



# Swain County Tourism Development Authority

Official 2022 – 2023 Meeting Minutes



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Swain County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

07-13-2022 Regular Meeting

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Afton Roberts, Shannon Lackey, PattiJo Taylor, Erin Smith, Eugene Shuler

Absent (Voting): Janene Lancaster, Andy Bahkta, Cheryl Taylor

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wiggins at 12:10 pm. Pledge of Allegiance was given. Changes to the agenda asked for. Chair Wiggins suggested that Shannon Lackey provide an update on the EV charging stations. No vote taken due to not having a quorum at this time. All members in agreement.

Chair Wiggins introduced the new board member PattiJo Taylor and welcomed her to the board.

Chair Wiggins asked that the General Overview of 2022-2023 Board Rules and Procedures Policy be tabled until the regular meeting in August 2022.

Public Comment. None

Executive Report: Mary Anne Shea

### **Marketing And Public Relations**

- Website:
- Google Analytics Reports o Social Media & Google Organic are our top referrals to the website.
- Working on media pages and storyboards, also overall Search Engine Optimization
- Public Relations—June report attached
- Visitor totals for the visitor center and aquarium

### **Financial**

- May occupancy tax collections are \$170,004.68
- Chamber Freedom Fest pay out: The TDA Board approved to pay \$10,400 direct payments to vendors of Freedom Fest. The actual invoices came in at \$5,499.00

### **Administrative & Committees**

- New fly-fishing building should break ground in two weeks. The county manager is working with the county attorney on the MOU for the new fly-fishing building.
- Beautification Committee:
- Plans for Christmas décor 2022 are in progress.

- Four Corner project is on hold pending revisions from architect
- Finance Committee: Nothing new to report
- Marketing Committee: Nothing new to report

**Board Discussion:**

Shannon Lackey gave a report on the EV charging stations being installed behind the visitor center. For right now only two stations will be up and running. The county would like to see the use numbers before installing all 5 which equal ten parking spots taken out of the parking lot which is public parking.

Eugene Shuler arrived at the meeting at 12:22 p.m. Afton Roberts arrived at 12:50p.m. Due to now having a quorum the board could vote on the following minutes.

Afton Roberts made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of 06-08-2022 regular session and the 06-082022 Executive Session. Shannon Lackey seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Afton Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:27p.m.

Board Member Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins ..... *Jeremiah Wiggins* \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta ..... *Andy Bhakta* \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts ..... *Afton Roberts* \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey ..... *Shannon Lackey* \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster ..... *Janene Lancaster* \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler ..... *Eugene Shuler* \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith ..... \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor ..... *Cheryl Taylor* \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor ..... *PattiJo Taylor* \_\_\_\_\_

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Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

08-10-2022 Regular Meeting

Present (Voting):

Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy  
Bahkta, Shannon Lackey, Afton  
Roberts,

Eugene Shuler, Erin Smith PattiJo Taylor,  
Cheryl Taylor

Absent (Voting): Janene Lancaster

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

Attendees: Andrew Stanfield (NOC), Tobin Brogunier (Virtual Storefronts)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wiggins at 12:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given. Prayer followed by Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda as follows:

Chair Wiggins asked that Tobin Brogunier (Virtual Storefronts) be placed on the agenda in place of the Board Rules and Procedures Policy. Chair Wiggins put into form of a motion. Andy Bahkta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to approve the minutes of 06/22/2022 the public budget hearing. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to approve the minutes of 06/22/2022 regular meeting. Afton Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to approve the minutes of 07/13/2022 regular meeting. Erin Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Tobin Brogunier of Virtual Storefronts made a presentation about a mobile app for local businesses for a fee of \$10,000.

Public Comment: None

Executive Director Report: Mary Anne Shea

### **Marketing and Public Relations:**

- Website ○ Google Analytics reports
- Public Relations
  - July report attached ○ Instagram influencer plan to be reviewed by Mary Anne and Erin next week.
- Visitor totals for visitor center and aquarium attached.
- Mary Anne met with the marketing and management of the NOC. Data was shared and discussion of opportunities to partner with them on events being held in the Gorge.

### **Financial**

- June occupancy tax is \$203,749.84
- The Chamber has submitted a sponsorship request for \$2,000.00 for the Trick or Treat event in October. Last year the board approved the amount of \$2,000.00. Being that the board has authorized Mary Anne to approve up to \$5,000.00 for marketing grants and sponsorships, Mary Anne will approve the \$2,000 request upon the marketing plan changes she has requested from the Chamber Director.

