



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

MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors Meeting September 16, 2020 (Wednesday), 1:00 p.m. Zoom Conference Meeting

Zoom Meeting Etiquette/Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Self explained to mute your audio until you speak and to use the chat feature if you wish to make a comment.

- **Members in attendance:** Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Ann Self, Chair; Robert Jumper, Vice Chair; Board Members Dale Collins, Brad Herman, Andrew Harlfinger, Anna Thomas, Darlene Fox, Finance Officer.
- **Members absent:** Kathy Korb, Secretary; Stephanie Edwards; Ron Mau; Julie Spiro; Megan Orr and Jay Grissom.
- **Others in attendance:** Sales and Marketing Manager Caleb Sullivan; Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk; Rich Price, Economic Development Director Jackson County; Ken Fernandez, Old Cashiers Realty and Stephen Macauley, Developer; John Kautz, Rawle Murdy; Deborah Stone, Pineapple Public Relations; and Margaret Carton, Cashiers Highlands Health Foundation for Cashiers Greenway Ramble Revitalization.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Dale Collins moved to approve the agenda. Anna Thomas seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Recognize Vice Chair and Secretary

Mr. Jumper, Vice Chair, stated that the Tribe is now focusing on proceeding with projects outside the reservation boundaries that were ongoing prior to the pandemic shutdown. Harrah's projected revenue expectations are being exceeded.

Review and Approval of May Minutes

Minutes of the August 19, 2020. Minutes of the August meeting sent via email prior to meeting.

MOTION: Robert Jumper moved to approve the August 19, 2020 minutes. Brad Herman seconded. The motion carried.

Review and Approval August 31, 2020 Financial Report

Ms. Fox presented the financial reports. Highlights for August include Occupancy Tax collections of \$233,386.57, penalties of \$121.26, and YTD collection totals of \$421,002.65, which is 48.72% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$34,189.14. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$51,927.23. 118 accounts reported rentals for July rentals (decrease of 98 accounts from last year). Collections were up 40.62% from the same period in 2019. The August 31, 2020 cash balance is \$391,538.52 with investments totaling \$400,000.00. August expenses were

\$59,709.76 with YTD expenses totaling \$137,556.83 with encumbrances of \$16,417.00 for a combined total of \$153,973.83, equaling 17.66% of the budget.

MOTION: *Andrew Harlfinger moved to approve the August financial report as presented. Anna Thomas seconded. The 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:

- The TDA received \$88,000 from a grant from Visit North Carolina as part of the CARES Act. The funds must be used before December 31; therefore, they will be used to bolster the Secret Season promotion.
- The Secret Season Campaign is underway.
- The new Visitors Guide, which contains information about safe travels during the COVID-19 era, should be available at the end of the week of September 14.
- Hotel occupancy for week of September 7-11 is at 71% compared to 58% at the same time last year.
- Social media visits are up significantly. Overall results from social media is positive.

Ms. Stone from Pineapple Public Relations stated that public relations are focusing on Fall and Secret Season campaigns. Mr. Kautz expressed his thanks for Mr. Breedlove's efforts in getting the additional \$88,000 to boost the Winter and Secret Season campaign.

Directors' Reports

Jackson County Chamber: Highlights of the Jackson County Chamber report was emailed prior to the meeting. Since Ms. Spiro was absent, Mr. Breedlove reviewed the highlights from Ms. Spiro's report. Additional hand sanitizer stations have been installed. The Chamber participated in a downtown Sylva cleanup.

Cashiers Area Chamber: Highlights of the Cashiers Area Chamber report, which was emailed prior to the meeting, was presented by Mr. Breedlove since Ms. Edwards was absent. The Cashiers Chamber is working on a Christmas lights display and a Christmas village in downtown Cashiers. The Chamber is encouraging its members to purchase daffodils to plant in the Fall so that the plants will bloom in the Spring in Cashiers. In response to a presentation to the Jackson County Commissioners, they have agreed to ask NCDOT to study the lack of parking and safety concerns at Shadow of the Bear and Silver Run Falls.

Report to Board on Cashiers Project

Presented by Ken Fernandez from Old Cashiers Realty and Stephen Macauley, developer.

The pedestrian friendly project is anticipated to be in the southeast quadrant of the village of Cashiers between highways 107 and 64. The project village will have walkways and will focus on the culture of the mountains, healthy exercise and the environment. It will have shopping, restaurants, entertainment, and residences and will be accessible to young and old and every income level. At least 20% of the land will be green spaces with a heavy focus on gardens. The plan is to create a year-round destination for tourism.

Report to Board on Cashiers Greenway Ramble

Presented by Margaret Carton, Cashiers Highland Health Foundation. There is a ramble through Cashiers main business district which has fallen into disrepair. Friends of Cashiers Greenway Ramble organization received a grant from Cashiers Highland Health Foundation to improve community vitality and wellbeing by encouraging exercise and improving health. The revitalization project will improve the condition of the existing trail, incorporate other existing trails into the Ramble and will identify potential new pathways. Wayfinding improvements are needed to create a cohesive and easy experience for users and the group will maintain the trails so that they do not fall into disrepair. Ms. Carton presented the plans for trail phasing in three (3) parts. The first phase will implement a sidewalk, wayfinding upgrades and repaving.

Phase 2 will add new NCDOT crossings, install new wayfinding bollards. Phase 3 will add to the trail for a total length of 1.86 miles.

The goal is to connect Cashiers retail, dining and special events venues while promoting wellness and improving the community environment since people are not driving in town from one location to another.

Announcements

None

Adjourn

MOTION: *Robert Jumper moved to adjourn. Anna Thomas seconded. Motion carried.*

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Next Meeting

The Wednesday November 18, 2020 TDA Full Board Meeting will be at 1:00 pm via Zoom.

Megan Orr, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: _____, 2020