



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

MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
January 19, 2022 (Wednesday) @1:00 p.m.
Zoom Teleconference

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Mr. Jumper. Mr. Jumper reminded attendees of Zoom meeting etiquette.

- **Members in attendance:** Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Robert Jumper, Chair; Daniel Fletcher, Vice Chair; Megan Orr, Secretary; Board Members Craig Smith, Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning, Julie Spiro, Darlene Fox
- **Members absent:** Stephanie Edwards, Jay Grissom, Mark Jones, Dale Collins, and Scott Greene
- **Others in attendance:** Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk; Caleb Sullivan, Sale and Marketing Manager JCTDA; Rachel Croyle, Rawle Murdy; Carter Long, Lou Hammond Group; Anne Bernard, Lou Hammond Group

Approve Agenda

The proposed Agenda was sent by email prior to meeting.

MOTION: Megan Orr moved to approve the agenda. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Recognize Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and County Commissioner

Robert Jumper, Chair, commented that Cherokee is carrying on despite current challenges, COVID and snowstorm last week.

Daniel Fletcher, Vice Chair, no comments.

Megan Orr, Secretary, no comments.

Mark Jones, County Commissioner, was absent.

Review and Approval of December 15, 2021 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting sent via email prior to meeting. No comments were made.

MOTION: Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning moved to approve the December 15, 2021 minutes. Megan Orr seconded. The motion carried.

Review and Approval of December 31, 2021 Financial Report

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for December include Occupancy Tax collections of \$212,373.15 penalties of \$179.40, and YTD collection totals of \$1,431,879.55, which is 104.14% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$31,934.87. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$31,465.93 and the VACASA, NC total was \$8,821.70. 86 accounts reported rentals for November rentals (decrease of 20 accounts from last year). Collections were up 45.93% (\$66,894.77) from the same period in 2020. The December 31, 2021 cash balance is \$305,550.17 with investments totaling \$2,000,000.00. December expenses were \$104,760.16 with FYTD expenses totaling \$963,601.88 with encumbrances of \$66,213.26 for a combined total of \$1,029,815.14, equaling 57.08% of the budget.

Mr. Smith asked if the JCTDA is tracking average daily rental rates in Jackson County. Mr. Breedlove responded that yes rates are tracked using several tracking programs.

MOTION: Daniel Fletcher moved to approve the December financial report as presented. Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning seconded. The motion carried.

Budget Amendment

The details of the budget amendment were emailed attached to the meeting agenda. Mr. Breedlove explained that since tax collections are up, a new forecast needed to be made for the remainder of the year to increase the budget as follows:

- An additional \$825,000 is forecasted for this year. The budget amendment will level out some line items that need additional funding.
- These items are office supplies, public relations to bring additional influencers to the area, social media to boost the efforts of communication, capital outlay increased due to the office move.
- Capital projects is ready to fund projects in accordance with the recent board approval for project funding. If the funds are unspent, the funds will roll over to next year.
- Contingency is increased just in case money is needed for unexpected expenses.

MOTION: Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning moved to approve the budget amendment. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Approve 2022 Staff Incentives

Mr. Breedlove explained that his employment contract already has performance incentives stated. Mr. Sullivan's incentives are in his pay plan. The incentives are in the budget and no additional funding is required; however, the incentives do require the board's approval.

MOTION: Daniel Fletcher moved to approve 2022 staff incentives. Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning seconded. Motion carried.

Approve 2022 Meeting Dates

The proposed meeting dates for 2022 were emailed in December. There were no comments from the board. The proposed dates have a meeting for each month; however, the dates can be cancelled if there are no capital projects to approve that month.

MOTION: *Megan Orr moved to approve 2022 meeting dates. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.*

Approve Job Description for New Hire

The job description was emailed attached to the agenda for this meeting. Mr. Breedlove explained that the part-time job is for someone to help Mr. Sullivan in his social media and digital content duties so that he can focus on content and take on some additional duties in the future. Mr. Breedlove pointed out that the #1 driver to the JCTDA website is social media, so it makes sense to invest in this position. The job description has been vetted by the County legal, HR and the Executive Committee.

MOTION: *Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning moved to approve the job description. Megan Orr seconded. Motion carried.*

Approve Capital Projects Application

The application was emailed attached to the agenda for this meeting. Mr. Breedlove gave a synopsis of the activities leading up to the creation of capital projects application and the requirements of applying for capital project funding. After the application is approved, a selection committee will need to be set up. The completed project application will have to be approved by the selection committee, the JCTDA board, and the County Commissioners. Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning asked about conflict of interest in case of a board member or partner applying for funding, which Mr. Breedlove responded that the board was only approving the application at this time.

MOTION: *Craig Smith moved to approve the capital projects application. Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning seconded. Motion carried.*

Director's Report

The director's report was emailed with the agenda. Mr. Breedlove did not have any additional items that were not stated in the report. Mr. Breedlove explained that he is reducing the format of the report to 1-2 pages summarizing the items in the report to save board members time to review the report. Mr. Breedlove then gave further information to the daily average rate statistics requested by Mr. Smith earlier.

Jackson County Chamber Directors Report

The report was emailed as an attachment to the agenda. Ms. Spiro updated the report as follows:

- The Fly-Fishing maps are ready to be reprinted and will be sent out as soon as printed. Over 11,000 Visitor's Guides have been sent out.
- Concerts for the summer concerts are booked.
- Downtown Sylva now has free Wi-Fi coverage.

Cashiers Area Chamber Director Report

Ms. Edwards was absent. Mr. Breedlove presented the report, updates, and highlights as follows:

- The Chamber has been working with the Kessler Collection regarding the Cashiers East Village, which is expected to bring 150 jobs to the area. The project is in the conceptual stage and, if approved, will be implemented in several years.
- The Urban Land Institute's visits to the area has been postponed due to COVID travel restrictions.

Social Media, PR Report

Mr. Sullivan reported on social media highlights. The JCTDA Facebook site has generated more organic hits than Asheville, Bryson City and Cherokee.

Ms. Long of Lou Hammond Group reported that they have hosted Ann Baily who is writing two articles, one on dining and one on travel in the Cashiers area. There are other writers who will be visiting soon. Two additional magazine articles are being prepared to feature the Outhouse Race.

Rachel Croyle of Rawle Murdy reported that RM has prepared eight new display ads for Secret Season that will be running from February to April.

Updates from Individual Board Members

Mr. Smith stated that his marketing team has been doing Google ads on Secret Season which have brought visitation to Bear Lake up in January, which is usually a slow month for visitation. Castle Ladyhawk has received two choice awards as a wedding destination by Wedding Wire. There will be a charity 5K run called Running with the Bears at Bear Lake in March.

Announcements

None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m. by Mr. Jumper.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held February 23, 2022 via Zoom Conferencing.

Megan Orr, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: March 23, 2022