Convention & Visitors Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes 04/15/2026
In-Person Meeting | SpringHill Suites (3921 S. MacArthur Boulevard)

I. Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Jean Bruner-Jachino at 8:00am.

II. Attendance: Jodi Davis, Jacob Blair, Malinda Montz, Jay Kitterman, Darin Dame, Betsy Dollar, C.J. Metcalf, Mike Murphy, Karen Conn, Jean Bruner-Jachino, Scott Dahl.

III. Motion to approve meeting minutes from 3/25/2026 by Mike Murphy, seconded by Karen Conn. All ayes, no discussion.

IV. Chair Report: Jean started by thanking everyone for their time spent reviewing grants and preparing for this meeting. She mentioned the need to make decisions today to keep the process moving. She quickly moved the group on to the Local Tourism Grant discussion.

V. Local Tourism Grant Discussion and Voting: Scott reminded the group that the total amount of money allocated to this grant program is $35,000. He suggested moving some events to the Route 66 funding source, which is also an allocation of $35,000 for FY27. He suggested moving the Corvette car show, Kidzeum Route 66 exhibit expansion, The Pharmacy's Route 66 centennial event, Stadium's Rumble on 66, and the United Way Ride. Mike agreed with Scott's suggestions.

The group began to work through the rest of the grants, starting with Bloom's progressive dinner series. Jodi brought up her concern about the limited number of participants. Malinda echoed that sentiment. Other group members chimed in with the same decision.

Next, the group discussed the CEDA Takes Over Springfield event. Darin mentioned that the trip comes at a time when hotel capacity is quite full. Mike said he was a no. Others chimed in similarly.

For the German Shepherd Dog Club of America event at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, the group had individually given the application high marks. Jean and Mike cited a strong explanation of economic impact. Mike talked about how the fairgrounds events are big and have a widespread impact. Jodi and Malinda shared reservations that the dog show is a revenue-generating event. Jean reminded the group that costs at the Fairgrounds went up. Jean and Jay suggested funding.

The Springfield Oyster and Beer Feztival was discussed next. Scott thinks the event could be a good candidate for Route 66 money, if they are able to do a centennial tie-in. Mike and Karen expressed concern about putting too much pressure on the Route 66 fund, but The group decided to provide funding support.

Next, the group discussed The Pharmacy's Art of Jazz series. The application states that The Pharmacy's board is asking for $2500-3000. Mike and Jay mentioned that rating it highly. Karen suggested that supporting The Pharmacy is good for the "quality of life."

The Rolling Laughs program application was generally viewed as an interesting concept, but not a good fit for the grants program.

The Springfield Area Arts Council applied for two separate event series. The first is the Artist in the Park program. Mike had this application ranked highly but hopes they utilize the money for marketing efforts. Multiple members of the group commented on not being aware of the series and want to see people take advantage of that offering. Levitt AMP Springfield was the other SAAC program discussed. The group unanimously agreed to provide financial support.

The group mentioned that the Salsa with Julio program application did not provide enough understanding of how it impacted tourism.

The board next discussed Ryan Lopez Memorial Tournament at the Spartan Sports Park. C.J. thought it was worthy of money, both for the community enrichment and economic impact of youth sports tournaments. Other board members agreed.

Members agreed to move the UIS Alumni event, which will have a centennial tie-in, to the Route 66 event fund, as was the United Way Ride event.

The last event to be discussed was the Vondra Social House's anniversary celebration. The group agreed that the event was not a good fit for the grant at this time.

Next, board members returned to the group of events they had previously noted as recipients of funding. The group discussed various amounts, resulted in a motion. Mike made a motion for the following grant funding amounts:
$2,500 to the German Shepherd Dog Club of America and the Spartan Sports Park.
$3,000 to The Pharmacy for the Art of Jazz series.
$4,000 to the Springfield Area Arts Council for the Artists in the Park program series.
$7,500 to Springfield Oyster and Beer Festival.
$15,500 to the Springfield Area Arts Council for the Levitt AMP Springfield music series.
Malinda seconded Mike's motion. All ayes, no discussion.

VI. Update on Trip to Joliet: Scott mentioned that he thought the City will be supportive of the SCVB and CVAB members attending the Illinois Office of Tourism's Route 66 centennial kickoff event on April 30th. The event organizers have volunteer spots in the drink and merch tents, among other areas, for that day. Scott mentioned this as an option starting at 11am and ending before the 3pm game. Several board members mentioned that they will not be able to make it. Others stated that they needed to drive separately. This conversation led to the group deciding that everyone would drive separately.

VII. Old Business: No old business discussed.

VIII. New Business: The group spent this time to discuss utilizing a portion of the Route 66 event fund money for some of the grant applications that had Route 66 associations. The group talked through varying amounts.

Jay asked for clarification on the Stadium restaurant's Rumble on 66 event. Karen mentioned not being sure of the amount that should be given to the event. Jodi clarified that the Rumble will include three locations—Stadium, Weebles, and Motorheads.

Karen made a motion to award the following money to six tourism grant applicants:
$7,000 for the Corvette car show
$6,000 for Rumble on 66
$5,000 for the Kidzeum's Route 66 exhibit
$2,500 for the UIS Alumni event
$2,000 for the United Way Ride.
Betsy seconded the motion. All ayes, no further discussion.

Scott explained the City Council process for both the Local Tourism Grant and Route 66 event fund recommendations.

IX. **Adjournment: Scott, on behalf of Jean, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:47am. Karen Conn made the motion, seconded by Darin Dame.**