



Swain County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
03-13-2024 Budget Meeting

Present (Voting): Shannon Lackey, Presiding Chair, Andy Bhakta, Janene Lancaster, Kevin Seagle, Erin Smith, Eugene Shuler, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo Taylor,

Absent (Voting) Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman

Present (Ex-Officio) None

Absent (Ex-Officio): Cally Elliott, Swain County Finance Officer

TDA Staff: Sarah Conley, Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones

Commissioner: None

Attendees: None

This meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by acting chair, Shannon Lackey. No Pledge of Allegiance, prayer by Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda: Calley Elliott from the Swain County Finance office will be speaking on the changes regarding the retirement part of the moving of TDA human resources from Swain County.

Cheryl Taylor made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 02/14/2024 regular meeting. PattiJo Taylor seconded the motion. Majority vote. Motion carried.

Erin Smith made a motion to approve the minutes for 02/14/2024 Executive Session. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. Majority vote. Motion carried.

Calley Elliott spoke about the retirement part of the human resources for the TDA. Cally recommendation was that the TDA have an escrow account for the surety that has to go to the Local Government Employees' Retirement System.

Erin Smith made a motion that the Tourism Development Authority have in place an escrow account to cover all the employees' retirement that are full time employees. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.



Acting chair, Shannon Lackey made a motion to accept the North Carolina Local Government Employees' Retirement System (LERS) on behalf of the Swain County Tourism Development Authority. Erin seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public comment: None

Erin Smith made a motion to go out of the regular meeting and to go into Executive Session G.S. 43-318.11(a). Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried at 10:25a.m.

Shannon Lackey, acting chair made a motion to go back into the regular session at 11:50 a.m. PattiJo Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Executive Director:

Mary Anne Shea introduced the new executive director Sarah Conley to the TDA board. Sarah spoke about how excited she was to be on board the TDA.

Mary Anne spoke about having Western Carolina come in and be a partner with us at the Appalachian Rivers Aquarium. A team will be coming on March 22, 2024.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to hire Lisa Bryan as the Event Manager for the TDA at a salary of \$45,000.00 plus benefits. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Janene Lancaster made a motion that all TDA employees wear a uniform shirt. Andy seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eugene made a motion to accept the bid from Naturally Green Landscaping, for \$33,466.00 for the flower boxes that sit on the street. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Janene Lancaster to approve \$11,500.00 for the flower baskets on the upper and lower bridges. Andy Bahkta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Janene Lancaster made a motion to give Rita Jones the title of TDA Manager, with a pay increase to \$23.50, which will be retroactive from January 01, 2024. Andy Bhakta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Lunch break at 12:30 p.m.

The meeting was back in session at 12:45 p.m.

Mary Anne went over all the budget consideration that may be for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Acting chair, Shannon Lackey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion.



All the board were in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins _____

Andy Bhakta _____

Shannon Lackey _____

Janene Lancaster _____

Kevin Seagle _____

Eugene Shuler _____

Erin Smith _____

Cheryl Taylor _____

PattiJo Taylor _____