### **Administrative & Committees:**

- New fly-fishing building will be breaking ground soon. Mary Anne will be checking with the county attorney regarding the MOU on the fly-fishing museum.
- Events: Sales and Operational Planning:
  - Mary has asked Chris Cavanaugh for research on how other NC counties are managing their event centers.
  - We are equipped to handle the marketing of events, but not the sales and operations/staffing portions.
- Beautification committee: ○ Plans for Christmas 2022 are in progress. ○ Order placed for new snowflakes that will go up on the Duke Energy poles in town.
  - The triangle at Exit 67 is on hold pending approval from the DOT and supply chain issues of products this year.
  - We are talking to an electrician to do an electrical hookup box at Mountain Ford for the lower bridge.
- Finance Committee: Nothing to report
- Marketing Committee: Nothing new to report

Shannon Lackey gave an update on the EV charging stations. There are two stations (4 outlets). Still waiting on the low voltage router so that cards can be used. For now, TDA is not going to be charging for use of the charging.

### **Board Discussion:**

- Afton Roberts asked if the board would draft a letter to the county commissioners regarding the sale of alcohol in the county being placed on the ballot. Chairman

Wiggins asked Afton to draft a proposal letter for the board to review at the September meeting.

- Chairman Wiggins made a motion to allocate \$10,000 of our event sponsorship program to organizations willing to donate volunteer staffing for events that attract tourists. Cheryl Taylor seconded this motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Mary Anne will add this to the current sponsorship guidelines and bring it to the next meeting for board approval.

Andy Bahkta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Erin Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_



Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**08-31-2022 Special Zoom Meeting**

Present (Voting): Shannon Lackey, Afton Roberts, Cheryl Taylor, Eugene Shuler, Janene Lancaster,  
Erin Smith, PattiJo Taylor @ 5:09pm, Andy Bahtka @ 5:23pm, Jeremiah Wiggins @ 5:35pm

Absent (Voting): None

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by acting chair Shannon Lackey at 5:04 p.m. via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was for the board to discuss a proposal from Shadrack’s Christmas Wonderland for the 2022 holiday season.

Erin Smith and Mary Anne presented the Shadrack’s franchise proposal for \$150,000. The board asked questions and discussed the information. Chair Wiggins made a motion for the TDA to sponsor the Shadrack’s Christmas Wonderland event for \$150,000. Afton Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

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.

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**09-20-2022 Emergency Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bahkta, Shannon Lackey, Afton Roberts, Erin Smith, PattiJo Taylor, Cheryl Taylor

Absent (Voting): Eugene Shuler

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 10:03 a.m. via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Shadrack contract for 3 years. The board had voted at their last meeting to approve the event for \$150,000, however had not approved it for 3 years.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to approve the 3-year contract with Shadrack. Erin Smith seconded the motion.

Voting For: Jeremiah Wiggins, Erin Smith

Voting Against: Andy Bahkta, Shannon Lackey, Afton Roberts, Cheryl Taylor and PattiJo Taylor

Motion does not pass.

The board then discussed ways to ask Shadrack to change the contract to make it more amenable to approve, including

- A 1-year contract instead of a 3-year contract.
- Add to the termination section of the contract that allows the TDA to cancel without penalty:
  - A "Flop Clause" that states if we don't have at least 5,000 vehicles attend the event ○ TDA funding needs to be available for the event.
- Get questions answered regarding storage of trailers storing the light display.

Once these changes are made then the board will consider the event again at another emergency meeting.

Afton Roberts made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Erin seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**09-21-2022 Emergency Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Erin Smith,  
PattiJo Taylor, Cheryl Taylor, Eugene Shuler, Afton Roberts

Absent (Voting): Janene Lancaster

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 9:03am. via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to review the termination clause as requested at the 9/20 emergency meeting. Chair Wiggins made a motion to approve the contract as revised. (The revision included the Flop Clause and the 5000 minimum vehicles in attendance which was requested at the 9/20/22 board meeting) Erin Smith seconded the motion.

Those For: Jeremiah Wiggins, Erin Smith, Eugene Shuler

Those Against: Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Cheryl Taylor and PattiJo Taylor

Motion does not pass.

Board members asked for a copy of the Shadrack contract so they could read the entire document. Mary Anne said she would send it to the board members to review immediately.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to recess the meeting so board members could review the entire contract at 9:47am. Meeting scheduled to reconvene at 4:00 p.m. on 09-21-2022 so members could review the contract. Seconded by Cheryl Taylor and PattiJo Taylor.

Chair Wiggins called reconvened the meeting at 4:03 p.m. Present: Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Erin Smith, Janene Lancaster. Eugene Shuler, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo Taylor, Kevin King, County Manager. Absent: Afton Roberts

The board discussed other aspects of the contract regarding parking of the trailers at the event park when not in use. Also, insurance on these trailers.

Shannon Lackey made a motion to table this discussion until January 2023 . Eugene Shuler seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Shannon Lackey, Eugene Shuler, Andy Bhakta, PattiJo Taylor, Cheryl Taylor

Against: Jeremiah Wiggins, Erin Smith, Janene Lancaster

Janene Lancaster then made a motion to move forward with signing the Shadrack contract between the TDA and Shadrack for this year 2022. Erin Smith seconded the motion.

