



MINUTES

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors Meeting

September 21, 2016, 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 1:00 p.m. by Robert Jumper.

Members in attendance

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

Others in Attendance

Don Adams (Jackson County Manager), Paige Dowling (Sylva Town Manager), Brian McMahan (Jackson County Commissioners' Chairman), Danell Moses (minutes), Rich Price (Director, Jackson County Economic Development), Sarah Thompson (Southwestern Commission), Alexa Lampasona and Deborah Stone (Pineapple PR), John Kautz & Patrick Rhyne (Rawle Murdy)

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were presented and approved for August 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 \$302,255.63

YTD expenses of \$146,365.70

Cash balance on August 31, 2016 was \$581,377.18

MOTION: Clifford Mead moved to approve the financial report. Mary Lanning seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion & approvals of financial amendments

Budget Amendment presented by Darlene Fox.

End of year budget adjustments:

Decrease: Contingency line	\$6,137.00
Increase: Creative & Production	\$1,299.00
Contracted-Website	\$3,938.00
Public Relations	\$900.00

MOTION: Ann Self moved to approve minutes as presented. Sarah Jennings seconded. Motion passed.

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

County Commissioner, Vicki Greene, mentioned that the Fish and Wildlife and Jackson County Sheriff's Department met with commissioners to develop guideline for trout fisher as to where to walk and



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where to park. Nick Breedlove mentioned the new guide shows every Jackson County put-in and includes language about Mountain Heritage Trout Waters.

Brian McMahan thanked the group for its hard work, and said he's seeing positive differences as the result.

Don Adams thanks for the group for inviting him to attend and looks forwards to working with the group.

Paige Dowling thanked the group for its work and the invitation to join the meeting today

Committee reports: Governance, Marketing

No reports were presented.

Jackson County Chamber activity report

Julie Spiro provided the group with a highlight summary of Chamber activities and news:

- Held Executive Board meeting on August 9.
- She and Paige Dowling decorated Sylva and will be decorating Dillsboro.
- Saw 1,687 visitors in August and mailed out over 3,000 visitor guides as a result of phone calls and website inquiries.
- Chamber will staff tent at upcoming Dillsboro Color Fest event.
- Chamber will assist with upcoming Mountain Heritage Day event and with November's Charters of Freedom event.
- Has new maps for hoteliers.

Cashiers Chamber activity report

Stephanie Edwards provided the group with a highlight summary of Cashiers Chamber activities and news:

- Continues working with Mike Poston, Jackson County Planning Department, and NCDOT on pedestrian safety project.
 - Will install a rectangular rapid flash beacon on N.C. Hwy. 107 South at approx. cost of \$13,000.
 - Updated County Manager, Don Adams, on priority issues.
 - Jackson County, Cashiers Planning Council, and private funding sources to be pursued.
 - Parking options to be investigated.
- Working on general improvements to labor needs with specific emphasis on hospitality industry. Contacted J1 program intermediary regarding expansion.
 - Exploring creating a "Tourism Education Destination Program" to promote recruitment, retention and training of hospitality staff possibly in coordination with WCU classes.
 - Following up on public-private workforce housing initiatives (Olympic-village type of campus)
- Will hold a community briefing on September 23 for new Deerfoot Lodge Blue Ridge Development, a faith-based extended-stay boys camp at Trout Lake/Big Ridge, north of Glenville. This expansion of a highly-successful venture in the Adirondacks will draw hundreds of parents to stay in Jackson County to drop off and pick up campers each session.



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- Maintains contact with Jackson County Christmas Tree Growers Association with outreach via NC Extension Service and Valley Garden Club to improve landscaping aesthetics at Visitor Center building
 - Conducted soil testing on site
 - Investigating Blue Ridge National Heritage Area community grant opportunity
 - Efforts will continue to promote "Choose & Cut" Fraser Fir opportunities and other holiday and winter activities to lengthen the traditional visitor season
- Danie Beck serving as temporary part-time in Visitor Center until full time replacement starts in October.
- Boys and Girls Club of the Plateau is holding the Old Baldaroo Music Festival on September 24 and 25. Music features country, jazz, blue grass artists and fireworks displays.
- Bear Shadow should draw visitors to the area during third and fourth week of October.

Director Report

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

- Reminded the Board that the November work session will be on Tuesday, November 15 at 1 p.m. followed by a planning session retreat from 2 – 5 p.m. to identify goals for the upcoming year.
 - A survey will be e-mailed to board members for items of discussion during the retreat.
- The new website, creative campaign, and tourism video are scheduled for launch October 17. Board members are encouraged to review and recommend changes before that date.
 - Website visits last month were highest in 2 years
 - Up 11.49% this fiscal year
- The TDA has been asked to provide a letter of support for a grant application authored by Anna Fariello for improvements along the Tuckaseigee River Greenway. Fariello explained the application is for additional interpretive signage and benches, and she is working with Jackson County Parks and Rec on the application, due October 1.
 - Breedlove recommended that before authoring a letter of support, the board read the full copy of the draft grant application after the County Manager has approved the application.
 - Vicki Greene indicated she knew some people who would like to purchase benches for the greenway.
- Earned media – calculated through September – earned about \$1.8 million through media placements.
- Received a letter from Ashley Iglesias as resignation from her board seat.

MOTION: Clifford Meads moved to approve the resignation. Mary Lanning seconded. Motion passed.



Magellan Strategy Group study

- The Executive Committee recommended engaging Asheville-based Magellan Strategy Group to study the TDA's relationship with the Chambers and how that affects contracts. Magellan Strategy's Chris Cavanaugh has completed similar studies in Western North Carolina and is highly regarded in the Southeast for tourism research. The group will assess the TDA's relationship with the Chambers and will identify and assess services being provided in their contracts with the TDA.
- The fee for this study is \$3,750

MOTION: Jim Hartbarger moved to approve the engagement with Magellan Strategy Group. Noah Bell seconded. Motion passed.

Rawle Murdy presentation of new creative campaign & tourism video

John Kautz and Patrick Rhyne discussed upcoming advertising, planning, and production schedules. They showed board members a slideshow of highlights from the photo shoot and debuted the one-minute Jackson County tourism promotional video.

Public comment (per sign in sheet)

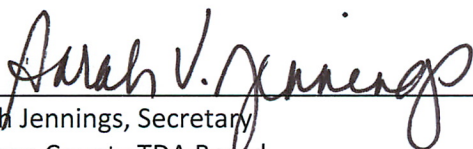
No comments were made.

Announcements

Nick Breedlove again reminded that the November meeting will be on November 15. The regular meeting will convene at 1 p.m. with planning session following.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by 2:05 p.m.



Sarah Jennings, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board
Approved: