



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Common Council

FROM: Mayor Dan Devine
John F. Stibal, Director, Department of Development

DATE: July 2, 2015

RE: Creation of a West Allis Tourism Commission AND West Allis Convention and Visitors Bureau

A recent motion added to the state budget would require that a minimum of 70% of all collected room tax go towards tourism promotion and development through marketing of projects to promote the City, attract tourists, tourist informational services, or municipal development significantly used by tourists. Current law allows for municipalities who already have a room tax imposed prior to 1994 (such is the case for West Allis) to keep 100% of the obtained room tax in the general city budget. With the proposed state law/budget change, only 30% can be kept for the general city budget and 70% must go towards tourism promotion.

State Statutes allow for a municipality to create a “Tourism Commission” to manage the 70% of the room tax that the City collects for the purpose of tourism promotion. The Tourism Commission is made up of five (5) members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a majority vote of the members of the Common Council who are present when the vote is taken. The Tourism Commission’s role is to manage the room tax funds available to them. The Tourism Commission would report activities and fund expenditures to the Common Council on an annual basis. The Tourism Commission then must contract with an entity to fulfill the “tourism promotion” activities. The entity would be “Convention and Visitors Bureau”. Under the direction of the Mayor, the Bureau would engage in tourism marketing activities and coordinate with city staff to provide “tourism-based” services with the funds that are appropriated by the Tourism Commission.

Two proposed ordinances are attached. One creates a Tourism Commission; the second creates a Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Cc: Rebecca Grill, City Administrator
Scott Post, City Attorney
John F. Stibal, Director, Department of Development
Patrick Schloss, Manager, Community Development Division
Kristi Johnson, Supervisor, Community Development Division