For Contract: Janene Lancaster, Erin Smith, Jeremiah Wiggins

Against Contract: Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Eugene Shuler, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo

Taylor Motion doesn't carry.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to adjourn the meeting. PattiJo Taylor seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 4:48 a.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**09-23-2022 Emergency Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Erin Smith, Eugene Shuler, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo Taylor , Afton Roberts

Absent (Voting): None

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

Absent (Ex-Officio): None

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 11:05 a.m. The purpose of this meeting was to consider funding for a County-Operated Shadrack Light Show

Kevin King, County Manager opened the discussion that the county would sign the Shadrack's contract and be the responsible party to manage this event in Swain County. The Swain County Commissioners had expressed to him that this event would be a great asset for our Christmas season.

Kevin had arranged that County Employee Melissa Barker would oversee the event. Fifty percent of ticket sales would go to the non-profit running the show each night, thirty percent to CORE, and twenty percent to the Family Resource Center, thereby funding non-profits in Swain County.

Kevin proposed that the TDA would be the sponsor for the event by providing funding, and the county will manage the event.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to approve \$210,000.00 to execute this contract between the county and

Shadrack, adding that the TDA will pay \$150,000 directly to Shadrack and provide up to \$60,000 to Swain County for electricity, gravel, and other incidentals to prepare for the event. These funds are provided within the 202223 TDA budget. Erin Smith seconded the motion. Board discussion followed.

For: Jeremiah Wiggins, Erin Smith, Eugene Shuler, Janene Lancaster, Andy Bhakta, Afton

Roberts Against: Shannon Lackey, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo Taylor

Motion Passed.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to adjourn the meeting. PattiJo Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.



Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_



Swain County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

10-19-2022 Special Meeting

Present (Voting): Lackey, Janene Lancaster,  
Eugene Shuler  
Absent (Voting): Afton Roberts, Erin Smith, Cheryl Taylor and PattiJo Taylor  
Present (Ex-Officio) Cally Elliott, Swain County Finance Officer, Kevin King, County  
Manager  
Absent (Ex-Officio): None  
TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones  
Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 12:08 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the MOU between Swain County and the TDA for the Fly-Fishing Aquarium and Museum located at 117 Island St, Bryson City, NC.

A draft of the MOU was presented to the board with discussion of changes that they would like to see before presenting the MOU to the board of county commissioners.

In paragraph #3, Chair Wiggins would like it stated: In the event either Aquarium or Museum are unable to continue to operate, TDA will continue to have option to operate other tourism related functions from Aquarium building and Museum building.

Then in the last paragraph on signature page:




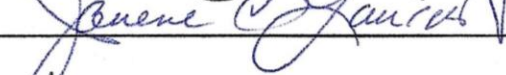
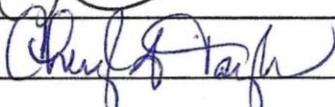
This memorandum of understanding is between Swain County and the Swain County Tourism Development Authority. This memorandum of understanding is not a legally binding agreement. Initial term of this agreement shall be for 10 years, with an extension option of 10 years after the initial term.

Chairman Wiggins made a motion to approve the MOU pending changes of Item #3, then changes of the last paragraph on last page regarding the termination clause. This MOU will be sent to the board of commissioners. It will be reviewed by the commissioners at their November 10 regular meeting. If it is approved, Mary Anne Shea may sign the MOU on behalf of the TDA board. Shannon Lackey seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Shannon Lackey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Andy Bhakta. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:27p.m.

Board Member Signatures

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins  \_\_\_\_\_  
Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_  
Afton Roberts  \_\_\_\_\_  
Shannon Lackey  \_\_\_\_\_  
Janene Lancaster  \_\_\_\_\_  
Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_  
Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Taylor  \_\_\_\_\_  
PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**11-09-2022 Regular Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bhakta, Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Afton Roberts, Cheryl Taylor. Eugene Shuler arriving at 12:12p.m.

Absent (Voting): PattiJo Taylor

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

Attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 12:05p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given. Prayer was then given by Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda. None

Cheryl Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes for 10-12-2022 regular meeting. Afton Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Erin Smith made a motion to approve the minutes for 10-19-2022 emergency meeting. Afton Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Executive Report given by Executive Director Mary Anne Shea:

Update on the Fly-Fishing Museum MOU between the County and the TDA. The updates that the board requested have been submitted to the county commissioners:

1. Add statement to paragraph 3: In the event that either the aquarium or the fly-fishing museum is unable to continue to operate, the TDA will continue to have the option to operate other tourism related functions from the aquarium building and museum building.
2. Last paragraph: The initial term of this agreement be ten years, with an extension option of ten years be granted to the Swain County Tourism Development Authority.

