



## MINUTES

### Jackson County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors Meeting

**October 19, 2016 (Wednesday), 1:00 p.m.**

North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching  
Cullowhee, NC 28723

### ***Call to order/Roll Call***

Meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Nick Breedlove.

Members in attendance

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alex Bell      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Darlene Fox    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mary Lanning   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noah Bell                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vicki Greene   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clifford Meads |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nick Breedlove | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hartbarger            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vick Patel     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cherie Bowers  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Henry Hoche    | <input type="checkbox"/> Ann Self                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kelly Custer   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Jennings | <input type="checkbox"/> Julie Spiro               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Edwards         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Jumper  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ken Taft       |

### ***Others in Attendance***

Danell Moses (minutes)

### ***Approval of Minutes***

Minutes were presented and approved for September 2016.

***MOTION:*** Mary Lanning moved to approve minutes as presented. Sarah Jennings seconded. Motion passed.

### ***Review & approval of year-to-date financial report***

Financial Report was presented by Darlene Fox.

YTD collections of \$437,904.86

YTD expenses of \$237,332.98

Cash balance on September 30, 2016 was \$626,996.65

***MOTION:*** Alex Bell moved to approve the financial report. Clifford Mead seconded. Motion passed.

### ***Recognize Vice Chair, Secretary, and Commissioner Representative & Government Officials***

County Commissioner, Vicki Greene, mentioned that Breedlove did a great, flawless job at the Joint Commissioners Meeting on October 17.

### ***Committee reports: Governance, Marketing***

No reports were presented.

### ***Jackson County Chamber activity report***

On behalf of Julie Spiro, Alex Bell provided the group with a highlight summary of Chamber activities and news:

- Chamber had busy October greeting 15,259 guests, taking 3,500 phone calls, and mailing 14,474 visitor guides.
- They are looking forward to the upcoming Treat Street and Pottery Festival in Dillsboro.



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### ***Cashiers Chamber activity report***

On behalf of Stephanie Edwards, Mary Lanning provided the group with a highlight summary of Cashiers Chamber activities and news:

- Had record turnout for Leaf Festival. Vendors reported phenomenal sales.
- Has hired Elizabeth Ramirez as the new assistant.

### ***Director Report***

Nick Breedlove provided some highlights of his full report provided with the agenda.

- Plans to survey JCTDA Board Members in advance of Nov. 15 regular meeting to better program that agenda. Hopes to have the survey sent out no later than October 25 with a due date of November 1.
- Will send a link for the new website for proofing purposes. The launch date is the week of November 1.
- Indicated the Magellan Strategy Group will begin scheduling interviews next week with all board members and Chamber Directors and will present draft report and recommendations to Executive Director by December 23 with final assessment and recommendations to TDA board by mid-January 2017.
- Reported that Solar Eclipse 2017 planning meetings are in process. Plans are continuing to develop:
  - Current include confirmed viewing sites locations:
    - Mark Watson Park, Sylva
    - Bridge Park, Sylva
    - Village Green, Cashiers
    - Cashiers and Jackson County Recreation Parks
    - Sapphire Valley Resort
  - Many events taking place that weekend:
    - Friday: Groovin' on Green, Cashiers; Concerts on the Creek, Sylva
    - Saturday: Dillsboro Arts and Crafts Festival; Valley Ballyhoo (WCU Campus)
    - Sunday: Eclipse-related panels at WCU or SCC; Moonlight run Cullowhee Rec Center
    - Monday: Totality occurs at 2:35 p.m., coordinating events leading up at each location
- Explained a report from Airbnb specific to Jackson County showed data specifically in our market about that service's impact and growth. Breedlove attempted to gather the same information from VRBO without success.
- Stated that four upcoming FAM trips will mark 11 members of the media to Jackson County this year. The TDA continues to generate notable media mentions and share Jackson County on a local, regional, state and national level. Breedlove is working with Pineapple to ensure the media have a great experience while in Jackson County.



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### ***Board Appointments/Nominations***

Jumper introduced the topic by explaining that five seats will be available to fill and a few nominations have been received. During the executive board meeting, the opportunity was discussed to streamline the board to reduce the board size from 15 to 13 by eliminating one north and one south seat. This would make it easier to fill vacant seats, maintain a quorum, and fill categories. This would require action by the Jackson County Commissioners. At this time, two south lodging seats (Cashiers properties, 25-plus rooms), two north lodging seats (25-plus rooms), and one north retail seats need to be filled.

Breedlove indicated it is hard to fill seats for 25-plus room lodgings for the south end of the county. Meads asked what percentage of lodging would be on board. Breedlove responded that 8 of 13 seats (62%) would remain lodging. Meads suggested that the idea was viable to establish committees and get work done and that lodging would still be well represented.

Bell said the quorum would be similar and that he doesn't see the benefit.

Jennings indicated it might be beneficial to reduce the number from 25 to 10.

Hoche said having a majority from lodging makes sense.

Jumper asked the board to continue to submit nominations and recommended a decision be made during the November meeting.

### ***Request for funding from The Conservation Fund***

The Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) received several thousand acres for the Conservation Trust (BRPCT). The TDA sent a letter of support for planning and visioning of that acreage. The BRPCT proposed a comprehensive plan and applied for a \$60,000 grant. Their share will be about \$33,000. Bill Holman, state director of the Conservation Fund asked for \$5,000 from Jackson County and Haywood County. Bell said the initial letter of support was clear that it did not indicate financial support.

Meads asked about the timeline and suggested waiting until the plan is developed. Custer agreed the TDA should have the plan before offering financial support.

Lanning said we should support them in their endeavors to bring in tourists, not in their planning process. Greene agreed.

No action was taken.

### ***Marketing committee items (advertising considerations - Cashiers/Highlands Lifestyle & Living Map, SM Host Guide)***

#### **Smoky Mountain Host Guide**

Breedlove indicated a \$100 fee would cover including a logo type ad in issue where the TDA will have a section with photographs. No objections were presented.

#### **Cashiers Plateau Map**

Breedlove asked if the board wants to renew.

Lanning said it was like putting an ad in a magazine. Bell agreed and said the TDA should be certain the funds are not going toward printing the map but for advertising.

Taft said his business gives away a lot of those maps.

Jennings said it was a good map and good way to market the TDA within a big corridor of activities.



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Jennings suggested to decide in the planning session what maps and promotional materials will be best for future. The matter will be discussed at the planning meeting on November 15.

### ***Public comment (per sign in sheet)***

No comments were made.

### ***Announcements***

Breedlove reminded the group of the upcoming regular meeting on November 15 at 1 p.m. and planning meeting after.

Breedlove asked for consent of his attendance at upcoming conferences:

- Visit NC 365, state tourism conference in Greensboro.
  - Cost: registration fee of \$425 and lodging \$278 plus tax.
- STS Marketing Conference Year II
  - \$1045
- Georgia Winter Chautauqua Conference
  - Cost: Fee of \$95 and lodging \$89 plus tax.

**Motion:** Clifford Meads motioned to allow Breedlove to attend conferences. Custer seconded. Motion passed.

Jumper announced that TWSA could issue a water restriction because of the drought conditions.

### ***Adjournment***

Meeting was adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Jennings", written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Jennings, Secretary  
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: