

DE SOTO AREA TOURISM COMMISSION

De Soto Tourism Commission Meeting

Monday May 20, 2023 7:00 PM

De Soto Community Center, De Soto

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

President – Gary Mulford 507-254-0164

Vice President – Josh Petzel 612-232-4076

Secretary – Carrie Brudos 608-648-2700

Treasurer De Soto – Carrie Brudos

Treasurer Wheatland – Kelly Boardman

Member – Kari Beeman

Member – Ryan Beeman

Member – Pamela Cotant

Member – Justin McCumber

Member – Mitch Schiffer

Member – Jenn Swiggum

Member – Janice Vanevenhoven

DE SOTO AREA TOURISM COMMISSION MEETINGS:

Third Monday of the Month

7:00 PM De Soto Community Center

Online Tourism Commission Records:

<https://desotowi.com/home/village-affairs/#tourism-commission>

DE SOTO AREA TOURISM COMMISSION

Background:

State government fosters state economic growth in multiple ways Wisconsin

- State of Wisconsin uses legislation to bolster the state economy.
- For a long time, an important sector of revenue for the state economy has been recreational tourism.

Attracting recreational spending benefits state and local economies

- Concentration on attracting recreational spending to Wisconsin benefits both state and local economies. Example attractions are: outdoor sports, game sports, live entertainment, fine dining, unique geography, fine art, unique and accessible natural settings, many things.... supported by reliable transportation, safe environments, readily available food, places to stay, a supply of goods and services.

Tourism is rapidly expanding beyond traditional Wisconsin vacation areas

- Tourism areas are now expanding significantly beyond the traditional vacation areas of Wisconsin (Bayfield area and Lake Superior, Door County, Hayward, Lake Michigan shorelines, Wisconsin Dells, Milwaukee).

Information explosion and COVID pandemic are reasons for the travel expansion

- A big reason for the expansion is the information explosion (social media, internet websites, endless news feeds, streaming media, television shows, and magazines). With a little bit of practice, it is very easy to find things to do and places to go.
- Another giant reason is the COVID epidemic. What more and more people want in overnight accommodations has changed dramatically. This demand for “a safe (and private) home away from home” versus traditional motels, hotels, and gigantic resorts, is very significant to places like the De Soto Area.

We are fortunate to live in the Driftless Area along the Upper Mississippi

- We are blessed to be located in the Driftless Area and on the banks of the Upper Mississippi River valley. Beautiful scenery, a ton of things to do, AND it's safe, with less traffic, less people, and now more and more great, easy to use overnight lodging.

Historically the area has been pressed for enough public revenue to meet needs

- One thing that has historically plagued the region is adequate financial means to maintain superstructure, public services, and local parks, and attract new retail businesses and other new tourism related sources of public revenue.

The Room Tax is meant to increase the focus on producing more local tourism.

- In 1967, the State of Wisconsin created the Occupancy (or Room) Tax. Today, it is widely used in Wisconsin and many other states to provide the financial means to promote growth in local economies through increased tourism.