



MEETING MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
May 21, 2025 (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.

Members in attendance: Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Robert Jumper, Chair, Megan Orr, Vice Chair, Craig Smith, Secretary, Peter Evers, Julie Spiro, Mandi Cantrell, Daniel Fletcher, Susan Gregory, Darlene Fox, Jack Austin, Dale Collins

Members absent: Jenny Lynn Hooper, Trevor Brown, Mandi Cantrell

Others in attendance: Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk; Samantha Nelson, JCTDA Social Media Manager; Ashley Svarney, Gina Stouffer, Aneska Walrath, LHG; Jane Mauer, Smokies Life.

Approve Agenda

MOTION: Megan Orr moved to approve the agenda. Dale Collins seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Jane Mauer, Smokies Life, announced that there is now a link in the GSMNP website to show trail and road closures in the GSMNP.

Recognize County Commissioner

Jenny Lynn Hooper was absent.

Introductions

Mr. Breedlove introduced new members of the Board of Directors and JCTDA staff. Jack Austin comes to the Board of Directors with many years of experience in hospitality and tourism in the Highland/Cashiers area. Samantha Nelson is the new Social Media Manager.

Review and Approval of April 19, 2025 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: Megan Orr moved to approve the April 19, 2025 meeting minutes. Craig Smith seconded. The motion carried.

Review and Approval of April 30, 2025 Financial Report

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for April include Occupancy Tax collections of \$129,452.53 with penalties of \$115.50 and YTD collection totals of \$1,733,143.35 which is 69.33% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$55,021.43. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$7,432.69 and the VACASA, NC total was \$3,873.13. 76 accounts reported rentals for March rentals (increase of 4 accounts from last year). Collections were up 1.42% from the same period in 2024. The April 30, 2025 cash balance is \$39,206.97 with investments totaling \$3,050,000.00. April expenses were \$299,734.09 with FYTD expenses totaling \$2,692,845.55 with encumbrances of \$10,324.30 for a combined total of \$2,703,169.85, equaling 83.46% of the budget.

MOTION: Dale Collins moved to approve the April 30, 2025 financial report. Craig Smith seconded. The motion carried.

Annual Public Relations Plan

Ashley Svarney, Lou Hammond Group, introduced the LHG team who will be working with JCTDA in the coming year. The presentation began with a review of the past year's successes.

LHG plans to focus on four narrative pillars in the annual PR plan. These pillars are as follows:

- Affordability
- Wellness
- Culinary
- Cultural

The complete PR Plan was not presented during the meeting; however, hard copies of the plan were available to attendees. Information on the timelines for the activities and PR goals and strategies can be found in the full plan.

Draft Budget Presentation

Ms. Fox presented a high level budget highlights and Mr. Breedlove provided an explanation of the detailed budget items. The largest budget item is capital projects (\$1 million) with media ad placement at \$600,000. The full 2025-26 Proposed Budget plan was distributed in hardcopy to each attendee at the meeting.

New Business

None

JCTDA Director's Update

The JCTDA Director's Brief with updates on industry metrics and lodging performance was attached to the agenda. Mr. Breedlove presented the Director's Brief, highlighting the following:

- The staff is in the process of digitizing all older JCTDA materials from 2013-2015.
- Madden Media is being onboarded as the new advertising agency effective July 1.
- Mr. Breedlove is participating in the committee to search for a new Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Director.
- The new website launches May 21. Mr. Breedlove demonstrated the features of the new website briefly.

Jackson County Chamber Director's Report

The Director's Report was attached to the agenda for this meeting. Ms. Spiro presented the report highlights.

- Concerts on the Creek kicks off this coming Friday, May 23.
- The Chamber is distributing the new Fly Fishing Guide by putting copies in hotels, restaurants and kiosks.

Cashiers Area Chamber Director's Report

Ms. Gregory presented her report. The report was sent with the agenda for this meeting. During the month of May, the Chamber will be spreading kindness with the Thomas Taulbee Kindness Challenge to honor the late Chamber director.

- Cashiers Burger Week was a success with over 1,000 participants.
- The Chamber has a summer intern. Ms. Gregory introduced Caitlyn Muniz.
- Leadership Cashiers began with 18 participants.

Updates from individual Board Members / Announcements

Mr. Jumper announced that the Cherokee Splash Pads are active after the recent ribbon cutting on May. The renovation and upgrade of access to Soco Falls is nearing completion.

Adjourn

MOTION: Dale Collins motioned to adjourn. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on June 18, 2025 in person at JCTDA headquarters unless otherwise posted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end, positioned above a solid horizontal line.

Craig Smith, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board
Approved: June 18, 2025