



Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority Minutes of 4/22/21 Virtual Board Meeting

Present: Grant Bullard, Layton Parker, Libby Freeman, David Guice, Dee Dee Perkins, Ali Lien, Jessica Whitmire, Tracie Trusler

Absent: Mac Morrow

Staff Present: Clark Lovelace, MJ Gordon, Corey Gafnea

Guests Present: Karen Tessier, Nathan Jordan, Jonathan Griffin, Kate Hayes

Call to Order – Layton Parker

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 AM by Layton Parker.

Presentation of Minutes – Layton Parker

The minutes of the March 25, 2021 board meeting were presented for review by Layton Parker. Dee Dee Perkins made a motion to approve as presented. Grant Bullard seconded. Motion passed.

Director's Report – Clark Lovelace

Financials – Revenues continue to trend beyond prior records for each month. Year-end is headed toward well over \$1.5M. Most expenses are close to budgeted amounts, with grants and partnership funding slated to fall below. Clark sent an updated version of the sample budget from our last meeting to the finance committee and we'll work together to present a budget at our next board meeting. Jessica Whitmire made a motion to approve March financials as presented. David Guice seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Office Report and Tourism Updates – Clark asked for any questions on his director's report that was sent out with the advanced board packet. There were none. He highlighted a few items. The proposed downtown hotel project should close the deal soon with the City of Brevard. TCT is working to provide images to wrap downtown electrical traffic boxes.

There is a request from Brevard Music Center for \$6,500 for a similar package as in the past. We have typically considered this as part advertising and part partner support. The request was reviewed with Market Connections they feel it has promotional value. Jessica suggested adding Leave It Better and Waterfall Safety messaging. Funding would come from the partnership support line item in the budget. Jessica made a motion to fund the partner support request from BMC. Dee Dee seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

MJ discussed the upcoming brewery PR visit as well as the Chasing Waterfalls (a group of Black women from Atlanta, #blackfacesingreenspaces) visit. Clark will be out for the June meeting. TCT Board meetings will continue to be virtual for a few more months.

Chair Report – Layton Parker

Chamber/TCT Contract Update – There was a meeting between a few members of the TCT and Chamber boards a couple of weeks ago. This was the first joint meeting and quite a bit was covered, mostly general in nature. The Chamber wants some time to research their options for moving forward. Both parties agreed that the county is an important part of this as well. A meeting is scheduled next week for Layton and Clark to meet with Jaime Laughter, David Guice, and Jason Chappell.

Ecusta Trail – Clark spoke with Chris Burns, who is a Friends of the Ecusta Trail board member and one of the primary people who's been working on making the trail happen. They have asked the HCTDA for 1% for the next five years (and have a tentative yes) and will be presenting to the Henderson C commissioners in a couple of weeks. They then plan on asking us for 1% for the next five years. 1% of 5% would be 20% of our total budget. One option is to increase the occupancy rate from 5% to 6%, which has been approved by the state but will have to be approved by the County Commissioners. Clark will invite Chris Burns to the May meeting.

UTV Legislation – There is legislation in the NC General Assembly that would allow UTVs to be ridden/driven on highways. This could have an impact in Transylvania County.

Marketing Update – Dee Dee Perkins and Market Connections

Kat Warner with BMC is new to the committee. Bob Andrews is moving from the area and has left the committee. Lydia O'dell is the other community member. We typically have 2 or 3, so we're open to one more if there are any suggestions, but fine with just 2. At the last meeting we discussed themes for the FY22 marketing plan. Market Connections will create a plan based on that conversation and present it to the Marketing committee next month. A final version will be presented with this board at the May meeting. The plan will be the largest in our history, by far, at \$1M or more. It will include a market study and multi-year marketing plan, a new website, more digital advertising than ever, and focus on generating room nights during slower times.

Old Business

None

New Business

Corey mentioned that Camp & Major Events Calendar is being created and published on our website with an email to our partners. MJ shared that she is creating a Camper Parent sheet with clickable links for each camp in Transylvania County to encourage the parents to stay and play here.

Public Comment

None

Meeting Adjourn

Motion made to adjourn meeting at 9:47 by Dee Dee . Seconded by David Guice. Motion passed.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Corey Gafnea