



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,
CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

MINUTES

**Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
June 17, 2020 (Wednesday), 1:00 p.m.
Zoom Conference Meeting**

Budget Public Hearing

12:55 – Prior to the regular Board of Directors meeting, a budget public hearing was called. Ms. Fox presented overall budget details. The budget, which has been on display, is in the amount of \$872,120. There were no questions and/or comments. There were no members of the public who requested to make comments on the budget. The public hearing was adjourned by Ms. Self.

Agenda Amendment

The meeting agenda is amended due to the inclusion of the Audit Contract.

***MOTION:** Robert Jumper motioned to include the Audit Contract into the meeting agenda. Megan Orr seconded. Motion carried.*

Zoom Meeting Etiquette/Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. with amended agenda in place. Ms. Self asked board members to mute their audio until called upon to speak and to use the chat feature if you wish to make a comment,

- **Members in attendance:** Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Ann Self, Chair; Kathy Korb, Secretary; Robert Jumper, Vice Chair; Board Members Dale Collins, Brad Herman, Andrew Harlfinger, Anna Thomas, Ron Mau, Darlene Fox, Julie Spiro, Stephanie Edwards, Megan Orr and Jay Grissom.
- **Members absent:** None
- **Others in attendance:** Sales and Marketing Manager Caleb Sullivan and Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk

Approval of Agenda

***MOTION:** Robert Jumper moved to approve the amended agenda. Megan Orr seconded. Motion carried.*

Public Comment: None

Recognize Vice Chair and Secretary

Mr. Jumper, Vice Chair, expressed that he was very happy to see the occupancy numbers higher than previous month and he thinks that it is a very positive sign, especially since the counties around Jackson are having increased cases of COVID-19 and Jackson is holding the numbers steady and considering the number of protests that have occurred in Jackson County. He is encouraged that conditions are looking good for Jackson County.

Ms. Korb, Secretary, stated that she is glad to see a return to somewhat normalcy.

Review and Approval of May Minutes

Minutes of the May 20, 2020. Minutes of the May Meeting sent via email prior to meeting.

MOTION: Dale Collins moved to approve the May 20, 2020 minutes. Kathy Korb seconded. The motion carried.

Review and Approval March 2020 Financial Reports

Ms. Fox presented the financial reports. Highlights for May include Occupancy Tax collections of \$15,819.40, penalties of \$17.35, and YTD collection totals of \$890,485.89, which is 104.81% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$28.46. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$1,692.84. 36 accounts reported rentals for April rentals (decrease of 97 accounts from last year). Collections were down 76.82% from the same period in 2019. The total decrease for the fiscal year is 7.77%. The May 31, 2020 cash balance is \$87,156.92 with investments totaling \$400,000. May expenses were \$58,244.06 with YTD expenses totaling \$960,140.16 with encumbrances of \$3,853.21 for a combined total of \$963,993.37, equaling 88.06% of the budget.

Mr. Breedlove commented that he learned recently Airbnb remittance reflects the time that the rental was booked and not when the visit occurred, so they are not indicative of when stays happened.

MOTION: Megan Orr moved to approve the May financial reports as presented. Andrew Harlfinger seconded. The motion carried.

Budget Amendment

Ms. Fox explained that revenue for tax collections in the amount of \$75,000 were added back into the budget, and investment earnings were increased by \$250.00. This is as a result of budgeting \$0 in collections for the COVID-19 impacts, but actually receiving close to \$75,000 over a three month period.

MOTION: Robert Jumper motioned to approve the Budget Amendment. Anna Thomas seconded. Motion carried.

Approve Budget for FY 2020-2021 TDA Budget Ordinance

MOTION: Ms. Self moved that the Board approve the budget for FY 2020/2021. Kathy Korb seconded. The approval is contingent upon public comment received within 24 hours from the time of the virtual meeting. There was a roll call vote. Motion carried.

Audit Contract

Ms. Self called for a motion to approve the audit contract with Martin, Starns & Associates CPA at a cost of \$7,000.

MOTION: Robert Jumper motioned to approve the audit contract, Kathy Korb seconded. Motion carried.

JCTDA Staff Report/Marketing Report/PR Report

Executive Director: Mr. Breedlove provided the board with a written report listing all the activities of the previous month prior to the meeting via email and presented the following updates that were not included in the report:

- JCTDA staff has spent the majority of their time working on the EDA grant for \$208,000 with a \$52,000 local match. There has been support from over 14 entities who authored letters on the TDA's behalf including the state legislature members for the district.

- Blue Ridge Parkway visitation numbers show that there were 14.9 million visitors who spent \$1.1 billion in the surrounding communities which supported 60,341 jobs.
- The U.S. Travel Association is proposing tax credit incentives of \$4,000/household for travel in the U.S. to help restart the economy. This tax credit is called the Explore American Tax Credit and may be part of a future COVID-19 relief package.
- Occupancy tax numbers were unavailable; however, an informal poll of local hotels state that they were nearly sold out in the last weekend.
- COVID-19 metrics show that the state is trending upward. The state is considering not moving forward with Phase 3 plans and requiring people to wear face masks.
- Mr. Sullivan gave an update on the website and social media. The hammock giveaway has been particularly good for engagement on social media. There have been 750 entries so far. We have reached the milestone of 16,000 followers on Instagram, which is exciting.

Directors' Reports

Jackson County Chamber: Highlights of the Jackson County Chamber report, which was emailed prior to the meeting, was supplemented by Ms. Spiro as follows:

- The Chamber is working aggressively to find funding for local businesses. A grant for funding for local minority and women owned business was found from Lowes. Ten female business owners have applied.
- The kiosks are being cleaned regularly since visitors are using them more.
- The Jackson Chamber has been working with the Cashiers Chamber on hand sanitizer distribution.
- The Chamber is promoting “Wonderful Wednesdays” in Dillsboro in conjunction with local businesses and the Farmers Market. This promotion will run for seven consecutive Wednesdays.
- The Chamber is working with the Sylva Main Street Association for have a special promotion at a future time.

Cashiers Area Chamber: Highlights of the Cashiers Area Chamber report, which was emailed prior to the meeting was supplemented by Ms. Edwards:

- The Chamber is seeing a lot of activity in both visitors to the center and calls from people who are planning to visit in July, August and September.
- The July 4th festival has been cancelled; however, Glenville is having a fireworks display on Friday July 3rd.

Updates from Individua Board Members; Agencies

There were no comments.

Announcements

None

Adjourn

MOTION: Megan Orr moved to adjourn. Robert Jumper seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Next Meeting

The Wednesday, August 19, 2020 TDA Full Board Meeting will be held via teleconference/Zoom.

Kathy Korb, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: August 19, 2020