The changes were sent to the County Manager because the commissioners have asked to review the changes prior to their October 27 workshop. The commissioners will then discuss the changes and the MOU on their November 10 meeting.

Alen Baker confirmed that his board has approved the transfer of ownership of the fly-fishing museum artifacts over the County. Alen's board will sign a resolution listing specific assets being transferred. Also, that assets being transferred go from a 501c3 on their end to a 501c3 on our end.

#### **Marketing and Public Relations:**

- Christmas Light Show-Marketing
  - All aspects of the marketing plan has been completed. Photo and video production is ongoing.
  - Between October 1—November 8, we have received 13,000 page views to the light event on our website.
  - Online ticket sales are live. Mary Anne trained the Family Resource staff on the ticket sales at the gate for point of sale, and prepaid online tickets.
- Other Christmas Projects:
  - 24' Tree and décor for the visitor center complete.
  - New snowflakes for the Duke Energy poles completed.
  - Town has given permission for the black poles be decorated. No outlets on these poles therefore, no lighted poles this year.
  - Letters to Santa, cookies and cocoa will start on November 9. This runs through December 31.
  - A Tree Lighting event at the Visitor Center is on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Live Nativity, Christmas caroling, hot cocoa and cookies, letters to Santa, lighting of the tree by the mayor.
- 2023 Visitor Guide- Mary Ann writing content and updating photos. Delivery date February 01, 2023.
- Website:
  - Google Analytics reports- the light show event is driving a lot of traffic for October, and social media is our number one source of website traffic.
  - Ongoing work includes search engine and media pages.
- Public Relations
  - October report attached
  - We have several Instagram Influencers in the next couple of months. Mary Anne is working the PR agency on itineraries including lodging/attractions/dining.
  - Visitor totals for visitor center and aquarium

#### **Financial**

- September Occupancy tax of \$174,895.10
- Christmas bonuses for employees. Full time \$300.00, part time \$100.00. Afton Roberts made a motion to give employees a Christmas bonus, full-time \$300.00, and part-time \$100.00. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried
- A check for \$5,000.00 has been presented to the Swain High Track team for the purchase of their state rings. This is in exchange for volunteer hours to the TDA for upcoming events.

#### **Administrative & Committees:**

- The last meeting with the developer on the 3 new digital exhibits for the Kid Zone in the Heritage Museum has been completed. Delivery date expected November 2022.
  - 3D Animation of construction and flooding of Fontana Dam
  - Native animal and forest sounds with push buttons
  - Nantahala River Kayak Race
  - Digital Game

- Finance Committee: Nothing new to report
- Marketing Committee: Nothing new to report.
- Beautification Committee: Coming up next is the spring flower RFP for downtown.

**Board Discussion:**

Mary Anne gave some dates for up coming meetings.

- December 14 meeting—No Change
- January 11 meeting -Canceled
- January 25 meeting—Retreat @ Mckinley Edwards 10am to 2pm
- February 08 meeting—Canceled
- March 08 meeting—No Change
- April 12 meeting—Changed to April 19 to avoid Spring Break conflicts
- May 10—No Change
- June 14—No Change

On the EV charging stations, CIC has sent Mary Anne an estimate of finishing up this project. Hoping to have completed in the very near future.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to set the date for the Strawberry Jam Race for May 20,2023. Race will begin at 7:00am at the Darnell Farms area. This race will be organized by Glory Hound Events at a cost of \$7500.00 as was the previous year. Erin Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried

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

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**12-14-2022 Regular Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Afton Roberts, Cheryl Taylor, Patti Jo Taylor, Eugene Shuler, Erin Smith arriving @ 12:50p.m.

Absent (Voting): Andy Bhakta

Present (Ex-Officio) Kevin King, Swain County Manager

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

Attendees: Julia Hunt, Julie Thorner, Taylor Barnard, Melissa Barker

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 12:03p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given. Prayer was then given by Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda: Chairman Wiggins added to the agenda #3b, Kevin King, Swain County Manager to speak to the board about the Recreation Park Pool project.

Afton Roberts made a motion to accept the minutes of 11-09-2022. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment: Julia Hunt spoke about the Light Show and how it has greatly been a benefit to the local Nonprofit groups in Swain County. Julia was very appreciative to the board for bringing it in to Swain County.

Melissa Barker from the Family Resource Center/CORE gave a review on how the Light Show has gone this year. There have been 12 non-profit groups that have worked the Light Show. To date there have been \$69,890.00 of tickets sold this includes the pre-sale tickets the non-profit groups sold before the event. Melissa gave a breakdown of how the money is to be distributed as follows: non-profit 50%, CORE 30% and Family Resource 20%. Also, Melissa explained what CORE was and who were the board members.

