel Association as the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences, not necessarily high-end or "gourmet." Culinary tourism or food tourism is experiencing the food of the country, region, or area, and is now considered a vital component of the tourism experience.

Tactics:

1. Develop partnerships with culinary destinations in Grinnell to implement cooperative marketing campaigns.
2. Work with key Grinnell restaurants to enhance the dining experience for tourists.
3. Include the Grinnell Farmers Market in marketing to help brand Grinnell as a local foods destination.
3. Supply culinary tourism education and information to Grinnell's culinary tourism businesses.
4. Create and curate content for GetIntoGrinnell.com.

Target Markets:

1. Foodies
2. Couples
3. Women
4. Millennials

► STRATEGY #3

Position Grinnell as a statewide destination rich in history, architecture, arts, and entertainment.

Grinnell's historic buildings, especially its downtown, and its variety in architecture are attractive to travelers. We will continue to spread awareness about historic and architecturally significant landmarks in the community. We will also work in collaboration with other local organizations to brand Grinnell as a community filled with arts and entertainment.

Tactics:

1. Showcase community assets that have historic and architectural significance.
2. Develop cooperative marketing partnerships with local arts organizations and galleries.
3. Create and curate content for GetIntoGrinnell.com.

Target Markets:

1. Baby Boomers
2. Retirees
3. Architecture Enthusiasts
4. History Enthusiasts
5. Arts Enthusiasts

PART III

WORK PRODUCTS & DELIVERABLES

Through our role as the Convention and Visitors Bureau, we propose continuing our work in the following areas. We have outlined our proposed objectives and tactics in each area along with our proposed measurable benchmarks. We will submit a monthly report to the Hotel/Motel Tax Committee that provides updates in each work area based on its measurable deliverables.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Objective: Increase social channel followers and engagement. Connect users to GetIntoGrinnell.com or other partner's websites. Connect with visitors from planning through their actual visit, offering them inspiration and information.

Tactics:

1. Continue to strengthen social channels as go-to resources for community information and inspiration.
2. Develop niche social promotions designed to further our objectives in branding Grinnell as a destination for sports/recreation, dining, history, architecture, arts, and entertainment.
3. Write or assist others with writing one blog post per month for TravellIowa.com's statewide travel blog.

Deliverables:

1. Number of fans/followers on social channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest)
2. Referral traffic directed to GetIntoGrinnell.com

DIGITAL

Objective: Position GetIntoGrinnell.com as the go-to source of information and inspiration about Grinnell. Increase traffic to GetIntoGrinnell.com.

Tactics:

1. Enhance website content by adding highly engaging photos and videos that entice users to spend more time on the website and that are designed for social sharing.
2. Expand website content, centered around our objectives in branding Grinnell as a destination for sports/recreation, dining, and history/arts/architecture.
3. Partner with a local photographer to acquire new promotional photography for GetIntoGrinnell.com, GrinnellIowa.gov, and marketing materials.

Deliverables:

1. Google Analytics (number of visitors, location of visitors, traffic to tourism content)
2. Reports on new tourism content added to website

PART III (continued)

WORK PRODUCTS & DELIVERABLES

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Objective: Raise top-of-mind awareness of Grinnell in the state of Iowa. Build relationships and communicate regularly with Iowa media and tourism industry.

Tactics:

1. Target niche publications and writers/bloggers with story pitches and press releases that align with tourism strategies.
2. Increase and maintain regular contact with media.
3. Continue to grow relationship with the Iowa Tourism Office.
4. Increase and maintain the Grinnell information posted at TravelIowa.com.
5. Submit nominations and applications for community awards and accolades.
6. Develop a new branding library available to anyone who wishes to promote the community. This could include logos, photos, and video.
7. Update community profiles on review websites such as TripAdvisor, Google Places, Yelp, and Wikipedia.

Deliverables:

1. Report of work with the Iowa Tourism Office and TravelIowa.com
2. Report of completed nominations and applications for awards and accolades
3. Report of updated profiles on review websites

PAID MEDIA

Objective: Raise awareness about Grinnell as a destination in the state of Iowa. Focus on target markets through niche advertising, centered around our three tourism strategies. Develop cooperative marketing opportunities for local businesses/attractions to increase their reach and reduce overall marketing expenses while creating a unified, intentional message and brand promise.

