



MEETING MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
December 4, 2024 (Wednesday) @1:00 p.m.
98 Cope Creek Rd., Suite D
Sylva, NC 28779

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Mr. Jumper. Mr. Jumper introduced himself, mentioning his long-term involvement with the TDA and TTA, and his deep roots in Jackson County.

Members in attendance: Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Robert Jumper, Chair; Daniel Fletcher, Megan Orr, Vice Chair; Ashlie Mitchell, Secretary; Craig Smith; Trevor Brown; Peter Evers; Julie Spiro; Susan Gregory; and Darlene Fox

Members absent: Mandi Cantrell

Others in attendance: Kara Addy, JCTDA Social Media Manager; Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk; Tiffany Henry and Betsy Norwood, Jackson County Economic Development; John Kautz, Genna Shelhutt, and Mark Hartzell, BGRM; Gina Stouffer and Ashley Svarney, LHG.

Approve Agenda

MOTION: Craig Smith moved to approve the agenda. Trevor Brown seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Ms. Henry thanked the Board for their work in the community and introduced Ms. Norwood, who is an intern and will be working with Ms. Henry until the end of June.

Elect Vice Chair and Secretary for 2025

Ms. Orr, Vice Chair, and Ms. Mitchell, Secretary, have agreed to remain in their current positions for another term.

MOTION: Daniel Fletcher moved to have Ms. Orr and Ms. Mitchell remain in the current positions on the Board. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Recognize Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and County Commissioner

Robert Jumper, Chair – Thanked Mr. Fletcher for leading the Board for the past two years and recognized him for his service. Mr. Fletcher welcomed Mr. Jumper back to the Chair position and thanked Mr. Breedlove for his help during the past two years.

Mr. Jumper noted that there is a new County Commissioner assigned to the Board. She will be at the next meeting.

Megan Orr, Vice Chair – Had no comments.

Ashlie Mitchell, Secretary – Had no comments.

Approve Draft 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Breedlove explained the 2025 meeting dates, including executive meetings and longer meetings in February and May. Mr. Jumper highlighted the importance of attending meetings in person for better discussion and quorum.

MOTION: *Trevor Brown moved to approve draft of 2025 Meeting Dates. Megan Orr seconded. Motion carried.*

Review and Approval of November 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Minutes of meeting are available on the JCTDA website. Minutes were also attached to the agenda for this meeting. No comments were made.

MOTION: *Craig Smith moved to approve November 13, 2024 meeting minutes. Trevor Brown seconded. The motion carried.*

Review and Approval of November 30, 2024 Financial Report

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for November include Occupancy Tax collections \$200,455.68 with penalties of \$50.00 and YTD collection totals of \$1,061,288.15 which is 42.45% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$23,482.79. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$29,557.87 and the VACASA, NC total was \$6,079.39. 88 accounts reported rentals for October rentals (decrease of 3 accounts from last year). Collections were down 29.74% from the same period in 2023. The November 30, 2024 cash balance is \$559,484.97 with investments totaling \$3,450,000.00. November expenses were \$217,226.66 with FYTD expenses totaling \$1,042,626.24 with encumbrances of \$0.00 for a combined total of \$1,042,626.24, equaling 32.19% of the budget.

Mr. Breedlove commented that, despite a decrease in collections compared to 2019, the current year's collections are still positive.

MOTION: *Trevor Brown moved to approve the November 30, 2024 financial report. Daniel Fletcher seconded. The motion carried.*

Approve CycleNC Agreement for Host City Sponsorship

Mr. Breedlove explained the Cycle NC event, which will bring several hundred cyclists to Jackson County in August 2025. Bernadette Peters of Main Street Sylva Association and Motion Makers Bike Shop have worked out the logistics and site planning for a successful event August 1-3, 2025 for approximately 300 people. The sponsorship requirement is \$5,000, which is within the budget for events. The event will bring people to Jackson County, with approximately 100 hotel rooms booked.

***Motion:** Craig Smith motioned to approve the CycleNC Agreement for Host City Sponsorship. Trevor Brown seconded. Motion carried.*

Approve Updated Bylaws

A copy of the revised Bylaws was attached to the agenda for this meeting. Mr. Breedlove explained that the changes reflect the expanded eligibility requirements for Board membership.

***Motion:** Daniel Fletcher moved to approve the updated Bylaws. Trevor Smith seconded. Motion carried.*

JCTDA Director's Brief

Mr. Breedlove presented the Director's Brief, highlighting the following:

- There was a misstatement at the County Commission meeting about a TDA commitment to the Greenway Ramble project in Cashiers. Mr. Robshaw stated that the TDA had committed \$1.5 million to the project, when there was a conversation with Mr. Breedlove where it was noted that the TDA had \$1.5 million available for capital projects—not a commitment to provide the funds. Mr. Breedlove has informed that Commission that the TDA has not received a completed application for the funds, nor have the funds been committed.
- The new website will be completed in August. The work on the website is labor intensive due to the descriptive details on attractions, such as waterfalls and trails. Mr. Breedlove shared website usage statistics, showing a significant increase in visitors and mobile usage.
- Mr. Breedlove introduced Mr. Peter Evers, a new Board member. Mr. Evers outlined his background in tourism.
- The Visitor Guide will be available in March/April with the new logo.
- Ms. Addy provided the social media report, highlighting the growth in followers on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Upcoming social media content includes videos on Christmas tree farms, parades, and the new aquatic center. The full social media report is attached to the agenda for this meeting.

Jackson County Chamber Director's Report

Ms. Spiro presented the Chamber Director's Report with the following highlights:

- Sylva Social is having their Grand Opening today at 4 PM.
- The Smoky Mountain High School show choir performance was a success.
- The Chamber has received 36 letters to Santa.

Cashiers Area Chamber Director's Report

Ms. Gregory reported on the preparations for the upcoming Cashiers Christmas Parade and the recent 5K run sponsored by The Village Green.

Partner Updates

John Kautz and Genna Shelnett of BGRM presented the new brand identity for Jackson County, focusing on "peak moments" and featuring an elk in the logo. The Board expressed excitement about the new branding and discussed its potential impact on weddings and other key audiences.

Gina Stouffer, of Lou Hammond Group, reported on recent PR efforts, including coverage in Southern Living and Forbes.

New Business

None reported.

Updates from Individual Board Members

Mr. Jumper reported that renovation of the downtown Cherokee Splash Pads has started. Ice skating on the Oconaluftee Enchanted Island has had one successful weekend.

Mr. Smith stated that Bear Lake Reserve is going to start a transportation business to support large events and weddings. There is a shortage of transportation services in Jackson County currently, which has affected Bear Lake's bookings and revenue.

Trevor Brown updated the Board on the progress of the Aquatic Center complex and Cullowhee River Park. The board discussed the new pool opening and the potential for day passes and memberships

Announcements

None

Adjourn

MOTION: *Craig Smith motioned to adjourn. Trevor Brown seconded. Motion carried.*

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06 PM.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on January 15, 2025 in person at JCTDA headquarters unless otherwise posted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashlie Mitchell', is written over a horizontal line.

Ashlie Mitchell, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board
Approved: January 15, 2025