



AGENDA INFORMATION
TIFFIN CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE:	August 13, 2026
AGENDA ITEM:	Discussion and Consideration of Dedicated Website for the Recreation Center and Council Action as Needed
ACTION:	Motion

Recommendation

Websites – Several months ago we made the move to RecDesk for our operational software for Parks and Rec. It handles all of our registrations, rentals, memberships, point of sale, etc. To get more information to the public, we could explore a website for the Recreation Center, very similar to the approach Mt. Vernon took. They also use RecDesk, and decided their own City Website was too difficult to use to get information out to the public about their recreation center. Their website is here - <https://thelbc.com/>. I have reached out to several businesses that build and manage websites, and received various quotes and scopes for the project. The key differences have been highlighted in the summary page.

My initial gut reaction was that this website may not be 100% necessary today, but in 2-3 years, I think it's something we'll wish we had. I am leaning towards recommending we spend the extra money and go with a firm like de Novo, simply due to the added support and professional content writing that they offer, that will help free up time and resources for Parks and Recreation and other City staff.

ATTACHMENTS: Website Comparison

Tiffin Recreation Center Website Proposals — Summary Comparison

Digital Boost | de Novo Marketing | Informatics | Aelieve Digital Marketing

Key takeaway: Digital Boost and Aelieve are the lower-cost options. Aelieve includes more pages and professional copywriting, while Digital Boost offers the simplest platform and lowest hourly support rate. Informatics emphasizes structured program/facility management and training. de Novo offers the most turnkey municipal package, including copywriting, accessibility, privacy tools, and direct experience with the Lester Buresh Center website.

Category	Digital Boost	de Novo	Informatics	Aelieve
One-time cost	\$6,800	\$20,000	\$20,600	\$6,500 Standard \$8,500 Full-Scope
Estimated first-year cost	\$8,228 basic hosting \$9,428 maintenance	\$23,900	\$22,420 base hosting Potentially \$24,820 with CMS protection	\$8,300 Standard \$10,300 Full-Scope
Pages included	7 primary pages	No fixed page count stated	About 16 pages	Up to 12 total Standard Up to 19 total Full-Scope
Content writing	City writes content	Professional copywriting included	City writes; Informatics provides briefs and SEO optimization	Professional copywriting included
Design / platform	Custom WordPress	Custom WordPress agency build	Custom WordPress theme and structured content tools	Custom WordPress using Breakdance and a managed plugin stack
RecDesk	Links/buttons; click tracking expected	Connection included; method not fully defined	Links/buttons; registration remains in RecDesk	Links/buttons plus GA4 outbound-click tracking
SEO / analytics	Basic SEO, GA4, Search Console	Keyword/competitor research, technical SEO, GA4 and Tag Manager	Keyword research, structured data, page optimization	Technical SEO, GA4, Search Console; Full adds keyword/competitor research
Accessibility / privacy	WCAG 2.2 AA commitment; privacy tools not yet confirmed	Strongest documented WCAG 2.2 process; privacy policy and cookie-consent manager	Not specifically committed in proposal	Best-effort WCAG 2.1/2.2 AA, accessibility statement, privacy policy and consent tools
Training	No live training; written instructions	2 hours plus documentation	Two live sessions plus content-planning training	Hands-on training as needed plus written guide
Monthly service	\$119 hosting or \$219 with routine edits; \$65/hour outside plan	\$325/month; includes 12 support hours/year	\$110 hosting + \$500 setup; optional \$200 CMS protection; \$155/hour	\$150/month; 20 minutes edits included; \$175/hour beyond plan
Main strength	Lowest-cost, straightforward and portable	Most complete turnkey municipal package	Best-defined program/facility editing structure and staff training	Strongest low-cost package: copywriting, more pages, privacy, analytics and training
Main concern	Fewer pages, City workload, limited training and privacy detail	Highest long-term cost; page count undefined; possible contingencies/change orders	High upfront cost, City still writes copy, accessibility/privacy gaps, expensive ongoing support	Platform/plugin dependency, weak backup-retention wording, qualified accessibility commitment

Benefits, Drawbacks and Best Fit

Digital Boost Benefits • Lowest overall development and support cost. • Custom WordPress site with City ownership, full administrator access, and clear transfer rights. • Basic SEO, GA4, Search Console, WCAG 2.2 AA commitment, daily backups, and security monitoring. • Lowest hourly rate for additional edits (\$65/hour). Drawbacks • Only seven primary pages are included; the City must write and organize all content. • No live training, no clearly defined post-launch warranty, and privacy/cookie tools are not confirmed. • Limits under the \$219 maintenance plan still need to be defined. Best fit: A simple, affordable informational site when City staff can prepare content and handle routine updates.	de Novo Marketing Benefits • Most turnkey package: professional copywriting, accessibility work, privacy and cookie consent, training, documentation, and annual support. • Built the Lester Buresh Center website used as the model for Tiffin. • Strong municipal process with formal discovery, sitemap, design, testing, and launch stages. Drawbacks • Highest projected long-term cost and no fixed page count. • Potential contingency, change-order, stock asset, and other contract charges. • Monthly fee is higher and annual increase language should be clarified. Best fit: The City wants a full-service agency to lead content, compliance, design, launch, and ongoing support.
Informatics Benefits • Approximately 16 pages and purpose-built structures for programs, classes, facilities, locations, and news. • Strong discovery, audience research, SEO, structured data, content briefs, and two live training sessions. • Thirty-day post-launch support and managed WP Engine hosting. Drawbacks • High upfront cost even though the City writes the copy. • Accessibility, privacy, GA4/Search Console ownership, and transfer rights are not clearly documented. • Only one revision round per phase; ongoing support can be expensive. Best fit: The City prioritizes a structured, scalable backend that staff can use to manage programs and facilities.	Aelieve Digital Marketing Benefits • Best combination of low price and broad scope; both tiers include professional copywriting. • Up to 12 pages Standard or 19 pages Full-Scope, plus SEO, analytics, RecDesk click tracking, privacy tools, training, and monthly support. • Clear fixed pricing and City ownership of content, design, domain, files, and analytics accounts. Drawbacks • Strong dependency on Breakdance and an agency-licensed stack of roughly 40–50 plugins. • Backup-retention wording appears weaker than other vendors. • Accessibility is best-effort rather than a firm compliance guarantee; extra work is \$175/hour. Best fit: The City wants professional copywriting and a larger website at a cost close to Digital Boost, and accepts a managed-platform relationship.

Note: Costs and scope are based on the proposals and written clarifications received as of July 2026. Final contracts should control. First-year estimates assume 12 months of stated hosting/maintenance and exclude optional services or change orders.