



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

MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
August 18, 2022 (Thursday) @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, and Darlene Fox
- **Members absent:** Julie Spiro, Stephanie Edwards, Mark Jones, Dale Collins, and Jay Grissom
- **Others in attendance:** Caleb Sullivan, Sales and Marketing Manager JCTDA; Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk, Ann Bernard and Carter Long, Lou Hammond Group; Rachel Covey, Rawle Murdy; Heather Baker, Jackson County Attorney; Tiffany Collins, new JCTDA staff member

Approve Amended Agenda

The proposed Agenda was sent by email prior to meeting. The agenda had an additional item added, so the board needs to approve the amended agenda.

MOTION: Daniel Fletcher moved to approve the amended agenda. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Recognize Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and County Commissioner

Robert Jumper, Chair, commented that there had been a lot of tourist traffic in Cherokee and their latest event was well attended. COVID cases are holding steady with approximately 70 cases per week.

Daniel Fletcher, Vice Chair, had no comments.

Megan Orr, Secretary, had no comments.

Mark Jones, County Commissioner, was absent.

Review and Approval of June 15, 2022 Budget Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes

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

MOTION: Daniel Fletcher moved to approve both meeting minutes, June 15, 2021 Budget Public Hearing and Regular Meeting minutes. Craig Smith seconded. The motion carried.

Review and Approval of June 30, 2022 and July 31, 2022 Financial Reports

June 30, 2022 Financial Report

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for June include Occupancy Tax collections of \$213,514.02 penalties of \$130.15, and YTD collection totals of \$2,328,723.97, which is 105.85% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$39,452.23. The Home Away / VRBO total was \$41,051.47 and the VACASA, NC total was \$6,210.56. 80 accounts reported rentals for May rentals (decrease of 21 accounts from last year). Collections were up 15% from the same period in 2021. The June 30, 2022 cash balance is \$461,008.96 with investments totaling \$2,000,000.00. June expenses were \$79,268.64 with FYTD expenses totaling \$1,707,086.50 with encumbrances of \$8,501.48 for a combined total of \$1,715,587.98 equaling 65.25% of the budget.

July 31, 2022 Financial Report

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for July include Occupancy Tax collections of \$302,567.11 penalties of \$0.00, and YTD collection totals of \$302,567.11, which is -14.69% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$43,557.43. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$63,120.51 and the VACASA, NC total was \$9,592.55. 79 accounts reported rentals for June rentals (decrease of 28 accounts from last year). Collections were down 1.40% from the same period in 2021. The July 31, 2022 cash balance is \$581,338.83 with investments totaling \$2,000,000.00. July expenses were \$170,955.82 with FYTD expenses totaling \$170,955.82 with encumbrances of \$122,968.18 for a combined total of \$293,924.00, equaling 11.07% of the budget.

MOTION: Craig Smith moved to approve the June and July financial reports as presented. Megan Orr seconded. The motion carried.

Grant Requests

Grant requests were received from Mountain Heritage Day and Pinnacle Park Foundation. The applications were sent by email to Board members on August 17, 2022.

Mountain Heritage Day

The festival is self-funded and does not receive any money from the university. The grant request was originally for \$5,000 to go toward hand washing/cleaning stations. After further consideration, Executive recommended funding \$2,500 for this request.

Pinnacle Park Foundation

This grant request is for \$4,340 to purchase trail counters to measure patterns of visitation to the trails in the park to plan repairs/maintenance on the trails and to prepare a master plan for the park in the future.

The Executive Committee recommends funding \$2,500 for Mountain Heritage Day and the full amount for the Pinnacle Park Foundation grant request.

MOTION: *Megan Orr moved to approve \$2,500 in funding for the grant application from Mountain Heritage Day. Ashlie Mitchell-Lanning seconded. Motion carried.*

MOTION: *Daniel Fletcher moved to approve \$4,340 in funding for the grant application from the Pinnacle Park Foundation. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.*

Proposed Revisions to Tourism Capital Project Fund (TCPF)

Mr. Breedlove is requesting a revision to the Tourism Capital Project Fund (TCPF) to remove the Selection Committee from approving/recommending each capital project fund request before passing it on to the Board and then County Commissioners for final approval. This revision will streamline the selection of applications.