County Manager, Kevin King then gave an update on the plans regarding the slide and pool improvements for the Recreation Park pool. He provided sketches of the lazy river and the slide and announced the new Director for the Recreation Park is Taylor Woodard.

Julie Thorner of Liquid Spark, which is the Marketing Agency for the TDA, gave an overview of what her company does to help with the tourism marketing of Swain County.

Executive Report given by Mary Anne Shea:

### **Marketing and Public Relations:**

- The big news: The Great Smoky Mountain Railroad in Bryson City ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in Google's ranking of top scenic spots searched for in the U.S. in 2022. This story has received national TV coverage, as well as national and global digital coverage. [www.cbsnews.com/news/google-search-list-top-us-scenic-spots-2022](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/google-search-list-top-us-scenic-spots-2022) • 2023 Visitor Guide- Mary Anne is writing content and updating photos. Delivery date February 01, 2023 • Website: ○ Google Analytics reports- the light event is driving a lot of traffic for November and December, and organic search is our number one source of website traffic, followed by social media.
  - Ongoing work includes search engine optimization and media pages.

### **Public Relations:**

- November report attached ○ We have several Instagram Influencers; their content and deliverables can be seen in the PR reports.
- We have also had several media partners here in person to help promote the holiday season and attractions.
  - Visit NC (State Tourism Office)
  - Romantic Asheville (one of our top referrers)
  - Pineapple Public Relations
  - Concord Creative
- New banners are being designed for the Main Street light poles. These will be installed when the snowflakes come down.
- Visitor totals are attached for the visitor center and aquarium.

### **Financial**

- October occupancy tax is \$262,291.60. We are 5% over last year.

### **Administrative & Committees:**

- Committees: PattiJo Taylor was assigned to the Beautification committee which had and opening due to Ron LaRocque retiring In June.
- Board reminders: No meeting on January 11
- The next meeting will be the annual retreat on January 25, 2023, at 10:00am at McKinley Edwards Inn.
- There will be no meeting in February.
- The March 8 meeting will be moved to March 15. Mary Anne and Rita will be at the annual Visit NC conference in Asheville.
- The new pool slide has been ordered. Installation expected by the end of summer 2023.
- Our new van is in transit. I am working on the design for the van wrap.
- CIC has installed the low voltage box for the charging stations. They are now talking to Mark Lyons the County IT person about hookup through the visitor center. At that point we will get an electrician back to hook it all up.
- Construction on the Fly-Fishing Museum is now underway. Foundation is ready for the cement to be poured which we are hoping to happen next week.
- Two of the 3 new digital exhibits for the Kid Zone in the Heritage Museum have been delivered. Once the last one is set up, we will then re-open the Kid Zone.
- Beautification committee: Planning for spring flowers RFP in January.
- Finance committee: Nothing new to report
- Marketing committee: Nothing new to report



**Board Discussion:**

Chair Wiggins made a motion to go into Executive Session G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4), Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried at 2:05p.m.

Upon returning from Executive Session, Shannon Lackey made a motion to ask Mary Anne to write an article for the local newspaper regarding the functions and community spending of the TDA.

Eugene Shuler seconded this motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Afton Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:02p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**01-25-2023 Budget Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster,  
Andy Bhakta  
Cheryl Taylor, Patti Jo Taylor, Eugene Shuler, Erin Smith

Absent (Voting): Afton Roberts

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

Absent (Ex-Officio): Kevin King, Swain County Manager

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones  
Jenny Beaver, Swain Co Finance Office, Larry Griffin, Smoky Mtn

Attendees: Times

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wiggins at 10:10 a.m. Prayer was then given by Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda: Chairman Wiggins asked that we move Shadrack's proposal to 4B. Everyone agreed; no vote taken.

Erin Smith made a motion to accept the minutes from 12-14-2022. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Erin Smith made a motion to accept the Executive Session minutes from 12-14-2022. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Shannon Lackey would like to be on record that the TDA is not in favor of the parking tags for the Great Smoky National Park. All the members agreed although no vote was taken.

Executive Report given by Mary Anne Shea:

**Marketing and Public Relations:**

- 2023 Visitor Guide is complete. Target delivery February.
- Website statistics for December 2022 were reviewed, with the Christmas events and light show producing several website visits
- Public Relations report from Pineapple Public Relations was reviewed
- Visitor totals for the calendar year for visitor center is 38,500 which is 1,500 less than last year.  
Aquarium ended the year at 17,500 visitors, up 10% from last year.

**Financial**

- November and December occupancy tax report

**Administrative & Committee:**

- There will be no meeting in February.
- **The March 8 meeting will be moved to March 15.** Mary Anne and Rita will be at the annual Visit NC conference in Asheville.

