



Swain County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
09-14-2022 Regular Meeting

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo Taylor @12:40p.m.

Absent (Voting): Afton Roberts, Eugene Shuler, Erin Smith

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Selena Hyde, Kerry Peek

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 12:20p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given. Prayer was then given by Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda: Chair Wiggins suggested moving the matching fund request and park pool to discussion at the end of meeting. All agreed (no vote taken).

Minutes for approval as follows:

- Cheryl Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes for 08-10-2022. Shannon Lackey seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Andy Bhakta made a motion to approve the minutes for 08-31-2022. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Erin Smith and Mary Anne Shea gave an overview the Shadrack Christmas Light Show which was approved at the 8/31/2022 special meeting. Mary Anne will set up a special/emergency Zoom meeting once she has a copy of the Shadrack contract.

On behalf of the board, Chair Wiggins wrote a letter to Community Services of Swain County asking that the TDA be allowed to put up all the charging stations that have been bought to go behind the Swain County Visitor Center.

Executive report by Mary Anne Shea

Marketing and Public Relations:

- Website:
 - Google Analytics attached
 - Ongoing work includes search engine optimization and media pages.
- Public Relations



- August report attached
- Instagram influencer plan is underway—Selections made by Mary Anne and Erin; Pineapple PR is doing the follow up to plan their visits.
- Visitor totals for visitor center and aquarium attached

Financial

- July Occupancy tax of \$252,312.02.
- Visitor spending data by the state tourism office attached
- Allocation of the 1% occupancy tax
 - All three loans will be paid off at the end of this month; The Heritage Museum, the train turntable, and the event park.
 - Beginning Oct. 01 those funds will come back to the TDA. Approximately \$330,000 in available funds for the budget year.
 - Swain Co received a \$500,000 matching grant from the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF). The TDA is being asked to match \$500,000 over a 3-year period.
 - Water slide to be finished spring 2023 for approx. \$125K
 - Revamp pool bathrooms and administration building
 - Lazy river water feature by 2024
- Shannon Lackey made a motion to approve \$500,000 to match the \$500,000 Partf Grant for the Swain County Recreation Park project (referenced above). Seconded by Janene Lancaster. Shannon added to his motion that the funds be made available over a 3-year period, contingent on the 1% lodging tax being funded back to the TDA. All in Favor. Motion carried.

Administrative & Committees:

- Beautification Committee: Christmas 2022 underway
- Finance Committee: Nothing new to report
- Marketing Committee: Nothing new to report

Board Discussion:

Mary Anne did a review of the new Volunteer Grant Guidelines Application. Shannon Lackey made a motion to approve the application as is. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried

Janene Lancaster made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Andy Bhakta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:21p.m.



Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins _____

Andy Bhakta _____

Afton Roberts _____

Shannon Lackey _____

Janene Lancaster _____

Eugene Shuler _____

Erin Smith _____

Cheryl Taylor _____

Pattijo Taylor _____