Tactics:

1. Develop a paid media plan and secure media placements for the year.
2. Design a framework for co-op marketing opportunities and secure local partners.
3. Create advertising collateral that stays true to the Grinnell brand and focuses on our three tourism strategies.
4. Act as the creative director for tourism marketing projects.

Deliverables:

1. Copies of the creative content produced for all marketing projects
2. Ad metrics (depending on advertising medium, metrics could include circulation, audience reach, impressions, clicks, responses)

PART III (continued)

WORK PRODUCTS & DELIVERABLES

VISITOR CENTER

Objective: Operate a physical downtown visitor center that serves as the official first point of contact, or “front door,” to the community. Assist visitors and ensure they have a good experience in Grinnell. Answer requests for visitor information.

Tactics:

1. Continue to operate a visitor center in the Merchants National Bank building, staffing it with Chamber/CVB staff and volunteers.
2. Respond to all requests for information by phone, mail, and in-person.
3. Provide planning assistance to visiting groups, both large and small.
4. Provide planning assistance to groups hosting tourism events/meetings in the community.
5. Provide digital and print resources to visitors, such as dining guides and maps.

Deliverables:

- . Report on assistance provided to visiting groups and events

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Objective: Add to the vitality of the community by hosting public events. These events add activity and entertainment, and draw attendees from the surrounding area. Use events as a reason to communicate with media.

Tactics:

1. Improve and grow Grinnell Games as Iowa’s Family Sports Festival.
2. Coordinate Grinnell On The Fourth festivities including parade and fireworks.
3. Grow the Grinnell Farmers Market through increased vendors, customers, and added activities/partnerships.
4. Provide event logistics and/or marketing support to other community events that draw visitors including but not limited to Music in the Park, Grinnell Vintage Auto Show, sports events/tournaments, Arts Council events, and Grinnell College events.

Deliverables:

1. Report of event progresss
2. Post-event results reports

PART IV

PROPOSED BUDGET

The following budget outlines our proposed fees for the services detailed in this proposal.

Proposed Destination Marketing & Visitor Services Budget

Fiscal Year 2016-17

	Hotel-Motel Tax Committee Investment		Matching Investment	
	Fee For Service	Project Dev/Promotions	Chamber of Commerce	Other Partners
SOCIAL MEDIA				
Management/Creative/Strategy	\$ 2,750.00		\$ 6,000.00	
Paid Niche Social Promotions		\$ 800.00		
DIGITAL				
Management/Creative/Strategy	\$ 5,250.00		\$ 6,000.00	
Content Development		\$ 1,500.00		
Photography/Videography		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	
PUBLIC RELATIONS				
Management/Creative/Strategy	\$ 3,250.00		\$ 1,000.00	
PAID MEDIA				
Management/Creative/Strategy	\$ 2,750.00			
Media Placements		\$ 5,000.00		\$ 4,000.00
VISITOR CENTER				
Management/Staffing/Rent	\$ 5,250.00		\$ 5,000.00	
COMMUNITY EVENTS**				
Management/Marketing	\$ 3,250.00		\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT/EDUCATION				
Memberships/Conferences/Webinars	\$ 1,500.00		\$ 1,500.00	
Totals	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 8,300.00	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 8,000.00

PART V

SUMMARY

The Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce values its partnership with the Hotel-Motel Tax Committee. We feel we are uniquely positioned to carry out Grinnell's work in destination marketing and visitor services. We look forward to working with you to execute this proposed plan of work for fiscal year 2016-17. This comprehensive plan will help us focus our destination marketing and visitor services efforts, resulting in a targeted approach that uses hotel-motel tax funds efficiently by pairing them with matching funds from the Chamber of Commerce membership as well as partner businesses and organizations. We will submit a written monthly update to the Hotel-Motel Tax Committee based on the deliverables outlined in this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership.