

## **Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority**

### **Minutes of 10/22/20 Virtual Board Meeting**

**Present:** Grant Bullard, Aaron Baker, Layton Parker, Mac Morrow, Libby Freeman, Tracie Trusler, Mike Hawkins, Dee Dee Perkins, Tad Fogel

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Clark Lovelace, Prentiss Brewer, Karen Tessier, Nathan Jordan

**Guests Present:** Jonathan Griffin,

---

### **Call to Order – Layton Parker**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30AM by Layton Parker.

### **Presentation of Minutes – Layton Parker**

The minutes of September 24, 2020 were presented for review by Layton Parker. Dee Dee Perkins made a motion to approve as presented. Tad Fogel seconded. Motion passed.

### **Office Report – Clark Lovelace**

**Financials** – Financials were sent out in the advance packet. Clark noted that it was another record-breaking month with occupancy revenue. Expenses are in line. Dee Dee made a motion to approve the financials as presented. Grant seconded. Motion passed.

Given that we are expected to far exceed revenues, Layton asked for the board's input on plans for the money. After discussion, it was decided that the finance committee should meet and come back to the board at the next meeting with recommendations.

**Office Report and Tourism Updates** – Clark covered the following:

- \$10,000 was awarded to TCT from the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina through VisitNC. This money will be used for additional digital advertising targeting the holidays and winter. Per Jonathan, this will require a budget amendment. Layton made a motion to approve the amendment. Aaron seconded. Motion passed.
- Think Local Transylvania has been launched as a partnership between the Chamber of Commerce and Heart of Brevard which promotes local spending.
- Clark was recently approached by Josh Leder with a proposal to have the Brevard logo painted on the roof of his property behind Wells Fargo off of the Hendersonville Hwy. The logo would be visible in aerial footage as well as from a new hotel property. This and other murals were discussed. The Destination Infrastructure committee will discuss further, noting that their intent is to focus on murals with the highest visibility.
- Local Tourism News
  - A new event space has opened across the street from Marco's. It is a small venue focusing on weddings and similar events.
  - Grammy's 3.0 is moving to the former Lola's location.
  - Clark and the board gave a heartwarming "goodbye" to Prentiss, which caught her off-guard and made her cry.
  - Clark announced the hire of Corey Gafnea to replace Prentiss. She will start next week.

### **Chair Report – Layton Parker**

**2021 Board of Directors** – Layton and Grant reviewed the feedback provided by the board, which showed a lot of great candidates, with Ali Lien rising to the top for the “Member-at-Large” position. Layton’s position is also up for renewal. Dee Dee made a motion to recommend to the County Commissioners that Ali fill the “Member-at-Large” opening and Layton fill the “Accommodations Owner/Operator” seat. Grant seconded. Motion passed.

**November/December Meeting** – Due to Thanksgiving and Christmas, the November and December meetings have traditionally been combined with a meeting on the first Thursday of December. With that in mind, our next meeting will be on Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Grant Committee Update** – Layton reported that the Grant Committee had met and that the grant program was again up and running. To be more expedient, the committee hopes to review and approve grants as they come in rather than quarterly, as was done in the past. The committee brought a motion to the board that they be able to approve grants for up to \$3,000 without board approval up to the budgeted amount of funds. Aaron seconded the motion from committee. Motion passed. Other than needing to take COVID into consideration, no other changes to the program were made. Prentiss and MJ are to send out an eblast to partners to inform them. Prentiss will directly email past applicants.

**Committee Meetings** - Under open meeting laws, it was brought to our attention recently that committee meetings that include board members need to be announced and open to the public. Each committee is meeting at a regular day and time, so Clark will share with the County Clerk who can post on the county’s website. She will need to be notified of any changes to the schedule in advance.

**Miscellaneous** – Layton noted that there haven’t been any new developments in the last month regarding the Ecusta Trail and there may be a new board of commissioners following the election, so it seems appropriate to table the conversation on considering an increase from a 5% to a 6% occupancy tax at this time.

## **Market Connections Report**

Karen Tessier and Nathan Jordan went over highlights from the marketing report as well as upcoming plans. They also mentioned the need for a new multi-year marketing plan.

## **Transylvania Always**

Aaron provided an update on committee happenings, with the following highlights:

- The initial roll-out of the Leave it Better campaign has been successful with phase two well into the planning stages. This next phase is a call to action for the community.
- Committee members Brad Campbell and Lee McMinn worked for 10 months on an application to Green Destinations. Their hard work resulted in Brevard being named a Top 100 Sustainable Destination worldwide. One of only three in the US and the only one on the East Coast. Members were asked to extend thanks to Brad and Lee if they see them.
- The committee is continuing to look at recreation on the French Broad River. A master recreation plan through Conserving Carolina is being discussed.

Clark mentioned that as committee efforts have grown, the need has arisen for more dedicated coordination. Corey’s job description includes serving as the point person for Transylvania Always.

## **Old Business**

None

## **New Business**

None

## **Public Comment**

None

## **Meeting Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned by Layton Parker at 10:20 AM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Prentiss Brewer

---