It has been a challenge to find an additional seven members of the public to serve on the Selection Committee, Breedlove said noting that the Full Board would have to review the capital project requests anyway, so this streamlines the process, he said. The revised procedure will read: "The JCTDA Board of Directors will serve as the application review and selection committee to recommend applications to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners."

Motion: *Craig Smith motioned to approve the revisions to the TCPF. Daniel Fletcher seconded. Motion carried.*

Brief from Attorney on Updating Bylaws and Suggested Rules & Procedures

Updating Bylaws

Heather Baker explained that the TDA does not have a set of bylaws that are found in one document. A draft of bylaws from 2013 exists, which she then updated. The TDA's establishing resolution (R12-34) has been revised twice, leaving three documents one would have to reference to see the TDA's complete legislation. The proposed draft will have all the bylaws and legislation in one place and make it easier for everyone to find and understand the TDA's establishing legislation and procedures.

The document will not be voted at this meeting to give the Board time to read and understand this document and ask questions, if any. The vote will be taken at the September meeting.

Suggested Rules and Procedures

Baker explained there is a new book by the UNC School of Government with updated suggested rules and procedures.

The board previously relied on the same book, but a prior copy, for its rules of order.

Baker worked to update the rules and procedure to address remote meetings. Prior to the recision of state of emergency in North Carolina remote meetings were not an issue. Now, there is nothing in the North Carolina statutes that say that a group can or cannot meet remotely. The revised version will say that we would like you to be present; however, in certain situations members can join a meeting remotely by electronic means if notice is provided to the Executive Director.

The document will not be voted at this meeting to give the Board time to read and understand this document and ask questions, if any. The vote will be taken at the September meeting.

Oath of Office

An oath is required by any person in a public office in North Carolina. Ms. Baker is recommending that the TDA Board members take an oath of office since they are making determinations regarding taxpayer monies and are not exclusively an advisory board. An oath has been prepared and will be sent to each Board member by Mr. Breedlove. The oath should be signed, dated, notarized, and returned.

JCTDA Director's Report/Staff Report

The director's report was emailed with the agenda. Mr. Breedlove gave highlights and updates.

- Mr. Breedlove introduced the new staff member, Tiffany Collins, who will be working with Mr. Sullivan on social media with a focus on Tik-Tok and Instagram.
- The staff has been busy attending tourism shows, conventions and conferences.
- Tourism spending in Jackson County has increased by \$145 million, to \$437 million, from 2020 to 2021.
- Mr. Breedlove started a Facebook page for Short Term Rental owners to exchange ideas, best practices, contractors for housekeeping, etc.

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Director Report

The reports for June and July were emailed as an attachment to the agenda. Ms. Spiro was absent.

Cashiers Area Chamber Director Report

The reports for June and July were emailed as an attachment to the agenda. Ms. Edwards was absent.

Updates from the Advertising and PR Partners

Rachel Covey updated the Board on the activities of BGRM. They are highlighting fall ads for Secret Season which begins in November. They have run ads on Spotify and print ads focusing on local food in Jackson County to target the luxury audience from August to October. A formal report has been submitted to Mr. Breedlove and forwarded to Board members.

The LHG update was presented by Anne Bernard and Carter Long. LHG has gotten several stories published in national magazines during the past months. They have arranged visits to Jackson County by noted writers from regional and national magazines.

Craig Smith asked if there was a plan with the TDA to educate retailers and local hospitality vendors on Secret Season. Mr. Breedlove plans to work on this idea in September.

Updates from Individual Board Members

None

Announcements

None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m. by Mr. Jumper.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held September 14, 2022 via Zoom Conferencing unless otherwise posted.

Megan Orr, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: September 21, 2022