



Swain County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
06-11-2025

-Present (Voting): Chairwoman, Cheryl Taylor, Phillip Carson, Sr, Robin Fronrath, Janene Lancaster, Adrian Litzau, Erin Smith, and PattiJo Taylor

Absent (Voting): Andy Bhakta

Present (Ex-Officio) Cally Elliott, TDA Finance Officer

Absent (Ex-Officio): None

TDA Staff: Sarah Conley, Rita Jones

Attendees: Fred Crawford , Mike Drinkwater, Nick Nichols

The Swain County TDA meeting was called to order by Chairwoman, Cheryl Taylor at 12:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given in the previous meeting.

Changes to Agenda: None

Meeting Minutes:

PattiJo Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of 05-14-2025. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried

Public Comment: None

Robin Fronrath made a motion to accept the 2025/2026 budget that has been presented to the board. Phil Carson, Sr seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Executive Director:

Marketing & Public Relations:

- Features on Bryson city in the Greenville News, Raleigh News & Observer as one of the Best Top 10 Small Mountain Towns to visit this summer.
- A lot of engagements on social media.
- Hosted 3 influencers with a lot of engagements online.
- Finished up contracts for media flow and content calendar for next fiscal year.
- Regional TDA meeting with directors across the area. Everyone is reporting occupancy tax is down.



- Interview with the Smoky Mountain Times editor on the 25/26 budget.
- Meeting with Endless River out in the gorge to see how the TDA can get more foot traffic out into the gorge area to the different rafting agencies.
- Two new companies to be reporting all the booking information and lodging sales. Key Data and Zartico will assist in tracking spending within Swain County for 3 specific events: Freedom Fest, Singing in the Smokies, and Agriculture Fair.

Financial:

- All financial reports were attached to your email. Occupancy is down, but the monthly budget is still ahead in the overall budget.

Administration & Committees:

- Re-enrollment of insurance has been taken care for employees.
- Met with Duke Energy discussing getting plugs on the Duke power poles which that is 32.

Board Items:

- New additions to the Light Show with contract ready to go.
- Bryson City picture frame for Visitor Center.
- July 09, 2025, Board Meeting

The board decided that everyone will be in town in July to hold the meeting on July 09, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

Light Show:

- Addition of 12', 10' and 8' angels at the beginning of the pavilion entrance at the event park. The nativity at the drive out section of the building. Along the walls at the end of building have the 3 Wise Men, and all the animals that we can get for that area to be lit up. These items will be transported in a Connex box. Also, check to see about painting all the boxes the green color to hide them as much as possible. The total cost this year for the setup is \$129,500.00.
- There was a lot of discussion on the picture frame to be at the visitor center. Will bring back next month.

Board Discussion:

Janene Lancaster made a motion for recommendation of TDA member PattiJo Taylor for the upcoming year to send to the Swain County Commissioners. Due to the commissioners removing 2 seats on our board, there will only need to be one recommendation. PattiJo Taylor for the Chairwoman of the TDA Board position. The second person recommendation would be Andy Bhakta. Robin Fronrath seconded this motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

In another conversation Phil Carson, Sr was asked if he could stay on the board? Phil will see how the other commissioners feel regarding the matter.



Plaques were presented to the outgoing TDA members, Cheryl Taylor and PattiJo Taylor thanking them for their several years of service to the TDA Board.

Phil Carson spoke about getting some new signage for the Event Park on Hyatt Creek Road. Talk with the owners of the piece of property at the entrance about installing a bigger newer sign possibly with lighting on it.

There was no further discussion, PattiJo Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Janene Lancaster seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:18 p.m.

Chairwoman: Cheryl Taylor_____

Andy Bhakta _____

Philip Carson, Sr _____

Robin Fronrath _____

Janene Lancaster _____

Adrian Litzau _____

Erin Smith _____

PattiJo Taylor _____