

Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority

Minutes of 5/28/20 Virtual Board Meeting

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: Clark Lovelace, Prentiss Brewer, Mary Jo Gordon, Karen Tessier, Nathan Jordan

Guests Present: Jonathan Griffin, Kate Hayes

Call to Order – Layton Parker

The meeting was called to order at 8:32AM by Layton Parker.

Presentation of Minutes – Layton Parker

The minutes of April 23, 2020 were presented for review by Layton Parker. Tad Fogel made a motion to approve as presented. Dee Dee Perkins seconded. Motion passed.

Office Report – Clark Lovelace

Financials – Clark reviewed financials. We did not receive returns for two of the larger accommodations nor from Airbnb. Clark has spoken with other WNC TDAs who also did not get payment from Airbnb. One of the larger payments has since come in. We are trending about where expected on revenues with our updated budget with the absent March revenues factored in, but it is still a lot of guesswork. YTD for the chamber contract is correct. Two TCT contract payments ended up in strategic plan instead of the contract line. Corrections were made this month. Projected year-end grew by \$10,350. We were going to push these three months of a billboard payment out to FY21 when we thought we could get multiple free months. Turns out we only get one, so it will come down after July. Current expenses are trending a little ahead of where we budgeted. There are a lot of moving parts. We have a couple of refunds received in May for cancelled advertising. Clark is reviewing county finance numbers and market connections numbers to balance everything and figure it out. The Strategic Plan includes the \$100K for the Ecusta Trail and the above-mentioned corrections. Dee Dee made a motion to approve financials as presented. Tad seconded. Motion passed.

Prentiss reminded Clark that TCT has the opportunity to acquire the downtown Brevard tear-off map for \$2K, which the marketing committee wants to do. Tad seconded, as this was a motion from committee. Motion passed.

Office Report and Tourism Updates – Clark covered the following:

- **Messaging to Partners**
 - Have prioritized communicating with our local tourism partners since COVID-19 began. We were planning on starting something monthly or quarterly with MJ on board but have been sending weekly updates due to the crisis.
 - We shared our Explore Responsibly information with partners and offered printed posters.
- **Business Support Task Force**
 - Have organized 2 surveys, 3 town halls, 4 reopening huddle ups (retail, lodging, restaurants and art).
 - Transylvania Tomorrow Fund hit the \$150K mark with 80 businesses receiving funds so far.
 - Sought and received clarification on Phase 2 for breweries and taprooms.

- Planning on opening the visitor center on June 8. Will use the Foot Locker approach and take all precautions. Still working on details.
- Local Tourism News
 - Sully's Steamers has opened.
 - Brevard Marketplace with eclectic booths at back of rice building is opening.
 - Chris Cavanaugh is the interim Executive Director at the Buncombe County TDA.

Chair Report – Layton Parker

FY21 Budget – The proposed budget was reviewed by Layton Parker. The goal was to be both conservative and flexible. This is basically the same as it was last month.

FY21 TCT/Chamber Contract – The FY21 TCT/Chamber Contract was reviewed by Layton Parker. In the past, contracts have been for 5 years. The main change this year is that the contract is for one year, which provides more flexibility. There is a plan to discuss a 5-year option again in 2021.

A motion to approve the FY21 budget was made by Dee Dee. Tad seconded. Aaron asked about the process for adjusting the budget if needed. Layton answered by saying that many expenses are designed to be flexible and that Market Connections knows all of this depends on income. Jonathan Griffin suggested that we wait to approve the budget until the next meeting because a public hearing is required. Discussion was held and a vote was put off until next month's meeting. Clark is to get with Trish about notification of a public hearing.

FY21 Audit - Jonathan Griffin

Jonathan reviewed and explained the letter that was sent out from the auditor. It only needs to be seen by everyone, not signed or acknowledged.

FY21 Marketing Plan - Market Connections

Karen Tessier and Nathan Jordan went over the FY21 Marketing Plan highlights. Nathan shared a document via Zoom. Tad asked how we are targeting tourists from Asheville. Karen touched on the Play and Stay campaign from the past and explained that overnight trips are our goal, but day trips also have value. We are focusing on pulling our target markets closer now due to the pandemic. Aaron Baker seconded the motion from committee to approve the marketing plan as presented. Motion passed.

Further discussion was held regarding the timing of messaging due to COVID-19 and the fact that that messaging plan should be shared with elected officials. Clark and Mike will work together to reach out to elected officials individually.

Old Business

None

New Business

Brevard Music Center sold all its first drive-in movie tickets in two hours. The story was picked up by Forbes Magazine. Clark mentioned that the Transylvania Tomorrow video will be showing before the movies. He also thanked Mac & the City of Brevard for the \$30,000 donation to the fund.

Public Comment

None

Meeting Adjourn

Mac Morrow made a motion to adjourn. Grant Bullard seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:08 AM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Prentiss Brewer
