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Office of the City Administrator

**FESTIVALS COMMITTEE**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Monday, February 16, 2026 - 6:30 PM**  
**North Conference Room**

**Minutes**

**1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair White at 6:30 p.m.

**Present:** Chair White, Vice Chair Conaty, Member Benson, Member Hohn, Member Johnson (departed at 6:51 p.m.), Member Liljegren, Member Mchenry, Member Wirth

**Not Present:** Member Luchins, Member Nerbun

**Also Present:** Assistant City Administrator Wolff, Mequon Nature Preserve Executive Director Thiel, Executive Assistant Kong

**2) Personal Appearance and Public Comment**

Citizens wishing to address the Committee on any item not on the agenda may do so at this time. To speak or have your opinion recorded, please register your name and address with the Staff Liaison for the Festivals Committee. Time limit is 5 minutes.

Kristin Thiel, Executive Director of the Mequon Nature Preserve, was present and was interested in finding ways to partner with the Festivals Committee for upcoming events. Her team can help coordinate nature-centered activities.

Member Hohn had spoken with Connie Pukaite who works with local volunteers to see if any of them would be interested in attending a meeting or volunteering at future events.

**3) Approval of Meeting Minutes**

a) Meeting minutes of January 19, 2026

<b>MOTION:</b>	Motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 19, 2026
<b>MOVER:</b>	Member Lisa Liljegren
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Member Jenne Hohn
<b>AYES:</b>	Chair Miranda White, Vice Chair Deanna Conaty, Member Brett Benson,

	Member Jenne Hohn, Member Tracy Johnson, Member Lisa Liljegren, Member Laeh Mchenry, Member Janet Wirth
<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved by Voice Acclamation

#### 4) Committee Chair Update

Chair White shared that the topics of Redbud and Winter Wonderland were put on the agenda for this month to allow adequate notification to the community that the committee had discussed pausing them at the January meeting. At that time, the Committee had discussed the decreasing attendance at Winter Wonderland, cold/unpredictable weather issues and new events being held the same weekend as some additional factors that went into their plan to pause those two events.

#### 5) Action Items

##### a) Redbud Festival

Chair White moved to cancel Redbud Festival for 2026. The Committee will discuss a second or third festival after determining the time and resources needed to make those events happen.

<b>MOTION:</b>	Motion to cancel the Redbud Festival in 2026
<b>MOVER:</b>	Chair Miranda White
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Member Tracy Johnson
<b>AYES:</b>	Chair Miranda White, Vice Chair Deanna Conaty, Member Brett Benson, Member Jenne Hohn, Member Tracy Johnson, Member Lisa Liljegren, Member Laeh Mchenry, Member Janet Wirth
<b>NAYS:</b>	None
<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved by Voice Acclamation

##### b) Winter Wonderland

Chair White also moved to cancel Winter Wonderland and find other potential events that can help provide a family friendly event for the community.

<b>MOTION:</b>	Motion to cancel Winter Wonderland for 2026
<b>MOVER:</b>	Chair Miranda White
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Member Laeh Mchenry
<b>AYES:</b>	Chair Miranda White, Vice Chair Deanna Conaty, Member Brett Benson, Member Jenne Hohn, Member Tracy Johnson, Member Lisa Liljegren, Member Laeh Mchenry

<b>NAYS:</b>	Member Janet Wirth
<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved by Roll Call Vote

c) Second event for 2026

The Committee discussed several different ideas such as a movie night with an outdoor screen as a second event in the Summer. This would provide a nice family activity with limited "movie-theme" vendors. Vice-Chair Conaty suggested working with local restaurants for a special for that evening to promote the local businesses as well. The Committee also talked about how this can be a unique opportunity to get the community out and gathering in a fun way. People can bring their own blankets and chairs. An outdoor movie may have to start a little later depending on when dusk falls.

Another way to connect with the community would be to coordinate with the Library for a kickoff of the Summer Reading Program and have a smaller band, a few activities and plan for time that the pool would also be open.

Member Wirth suggested creating some kind of business scavenger hunt to get community members into the local businesses and submit a photo. When they complete the scavenger hunt, there can be a prize or gathering to celebrate completing it. Another idea was an event similar to "Doors Open Milwaukee" where buildings are open later or are open to the public when they normally would not be. It would be nice to have some kind of event with public art or something along the River walk.

Another summer event would be something that would promote the River usage such as a planned kayak tour or camping event. An idea was shared to hold a "community farmer's market" where community members sign up to bring something to pass (bread, handmade candles, soap, treats, crafts) that all participants can select and swap at this event. This was inspired by a Instagram post on this type of event. This would help showcase some cottage businesses but also allow the community to gather and share items at this event. It may also be an opportunity to sell or use the Mequon tote bags that were created for Redbud.

Members asked about combining a tree lighting event on the same night that Thiensville hosts their event. Maybe businesses could be encouraged to decorate windows or trees along the street on that same evening.

**6) Discussion Items**

Member Liljegren summarized the band selections that were contacted to play at Taste of Mequon. At the January meeting, the Committee voted to allow Member Lilegren to find and book the three bands within the budget of \$6200 (the amount spent for bands at Taste in 2025). She booked the Taxmen, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels and Noisy Neighbors for an estimated \$4600. With confirmation from the Committee, they will be sent contracts and W9s to have them finalized.

<b>MOTION:</b>	Motion to approve the band line up within the budget allocated
<b>MOVER:</b>	Chair Miranda White
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Member Janet Wirth
<b>AYES:</b>	Chair Miranda White, Vice Chair Deanna Conaty, Member Brett Benson, Member Jenne Hohn, Member Lisa Liljegren, Member Laeh Mchenry, Member Janet Wirth
<b>NAYS:</b>	Member Tracy Johnson (Deemed No)
<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved by Voice Acclamation

## 7) Work Plan

- a) Outreach to sponsors and vendors for Taste of Mequon (members to select 4 or 5 of each and follow up regarding participation).

Chair White reviewed the list of past sponsors and asked members to select three or four sponsors to follow up with businesses or people on the list to follow up with them. Emails had been sent to all on January 23, 2026. Committee members reviewed the list and selected several sponsors to contact. If a business wants to have a booth space, they either have to provide an activity for the children's area. They cannot just hand out flyers or try to promote their services.

The Committee reviewed the past children's activities and requested that those events end between 5 or 6 pm. The Committee also looked at reaching out to see if sponsors want to cover the costs for a specific activity as well.

## 8) Next Meeting Date and Time

The next meeting of the Festivals Committee will be on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

## 9) Adjourn

<b>MOTION:</b>	Motion to adjourn at 7:28 p.m.
<b>MOVER:</b>	Chair Miranda White
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Member Brett Benson
<b>AYES:</b>	Chair Miranda White, Vice Chair Deanna Conaty, Member Brett Benson, Member Jenne Hohn, Member Lisa Liljegren, Member Laeh Mchenry, Member Janet Wirth
<b>NAYS:</b>	Member Tracy Johnson (Deemed No)
<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved by Voice Acclamation

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Kong, Executive Assistant - Communications