- The new pool slide has been ordered. Installation expected by the end of summer 2023.
- Our new van has arrived. Working on the design for the van wrap.
- Construction on the Fly-Fishing Museum is now underway.
- Beautification committee: Planning for spring flowers RFP in February.
- Finance committee: Nothing new to report will be working with Mary Anne on budget.
- Marketing committee: Nothing new to report

## **2023 Budget Planning**

### **Forecasting Lodging Tax Income**

The recommendation for the budget for 2023-2024 from most of the board members due to the weak economy is 1.75 million. The current year budget is 1.89 million.

### **Expenses-Marketing**

1. Mary Anne reviewed travel trends for 2023
2. The marketing plan for 2023 will focus on digital placements and content creation. Consumers are obsessed with digital content, viewed in rapid-style formats. Short form video for social media
3. Experimental photo and video for website and social media
4. Influencer marketing
5. Social media posting and advertising.
6. Website—content, SEO
7. Digital campaigns
8. Limited print, including local maps, visitor guide.

### **Administrative Expenses and Capital Projects**

There are no changes in administrative costs.

1. Funding for the rec park pool over the next 1-3 years will come directly from the 1% lodging tax.
2. Four Corner Improvements – Corner 1 will be the initial focus and the Beautification Committee will review this with Mary Anne
3. Event Park Upgrades—The County Manager has asked for \$50k to make improvements to the Park. This amount is small part of the overall costs which will be paid for by grants/county.
4. Improvements for downtown Christmas décor
  - a. Hire an electrician for Fortner property for electric hookup so lower bridge can be lit.
  - b. Decorate federal building at 50 Main St
  - c. Replace the 7 small trees in front of the Visitor Center lawn.
  - d. Large sleigh with all 9 reindeer to replace the older one for photo opportunity.
  - e. Lighted tunnel for walkway on BCO corner
  - f. Ask town about refitting new black poles with outlets that we can plug into
5. Upgrades to Simpleview software awaiting price. This software will help feed the data for the above kiosks.
6. Cheryl Taylor made a suggestion for a holiday event at the event park and asked for a proposal on the cost to buy our own walk-through light show.

Jeremiah Wiggins made a motion to go into Executive closed Session per G.S.143-31811(a)(4).

Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried at 1:00p.m.

Eugene Shuler made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session and regular meeting. Andy Bhakta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**01-25-2023 Executive Session**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Cheryl Taylor, Erin Smith, Patti Jo Taylor, Eugene Shuler, Andy Bhakta, Eugene Shuler

Absent (Voting): Afton Roberts

Present (Ex-Officio) None

Absent (Ex-Officio): None

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones

Attendees: None

- The Shadrack accounting for the 2022 Light Show was discussed. No decisions or motions made at this time. Mary Anne will bring a proposal/presentation to the next meeting for discussion about purchasing our own light show (walk-through or drive-through)
- Staffing for the new Fly-Fishing Museum was discussed.
- Eugene Shuler would like to see more Christmas decorating on the opposite end of town. No motions were made at this time.
- Eugene Shuler made a motion to close the Executive Session. Andy Bhakta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Executive Session ended at 2:56p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**03-15-2023 Regular Meeting**

**Present (Voting):** Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Andy Bhakta, Erin Smith, Cheryl Taylor, Eugene Shuler arrived @12:13p.m., Jeremiah Wiggins, Chair arrived @12:27 p.m.

**Absent (Voting):** Afton Roberts, PattiJo Taylor

**Present (Ex-Officio)** None

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

**TDA Staff:** Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

**Attendees:** Jay Mallas, and Joel Mosca from Mosca Design

The meeting was called to order by acting chair Shannon Lackey at 12:07p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given followed by a prayer from Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda. Chairman Wiggins made a motion that the Executive Session be moved up to before the Executive Director being some board members needing to leave early. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Erin Smith made a motion to accept the minutes from 01/25/2023. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Erin Smith made a motion to accept the Executive Session minutes from 01/25/2023. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None

Presentation of Mosca Design for Light Show Options given by Jay Mallas and Joel Mosca.

After the Mosca presentation, Chair Wiggins made a motion to go into Executive Session G.S. 143-318.11(a) at 1:20p.m. Cheryl Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

The regular meeting resumed at 2:00p.m. Janene Lancaster left at 2:00 p.m., Eugene Shuler left at 2:10 p.m., Andy Bhakta left at 2:15 p.m.

Executive Report given by Mary Anne Shea

**Marketing and Public Relations:**

- Website statistics for February
- The February Public Relation report is available on request this month. It is not printed due to high volume of ink and paper.
- Marketing banners for Main Street light poles, updates on shopping/dining guide, pet-friendly guide, website updates and blog posts, multiple website posts, video and photo shoot for reels and social media. Also, advertising for Strawberry Jam Half Marathon/5K.
- Visitor totals attached.

