

**Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority**

**Minutes of 12/2/21 Virtual Board Meeting**

**Present:** Grant Bullard, Layton Parker, Libby Freeman, David Guice, Dee Dee Perkins, Mac Morrow, Ali Lien, Jessica Whitmire

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Clark Lovelace, MJ Gordon, Corey Gafnea

**Guests Present:** Jonathan Griffin, Dana Antonuccio, Kate Hayes, Brian Farmer, Kieran Roe

**Call to Order – Layton Parker**

Layton Parker called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. He introduced the guests attending and noted there will be time for public comments at the end. He thanked Grant Bullard for his dedicated service to the board for the past 2 terms, including two years as board chair and gave board members the opportunity to add their thanks.

**Presentation of Minutes – Layton Parker**

LP presented the minutes of the October 28, 2022 board meeting for review. Libby Freeman made a motion to approve minutes as presented. David Guice seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Director’s Report – Clark Lovelace**

**Financials *–*** Sent out in the advance packet. TCTDA Revenues continue to be up, 22% over prior year. Unlike last year, STR are up by less (9%), meaning that most of the increase is being seen by traditional accommodations, likely due to increased ADR. It was noted that $13,600 in August returns came with September collections. These have been added in the appropriate month on the monthly report, and shows why we do the monthly occupancy report. Expenses are in line, except for the Strategic Plan, which doesn’t have any allocated expenditures. This is a topic for further discussion by the finance committee or at the Board retreat.

**Office Report and Tourism Update –** Clark asked if there were any questions about the advance report. There were none. It was noted that there will be two meetings in January, one on the 6th and the regularly scheduled meeting on January 27th. The update included a PR opportunity on the Canadian *Morning Show* on December 10th, which came through our excellent relationship with VisitNC.

**Chair Report – Layton Parker**

**TCTDA Organizational Structure** **–** Catapult, the HR consulting firm that the County hired has completed their evaluation and reported back to the County. The County is still awaiting some final information from them. This option would include staff fully integrated as County employees with the director reporting to the TCTDA board. It would be a similar set up to Soil/Water, DSS, and TCS. Jonathan Griffin will be making a presentation to the County commissioners at their December meeting on December 13. The Chamber is hoping to have their plan in place by the end of 2021. Their plan is currently slated to have a partnership with the TCTDA that includes management of the Visitor Center and office space.

## 2022 Board of Directors – The two open seats on the TCTDA Board will be determined at the County Commissioners meeting on December 13. All three organizational appointments (County, City, Chamber) are set on an annual basis. At the end of each year, each appointee is asked to get with their organization and let us know who will be serving from that entity as soon as they can. Clark will follow up with each appointed board member for more details. David Guice indicated that he will likely be stepping down and we don’t know who the County will appoint to the Board.

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## Upcoming Meetings – There will be an additional meeting held on January 6, 2022. This will be in addition to the regularly scheduled January 27th meeting. Layton reminded the board members that each board member is asked to sit on one or two committees and asked them to think about which committee they would like to serve on. Committee members and committee chairs will be discussed and decided upon at the January 6 meeting. The committee presentation schedule will be discussed as well. It has been suggested that the Transylvania Economic Alliance update the TCTDA board a couple of times a year. The TCTDA Board Retreat will be held on February 24, 2022 from 8:30am - 2:30pm. Currently it is scheduled to be in person in a facility large enough to allow room for social distancing like the Parker Concert Hall at BMC or Earthshine Lodge in Toxaway. Another option is the County Commissioners chambers.

**Ecusta Trail –** Unfortunately the RAISE grant the City of Brevard applied for did not come through. A discussion was had about future plans. The Friends of Ecusta Trail are continuing their fundraising efforts, including looking at the EDA grant program, which is a Federal program which would cover the cost of planning. They should know more in the next month or so. They are also applying for a grant from Dogwood Health Trust which would focus on the Transylvania County side of the trail.

Currently we have a funding request from Conserving Carolina + Friends of the Ecusta Trail for 1% of total occupancy tax for five years on the table. It was noted that the TCTDA cannot commit the funds without being presented an overall total funding plan for the entire project within Transylvania County.

**Finance Committee Report – Layton Parker**

As mentioned last month, we are well ahead of budgeted revenues, have not yet spent any of the strategic plan category dollars, and have a large fund balance of $1.268M. Currently we are trending to have an additional $100K over the FY22 budget. $244K has been allocated to strategic plan and that is with the largest marketing plan and budget in the TCTDA history. The strategic plan will be a big topic for discussion at our next meeting as well as at the board retreat in February. It was also suggested that we use the 2019 strategic plan to help guide future planning and spending.

You referenced reviewing the strategic plan.

**Destination Infrastructure Committee Report – Dee Dee Perkins**

Not much has changed over the last few months. The committee continues to focus on the same areas including downtown, PNF entrance, culture/arts, bikes (including bike racks-bike huts), plus the Ecusta trail, which was discussed earlier. The committee is searching for the best way to support these areas from funding to advocacy. One challenge is that we cannot simply take on the coordination/management of these issues. As an example, the committee is focused on downtown bike racks as well as bike huts, which are more involved, but would solidify our brand as a cycling community. We need to find partners to create and implement ideas like this.

**Old Business –** None

**New Business**

The Morning Show in Canada will livestream a 5-6 minute segment on Transylvania County at the Brevard Music Center on Dec. 10. This exceptional PR opportunity was a result of our excellent relationship with Visit NC and our past work with them on their Canadian media missions. Dee Dee will be the spokesperson and there will be

**Public Comment**

Dana Antonuccio noted that there had been some talk about food trucks downtown on Sundays and wanted to make sure that sound regulators were required for any/all generators. She also expressed interest in sitting on the Destination Infrastructure Committee.

**Meeting Adjourn**

LP made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 AM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Corey Gafnea