

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF DELANO**  
**Spirit of Community Commission**  
**Tuesday, October 8, 2019**  
**7:00 PM**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Ted May at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

**Members present:** Theresa Green, Sarah Grosshuesch, Diane Johnson, Chad Kestner, Ted May, Becky Schaust

**Liaison:** Molly Fleming, Nick Neaton

**Guests:** None

**3. Approval of August 13, 2019, minutes**

On a motion by Becky Schaust, seconded by Chad Kestner, minutes of the August 13, 2019 meeting were approved.

**4. Additions to the Agenda**

Nick Neaton added “U.S. Census Count Committee” to the agenda.

**5. Order of Business**

A. Membership Update

There still exists a vacancy on the commission. Becky Schaust has recruited Janell Gildemeister as a potential member. Nick Neaton will contact her.

B. Lodging tax discussion

Staff introduced information about a potential lodging tax in Delano. Cities may impose a lodging tax of up to 3 percent of gross receipts of lodging in the city. Proceeds must be used to fund a local convention or tourism bureau for the purposes of marketing and promoting the city. Becky Schaust asked about the motivation for discussing the lodging tax. Chad Kestner said that tax funds could potentially fund marketing opportunities without creating an additional tax burden on residents.

SOCC members asked questions including: revenue potential, GrandStay Delano’s occupancy rate, competition with neighboring cities, etc. Members also recognized the potential for a more formal marketing campaign of Delano as a destination.

There were also questions around starting with the full three-percent tax, perhaps opting instead for a lower percentage.

Becky Schaust asked whether the funds could be used for the purposes of economic

development.

The SOCC instructed city staff to conduct more research on hotel-occupancy rates, revenue potential, and parameters of spending. The projected figures should reflect annual revenue from the lodging tax. The SOCC will revisit this at a future meeting

C. Remodel/home improvement fair event

Nick Neaton raised the concept of sponsoring a home improvement/landscaping/remodeling fair, in order to help the city move towards its goal of improving its housing stock. SOCC members expressed interest, but showed concern about possibly competing with the Chamber of Commerce expo event, which has many similar vendors.

Members thought the event would have to have a clear purpose and identity, perhaps featuring classes or workshops; partnering with the chamber or other community institutions. A member asked whether the lodging tax could help to fund this fair.

Staff will do more research on this possibility and the SOCC will revisit the topic at the November meeting.

D. Policy review process

Chad Kestner met with city staff to discuss ways in which the SOCC can be more proactive and informed about city policy issues in a timely manner.

Nick Neaton said that the city has created monthly leadership meetings to address this topic, for the purpose of preparing for policy discussions.

The group also suggested that the SOCC conduct regular reviews of Delano city policy, in order to learn about the context and history of the community. Staff would provide overviews of areas of policy, highlighting recent discussions.

Sarah Grosshuech suggested that the first topic focus on police presence in Delano, including recommended increases and the levels of police presence in different Wright County communities.

E. Old Fashioned Christmas

The SOCC had a presence at the 2018 OFC event. Commission members expressed an interest in having a booth again, provided that it is in a favorable location.

Ted said he would get poinsettias again to give away at a drawing at the booth.

Is candy or some other goodie (attraction) feasible?

F. US Census Count Committee

Molly Fleming said that the city council named the SOCC as the U.S. Census Complete Count Committee for Delano. We will receive more information about this designation as the 2020 census approaches, but the work entails helping to encourage census participation in the case that participation does not meet goals.

## 6. Other Business

Sarah Grosshuech suggested that we begin our meetings with some kind of icebreaker to help get to know each other. SOCC members agreed that this was a good idea, and plan to start this at the November meeting.

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 p.m. at Delano City Hall