**Financial**

- January occupancy report up 6%. \$114,489.18 • Budget research ongoing.
  - Met with Town planning board regarding light poles for Christmas décor.
  - Researching market initiatives, co-ops, and pricing ○ Met with Gabe from Gabriel’s Christmas to plan for Christmas décor 2023.
  - Received one bid for the downtown flower program, contract awarded too Naturally Green.

**Administrative & Committee:**

- April meeting on the 19th
- Power is now on the EV charging stations. Kurt Angel is working to get them up on the WIFI.
- The Kid Zone upgrade is complete.
- Construction on Fly Fishing Museum photos available, hoping for late April/May opening date.

**Beautification Committee:**

- Met on March 16, Christmas décor and Corner 1 of Four Corner Project discussed.

The meeting was dismissed at 2:27 p.m. No vote due to not having a quorum for adjournment.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**04-19-2023 Regular Meeting**

Present (Voting): Shannon Lackey, Janene Lancaster, Erin Smith, Cheryl Taylor, Patti Jo Taylor

Absent (Voting): Andy Bhakta, Eugene Shuler, Jeremiah Wiggins

Present (Ex-Officio) Kevin King, Swain County Manager

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

Attendees: Jay Mallas, from Mosca Design for Light Show Operations, Julie Thorner, Liquid Spark, Kord Walls, Great Smoky Mountains Railroad, Larry Griffin, Smoky Mountain Times

The meeting was called to order by acting chair Shannon Lackey at 12:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given followed by a prayer from Cheryl Taylor. Changes to the agenda: None Cheryl Taylor made a motion to accept the Regular Meeting minutes from 03-15-2023. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Erin Smith made a motion to accept the Special Meeting minutes from 03-15-2023. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Kord Walls from Great Smoky Mountain Railroad gave an update on the ridership from 2022 being 280,250.

Polar Express has the biggest percentage of ridership.

Jay Mallas from Mosca Design made an updated presentation of the Christmas Light show proposal to include changes asked for by the board.

Rita Jones gave an update about the new Fly-Fishing Museum, that the moving of artifacts from 210 Main Street, going to 117 Island Street is now happening. Hope to have a soft opening on May 05 when the Farmers Market opens for the season.

Executive Report was then given by Mary Anne Shea

**Marketing & Public Relations:**

- Strong traffic from Google organic and social media
- Public Relations Report attached.
- Visitor totals attached.
- Working on a new website for fly-fishing museum—this will be a microsite within ExploreBrysonCity.com to encourage lodging and attractions.



- Finalizing RFP for marketing agency, updating website with blogs and other new content, Blue Ridge Outdoors editorials, van wrap design.

**Financial:**

- February occupancy tax was \$95,895.28.
- The first draft of the budget should be ready early in May, which will be reviewed at the next meeting.

**Administrative & Committee:**

- Mary Anne met with Kim Albritton and Kord Walls from the railroad in April to discuss putting a kiosk in Railroad Square to provide train riders with information about other things to do in Swain County
- Discussion regarding the clean up the red caboose.

**Beautification Committee:**

- Once we get a final proposal from Gabriel’s Christmas, we will call for a committee review of it.

Shannon Lackey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Erin Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p. m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**05-10-2023 Regular Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Chairman, Andy Bhakta, Janene Lancaster, Shannon Lackey, Erin Smith, Cheryl Taylor, PattiJo Taylor arrival @ 12:13pm, Eugene Shuler arrival @ 12:18.

Absent (Voting): None

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones

Attendees: Julie Thorner and Taylor Bernard from Liquid Spark

Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order at 12:00pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was given along with the prayer from Cheryl Taylor.

Changes to the agenda: None

Erin Smith made a motion to accept the Regular Meeting minutes from 04-19-2023. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Rita Jones gave an update on the fly-fishing museum. All artifacts have been moved from the Chamber building on Main Street to the new location on Island Street. Ms. Jones thanked her staff for all their hard work to make this possible. Also, a thank you to the Swain County Maintenance staff for all their help with this move.

Julie Thorner and Taylor Bernard made a presentation on Liquid Spark.

Chairman Wiggins made a motion to go into Executive Session GS 143-318(a)(5). Erin Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Time was 12:37 p. m.

The Executive Report was attached but not given due to the lateness of the Executive meeting and board members having to leave for other obligations.

The meeting dismissed no adjournment due to not having a quorum. The meeting was dismissed at 2:52 p. m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Pattijo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**06-14-2023 Regular Meeting**

Present (Voting): Jeremiah Wiggins, Andy Bhakta, Janene Lancaster, Shannon Lackey, PattiJo Taylor  
Absent (Voting): Eugene Shuler, Erin Smith, Cheryl Taylor  
Present (Ex-Officio) None  
Absent (Ex-Officio): Cally Elliott, Swain County Finance Officer, Kevin King, County Manager  
TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde  
Commissioner: Roger Parsons  
Attendees: Pineapple Public Relations, Karen Wilmot, Larry Griffin

This meeting was called to order at 12:14 p.m. by Chairman, Jeremiah Wiggins. Pledge of Allegiance was given at the beginning of the Budget Hearing meeting.

