



COLUMBIA COUNTY TOURISM COMMITTEE (CCTC)

Tourism is a critical component of the economy and economic development in Columbia County. It affects employment, revenue for the County and the livelihood of many residents.

The tourism industry has the potential for significant growth. The Columbia County Board of Supervisors created an independent tourism committee to support the tourism industry, originally promoted by the Columbia County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC).

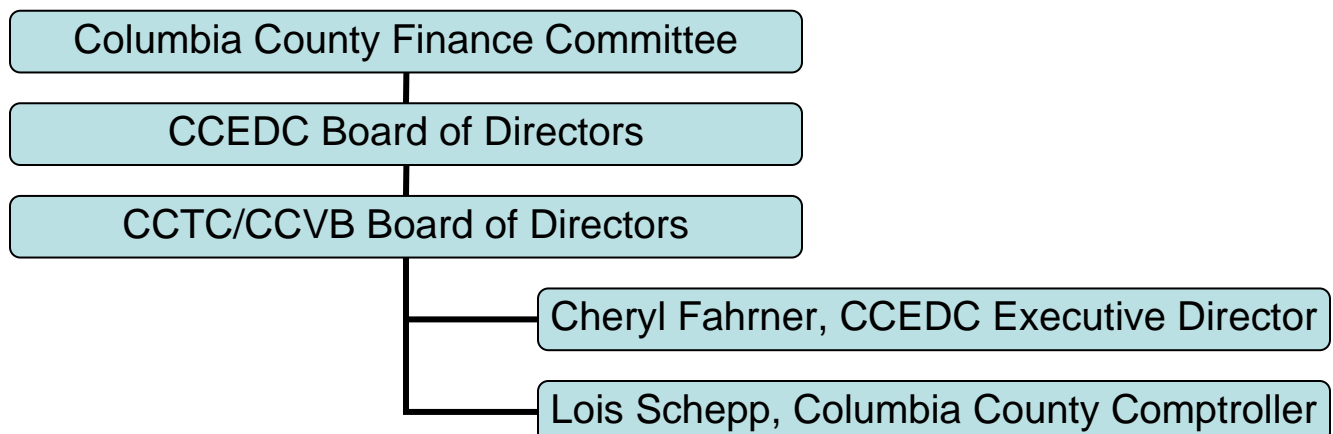
The Columbia County Tourism Committee (CCTC) is responsible for the coordination and promotion of tourism within Columbia County. Tourism Committee Members may be from an organization, group, community, or tourism-oriented businesses, or any individuals with an interest in tourism from Columbia County.

A Columbia County Visitor’s Bureau (CCVB) has also been formed, with the same committee members that serve on the CCTC. The move to create the CCVB was suggested in the Columbia County Tourism Diversification Plan. This Plan was created with funds from a Department of Tourism grant with assistance from Columbia County Comptroller Lois Schepp.

Both the CCTC and the CCVB have a close working relationship with CCEDC, who is their fiscal agent. Both develop plans for the advancement of tourism within Columbia County.

Columbia County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) has responsibility to oversee the operation of CCTC. The CCEDC Executive Board must approve of any expenditure of funds budgeted by the Columbia County Board of Supervisors. In 2019, no funds from Columbia County will be received to support tourism. CCEDC will continue to fund the new tourism website and produce the 2019/2020 Columbia County Travel Guide.

Organizational Chart



Statistical Performance

In this budget year, the CCTC/CCVB moved ahead to further the goal of a sustainable tourism industry in Columbia County. The Tourism industry provides sales tax to the county and this amount is growing each year.

