

Posted:03.26.2026



Equal opportunity Provider & Employer"

508 Second Street, P.O. Box 277, Pepin, WI, 54759, Phone 715-442-2461
Emails: clerk@pepinwisconsin.org and treasurer@pepinwisconsin.org

PEPIN TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

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

ROLL CALL: Present: Sue F, Pat S, Jenny B, Denise P, Mary P, Cheryl H. As the new members of the tourism commission, Cheryl was introduced

SECRETARY'S REPORT: A motion was made by Denise and seconded by Jenny to approve the December 10, 2025 meeting minutes. Vote called; motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE REPORT:

Approval of invoices: One invoice was due to HW Marketing for \$990.00. A motion to pay this invoice was made by Denise and seconded by Mary. Vote called; motion carried unanimously.

- **Financial report review:** The final 2025 budget was presented. The 2026 budget has been increased to \$90,000 and allocated as follows: 40% Tourism Development & Grants, 50% Tourism Promotion, and 10% Admin. Current balance is \$62,354.23. Room tax revenues in 2025 totaled \$89,936.75. Sue will provide year-to-year comparisons of room tax revenue at the next meeting.
- **GRANT PROPOSALS.** No grant proposals were brought forward at this meeting. Mary commented that the tourism grant program was underutilized in 2025 and should be better promoted so people know about it. Sue will post an explanation of the grant program on the Destination Pepin Facebook page, and we'll try to spread the word by word of mouth.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION STRATEGY. Gabby provided the commission with the SEO strategy for DestinationPepin.com that she has been developing. Jenny offered to discuss this plan in detail with Gabby, and Sue will facilitate their connection.

COST SHARE WITH TOURISM ENTITY: There was an extensive discussion regarding a one-time financial boost for WCOW, our tourism entity, as it undertakes rebranding, website development, and initiatives to increase membership and enhance marketing efforts. The consensus was that the tourism commission will contribute \$200 toward the \$299 membership fee for any lodging facility in Pepin that wishes to join WCOW and benefit from its broad marketing campaigns. A motion was made by Jenny to reimburse \$200 of the \$299 membership fee as a pilot program for Pepin lodging owners interested in joining (WCOW). Sue seconded the motion. A vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously. Denise will communicate

Posted:03.26.2026

this opportunity to the WCOW president and marketing team, who will present it to the Pepin lodging owners. This program aligns well with WCOW's membership push scheduled for February 2026. If we do not receive a substantial number of owners participating, we will discuss a potential cost-share with WCOW to help support their budget.

HWY 35 PLANTERS UPDATE. Pat reported that Aaron is still looking into the locations for these planters along Hwy 35. Once the location and watering plan are finalized, the planters will be ordered.

VILLAGE MAP/FLYER. This project will include 2 maps: one digital map on MapMe and one illustrated map in print and digital pdf format. Jenny presented options for the illustrated map's format, and the consensus was that the Landmark & Orientation map with physical landmarks, cultural buildings, and a few anchor destinations would best suit our needs and would have less chance of becoming outdated quickly. The map will be trifold. It will include a QR code to the digital map and destinationpepin.com. A suggestion was made to list business categories on the flyer: retail, dining, lodging, etc. A motion was made by Sue and seconded by Denise to select the Landmark & Orientation map format option for the illustrated map. Vote called, motion carried unanimously. Jenny will now finalize the landmark list and get quotes to move forward. She will also activate the digital map. Payment options include the tourism commission credit card or a direct payment invoice, whichever is best for the vendors. The digital map fee can be set up for monthly autopay.

SHRPA.COM UPDATE: Sue provided an update on the proposed itinerary for the content creator's visit over Valentine's weekend, which includes dining, shopping, and entertainment options. To finalize the last visit in the 7-visit Shrpa package, Sue will review past visits for any coverage gaps to help the tourism commission identify areas where new content is needed. Based on this assessment, the commission will decide on additional Shrpa packages moving forward. Sue will also reach out to Gabby to obtain social media analytics for our new content.

OTHER TOURISM COMMISSION BUSINESS.

- Mary will reach out to Jan B regarding the status of the three directional signposts on Lake Street. Everyone agreed that if the signs are not repaired and updated by February 28, the tourism commission will take on this project to ensure the signs are ready for the tourist season.
- Signage: There was discussion about placing business signs on Hwy 35 at the west end of town so travelers know that there are businesses beyond Villa Bellezza. This issue will go on the February agenda for discussion and approval.
- There was a discussion about marketing the Christmas market with banners to attract travelers, as many people are unaware of it.
- There was discussion about installing a charging station in Pepin. There are different levels of electric vehicle charging stations: Level 1 is the slowest, suitable for plug-in hybrids. Level 2 is a public charging station that uses a 240-volt outlet and provides a faster charge. Level 3 uses DC power and provides the fastest charge, making it ideal for long-distance travel. Pat will look into the possibilities and costs and report back.

NEXT MEETING. February 25, 2026 at 3 pm.

Posted:03.26.2026

ADJOURN. Sue made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mary. Vote called, motion carried.

Sue Fedie