



MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

February 20, 2019 (Wednesday), 1:00 p.m.

Holt Library Conference Room 112, SCC

447 College Drive, Sylva, NC 28779

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

- **Members in attendance:** Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Vice Chair Laura Bowers; Secretary Kathy Korb; Board Members Bob Williams, Megan Orr, Dale Collins, Tom Garcia, Andrew Harlfinger, Jay Grissom, Julie Spiro, Stephanie Edwards (arriving after roll call)
- **Members absent:** Chair Ann Self; Board Members Ron Mau, Darlene Fox
- **Others in attendance:** Caleb Sullivan, Intern; Debbie Coffey, Minutes Clerk

Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Dale Collins moved to approve the agenda; Kathy Korb seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment

None.

Vice-Chairman and Secretary

Vice-Chair Laura Bowers and Secretary Kathy Korb had no comments at this time.

Review and Approval of December Minutes

Minutes of the December 12, 2018 TDA meeting were emailed prior to the meeting for review.

MOTION: Megan Orr moved to approve the December 12, 2018 minutes. Tom Garcia seconded. Motion carried.

Review and Approval of December and January Financial Report

Director Breedlove presented the financial reports in the absence of Darlene Fox. Highlights for December include Occupancy Tax collections of \$105,678.83, penalties of \$337.80, and YTD collection totals of \$683,519.64, which is 61.45% of the budget. Collections were up 25.09% from the same period in 2017, and up 6.82% for the fiscal year. Airbnb collections totaled \$8,704.84. 165 accounts reported rentals for November. The December 31st cash balance was \$222,980.80 with investments totaling \$400,000.00. December expenses were \$70,209.28 with YTD expenses totaling \$603,135.26. Encumbrances of \$4,989.31 make a combined total of \$608,124.57, equaling 50.96% of the budget.

Highlights for January include Occupancy Tax collections of \$59,329.83, penalties of 877.56, and YTD collection totals of \$742,849.47, which is 66.78% of the budget. Collections were up 7.46% from the same period in 2017, and up 6.86% for the fiscal year. Airbnb collections totaled \$6,446.18. 149 accounts reported rentals for December. The January 31st cash balance was \$160,870.12 with investments totaling \$400,000.00. January expenses were \$123,031.75 with YTD expenses totaling \$726,167.01. Encumbrances of \$51,350.89 make a combined total of \$777,517.90, equaling 64.72% of the budget.

MOTION: Bob Williams moved to approve the financial reports as presented. Kathy Korb seconded. Motion carried.

Directors' Reports

Jackson County Chamber Director's Report: A written report was provided prior to the meeting which included the following highlights:

- The December report included the following numbers: 1,087 direct inquiries fulfilled for the month and 1,375 visitors served in Dillsboro and Sylva; 15,980 direct inquiries fulfilled for 2018; 10,445 Fishing maps to Welcome Centers and local shops for 2018; and 20,072 Visitor guides distributed to Welcome Centers for the year.
- The January report included the following numbers: 1,821 direct inquiries fulfilled for the month; 704 Visitor Guides distributed to North Carolina Welcome Centers; 750 Fly Fishing Maps distributed to local fly shops; and 561 visitors served in Dillsboro and Sylva.
- New items available at the Visitor Center's shop include a very popular Christmas ornament featuring the Historic Court House, vintage post cards, collectable shot glasses.
- Public comment on the proposed Hwy 107 project through Sylva will be held on March 21st by the Asheville Design Center.
- Upcoming events for the area include the Hook, Line and Drinker Festival, Brew Hop, and the Dillsboro Easter Hat Parade. The Chamber will host an open house in March, with the exact date to be determined.

Cashiers Area Chamber: A written report was provided prior to the meeting which included the following highlight:

- The 2019 Cashiers area visitor publications are in production with a projected release date of May 1st.
- The Chamber's Business After Hours events will have a new format to feature tourism as the focus for 2019.
- The Sapphire Valley Resort 2019 Outhouse Races were held on February 16th with over 2,000 in attendance.
- The Chamber will host the Plateau Jobs Fair on April 13th at the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library.
- An ad hoc committee of local retailers recently met to discuss improving the retail experience and increase sales for local businesses. One goal is to work toward a year-round economy for the area.
- Leadership Cashiers is a class of 14 individuals that has been launched to help train leaders with the necessary tools and connectivity for future stewardship of the community.

Executive Director: Mr. Breedlove provided the board with a written report prior to the meeting which included the following highlights:

- Mr. Breedlove noted the Cashiers push to help create a year-round economy and stated that Sylva is also looking to increase later hours and Sunday sales.
- Three lodging partners have offered winter lodging specials with very successful results in the marketing push for winter travel.
- Two blog posts have helped promote winter visitation as 'secret season travel' instead of off-season travel.
- Director Breedlove pitched "20 Things For 2020" to VisitNC last week for potential inclusion in their travel guide.
- The festival director for Greening Up the Mountains has declined the TDA grant funds which may be awarded to a different festival with a focus on over-night visitation.
- Mr. Breedlove will be presenting at the Leadership Cashiers Meeting and WNC Press Pass Conference and attending the Southeast Tourism Society Conference in March.
- Caleb Sullivan, JCTDA Intern, was introduced to the board and has proven to be a beneficial asset to the TDA office.
- Written updates from Rawle Murdy and Pineapple PR were provided via email prior to the meeting.

Update on High Hampton Resort – Tom Garcia

Mr. Garcia noted that the current work on the High Hampton is focusing on infrastructure. A new designer is on board who is very familiar with the local area. They will be working very closely with the State Historic

Preservation Society to preserve the rich history which is an integral part of the High Hampton. The Inn will remain as-is and the final project will create a 92-key facility, with new venues for dining and events.

Announcements/Adjournment

The March and April meetings will run from 1 to 4 p.m. for Research and Strategic Planning. Please adjust your schedule for the extended meeting time.

Dale Collins noted that a Fly-Fishing Film Festival will be held at Quinn Theater this Saturday morning.

MOTION: *Megan Orr moved to adjourn. Andrew Harlfinger seconded, motion carried.*

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Next Meeting

The Wednesday, March 13, 2019, TDA Full Board Meeting will be at 1:00 pm in the Holt Library Conference Room 112, Southwestern Community College, 447 College Drive, Sylva, NC 28779.

Kathy Korb, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: March 13, 2019