- Held twelve (11) meetings of CCTC/CCVB in 2018
- CCTC/CCVB Executive Board Members Robert Becker, Stan Stofflet and Cheryl Fahrner attended the 2018 Governor's Conference on Tourism. Both provide many volunteer hours for this effort.
- Advertised in Our Wisconsin Magazine for summer April/May, June/July and Aug/Sept issue. This publication is a paid subscription with a distribution list of over 100,000 subscribers.
- Continued updates to the new CCVB 10-page website with Portage Daily Register through their company Amplified Digital. Pages reflect community listings, places to stay, local foods, shopping, things to experience, maps along with photographs to attract tourists to our county.
- The Tourism Committee has a google calendar to use on the website. Communities in the county list their own events on the website whenever they want. Tourists can now see in real time what is happening in our community, so they can plan for their trips accordingly. It was suggested that one person be the administrator for the calendar and each community have one individual that can add their own events to the calendar so that we can keep it updated every year. This calendar can also be used at the end for the year to export all the events needed for the Travel Planner.
- Capital Newspapers delivers 60,000 Columbia County Travel Planners
- 2019 CCTC/CCVB Awards Banquet on March 27, 2019 at Savanna Oaks in Fall River:

2019 WINNERS (No event held in 2018 – held every other year)

TOURISM AWARD:

EVENT AWARD:

VOLUNTEER AWARD:

- 2018 Advertisement campaign: Online digital summer campaign (May-August) in the Chicago markets promoting activities to do in the county. Three different marketing campaigns were launched over this period.
- 2018 Columbia County Map
- 2018 Columbia County Bicycle Loop Maps new updates to the map during the year to prepare for new printing in 2018. Update map is included on new website.
- Attended meetings consisting of members from Columbia, Sauk and Dodge Counties involved in Tourism, Economic Development, Chambers, etc. to promote regional tourism.
- Columbia County Silent Sports Trails Committee
 - Chair Stan Stofflet is working with Rio Library and others to provide a repair station for cyclists on-the-go.

- Responsible for collecting and updating information on events and pages put into the Tourism Travel Planner each year. Many volunteer hours are utilized. Proofs were then reviewed before going to printers.
- Attended the Columbia County Fair and had a booth with Tourism materials July 25-29, 2018.
- New marketing opportunity with Discover WI had Lisa Beck do a presentation on the benefits of TV program on Columbia County and how \$40,000.00 promotion could be split between four partners/entities/communities over three years to feature everything in Columbia County. This effort initiated by CCEDC has encouraged communities and businesses to participate and feature Columbia County – without having to contribute funds from CCEDC.

According to Wisconsin Department of Tourism –

Tourism activity in the state was up nearly \$1 billion, from \$20 billion in 2016 to \$20.6 billion in 2017 according to research conducted by Tourism Economics and Longwoods International. This 3.2% growth was driven by increases in spending on lodging, gas and refined marketing strategies.

- The total seven-year growth of tourism activity is up more than \$5.8 billion, a nearly 40% increase from 14.8 billion.
- Tourism directly and indirectly supports 195,255 jobs in Wisconsin, a seven-year addition of more than 23,255 jobs to the state’s total employment, an increase of 13.5%
- The Tourism economy generated 1.5 billion in state and local revenue and 1.2 billion in federal taxes. Without tourism, each Wisconsin household would pay an additional \$660 to maintain existing services.
- Visitor growth topped 110 million in 2017, a seven-year increase of 17.5 million.
- Visitors to Columbia County generated 15.09 million in state and local taxes during 2017.
- Tourism total business sales in Columbia County was up \$1.9 million, or .99% increase in 2017 over 2016, at \$194.2 million.

Summary

In 2018, the committee achieved many goals to promote a strong, vibrant and growing tourism industry. In 2019, the plan is to continue moving ahead to further the goal of a sustainable tourism industry in Columbia County bringing more sales tax revenue to Columbia County. We hope to build collaborative partnerships to help sustain our efforts.

Submitted by:

Columbia County Tourism Executive Board

President - Bob Becker
 First Vice President - Stan Stofflet
 Second Vice President - David Schneider
 Secretary - Marianne Hanson
 At Large Member - Bob O’Brion
 At Large Member –Jan Clingman

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Reviewed/Approved by:

- 03/01/19 - Columbia County Tourism Committee/Visitor’s Bureau
- 03/01/19 - Columbia County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) Executive Committee
- 03/13/19 - CCEDC Board of Director’s
- 03/14/19 - Columbia County Finance Committee
- 03/15/19 - Copy of the Annual Report submitted to Columbia County Comptroller

APPROVED:

Robert Becker, CCTC/CCVB President
 Carl Vander Galien, CCEDC President