Changes to the agenda: PattiJo Taylor made a motion following Chair Wiggins' suggestion to move Item #5 Pineapple Public Relation up to #3, and to keep Karen Wilmot from the Chamber of Commerce on as the #4 following the PR group. Andy Bhakta seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting Minutes Approval:

- 5-10-23: Janene Lancaster made a motion to approve the minutes, PattiJo Taylor seconded, All in favor. Motion carried.
- 5-10-23: Exec Session: Janene Lancaster made a motion to approve the minutes, PattiJo Taylor seconded, All in favor. Motion carried.
- 5-24-23: PattiJo Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes, Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Pineapple Public Relations gave an overview of the PR and Social Media accomplishments for the 2022-2023 year including analytics and media.

Karen Wilmot presented a Sponsorship Funding Request for the 2023 Freedom Fest for \$10,000. Chair Wiggins made a motion to give the Chamber up to \$15,000 to add more features for a children's corner, contingent upon itemized reimbursement from Ms. Wilmot to the Director. PattiJo Taylor seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Shannon Lackey made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 budget pending the removal of the remainder of the capital pool project to be paid in 2023. PattiJo Taylor seconded this motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Chair Wiggins asked the Director to create a history/list of resolutions and actions taken by the TDA for new members of the Board. He then suggested a new resolution to establish responsible fiscal guidelines whereby the Swain County Tourism Development Authority shall establish a fund balance floor and only allow for the authorization of expenditures that can be paid for with the current fund balance, after consideration for the floor, at the time expenditure is being voted upon by the Swain County Tourism Development Authority.

Chair Wiggins made a motion to put Resolution 001 in place to go into the Policy & Procedure Manual. Shannon Lackey seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Chair Wiggins suggested discussion and vote on the live streaming of future TDA board meetings. Since the Covid social distancing restrictions have long been lifted, and the public can attend meetings in person, live streaming is now up for consideration. Janene Lancaster made a motion to discontinue streaming the TDA meetings. PattiJo Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Andy Bhakta left at 1:42 p.m.

Item #7, C Personnel Discussion was tabled, due to not having a quorum present. Chair Wiggins talked about a letter to the Board of Commissioners regarding reappointments of current board members that will be coming off the board as of July 01, 2023.

Executive report by Mary Anne Shea was given very briefly due to the time of meeting. Mary Anne talked about how the April occupancy tax had fallen by 16% over last year. Total occupancy for April was \$135,582.78.

#### **Administrative & Committees**

- Met with all staff to review of job descriptions.
- Beautification ○ This committee will meet with the Christmas vendor next week for a 2023 review and direction.
  - Per the board’s request Mary Anne requested modifications to the landscape architect plan for the 4 Corners. These revisions are available to review upon request.
- Finance: Nothing to report.
- Marketing: Reviewed and approved the marketing budget

Presentations of awards were given to outgoing board members thanking them for their service to the TDA. Having no quorum, the meeting was dismissed by the Chair Wiggins. The meeting ended at 2:05 p.m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

Swain County Tourism Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Budget Public Hearing

**Wednesday, June 14, 2023, at 12:00 noon**

Present (Voting): Chairman Jeremiah Wiggins, Andy Bhakta, Janene Lancaster, Shannon Lackey,

PattiJo Taylor

Absent (Voting): Eugene Shuler, Erin Smith, Cheryl Taylor

Present (Ex-Officio) None

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

TDA Staff: Mary Anne Shea, Rita Jones, Selena Hyde

Commissioner: Roger Parsons

Attendees: Pineapple Public Relations, Karen Wilmot, Larry Griffin

This meeting was called to order at 12:12 p.m. by Chairman, Jeremiah Wiggins. The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Changes to the agenda were none.

Chair Wiggins opened the discussion. This was a Public Hearing on the TDA 2023-2024 Budget open for Public Comment.

Public Comment: None

Chair Wiggins asked for a motion to end the Public Comment hearing. Andy Bhakta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. PattiJo seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting ended at 12:14 p. m.

Board Member Signatures:

Chair Jeremiah Wiggins \_\_\_\_\_

Andy Bhakta \_\_\_\_\_

Afton Roberts \_\_\_\_\_

Shannon Lackey \_\_\_\_\_

Janene Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Shuler \_\_\_\_\_

Erin Smith \_\_\_\_\_

Cheryl Taylor \_\_\_\_\_

PattiJo Taylor \_\_\_\_\_