



**RUTHERFORD COUNTY TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 23, 2012
COMMISSIONERS ROOM – COUNTY ANNEX**

Members Present: Dwayne Harris, Dan Hegeman, Dawn Hemmelgarn, Denise Holland, Sally Leshar, Paula Roach, Bob Singer, Lisa Sullivan, Adrienne Wallace

Members Absent: Jeff Bradley, Eddie Holland, Ann Washburn Hutchins

Staff Present: Michelle Whitaker

Others Present: Chris Roberts (Asst. Finance Director – Rutherford County)

Call to Order

Sally Leshar called the meeting called to order

Agenda

Sally Leshar recommended that after the Wayfinding Committee Report, that the Information Committee Report be added. Motion to accept agenda as amended by Dan Hegeman. Seconded by Lisa Sullivan. Motion carried.

January 31, 2012 Minutes

Adrienne Wallace requested that she be marked absent for the January 31st meeting. Dan indicated that he reported the Wayfinding Report. Motion to accept minutes as amended by Dan Hegeman. Seconded by Dawn Hemmelgarn. Motion carried

TDA Activity Reports

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

The reports that are submitted each month to the board will also be highlighted in the TDA monthly newsletter. We are on track with growth and this year will be the greatest collection year in the history of the TDA. For the month of December, we are up 13.01% from December 2010. Note that Rumbling Bald Resort was closed for renovations during December 2010 and are now open resulting in the Resorts being up 113%. Motion to accept as presented by Lisa Sullivan. Seconded by Adrienne Wallace. Motion carried.

Michelle Whitaker briefly discussed the highlights of what is being accomplished in Marketing, Internal Customer Services, and Public Relations.

In regards to the VIN, the Town of Rutherfordton is working in a lease agreement with the owners of the home, as well as working with the Zoning Committee on zoning the home for museum and visitor center usage. Plans are to go to the Town Council on March 7th for a vote. Everything is in order one this is approved. Once everything is complete the timeline will move along rather quickly.

A discussion is also underway with the Town of Lake Lure. It has been recommended by the VIN committee to set aside money to assist the Town of Lake Lure with restrooms and information for visitors. Through preliminary discussions with the town they are interested in working with us in the same manner as the Town of Rutherfordton. The Town of Lake Lure asked would we be interested in assisting with volunteers and it was indicated that we would in the same manner as we are with The Bechtler House in regards of training, scheduling, etc. There is no lease arrangement involved; it is solely like the Bechtler House. In regards to these projects the money will come from the Stakeholder Assistance Program line item. The county attorney is drawing up an agreement for any VIN site that if the partnership ends then all information kiosks and visitor information is property of the TDA and will be returned to the TDA. Michelle Whitaker suggested that at the next meeting go over the VIN sites entirely.

Michelle Whitaker and Mark Teague have been driving over the county to look at where off the road sites would be feasible. Mark has also done a report on out of county signage as well as in county signage.

TDA Activity Reports *continued*

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

The Town of Lake Lure is embarking on their own wayfinding signage project and Michelle Whitaker is working with them so there is no overlap in requesting signage from the DOT.

Michelle Whitaker discussed the work that has been completed on the website. Things are continuing to be improved.

In regards to the leads, next month a comparison of all the sweepstakes that the TDA has been involved in with the state will be presented.

Finally item on the activity report is in regards to the NCTTC (North Carolina Travel & Tourism Coalition) report from a meeting on Monday, February 20th and the entire report is in the board appendices.

Wayfinding Sub-Committee Meeting

Dan Hegeman, presenting

A handout of the VIN Wayfinding Tasks was presented to the board (in board appendices) and briefly discussed. Dan Hegeman indicated that the purpose of each piece of the VIN, including Wayfinding, is to: attract, inform, direct, and connect. The tasks are broken out into Priority Groups with the costs associated with each. There was discussion regarding each task and the costs associated with each task.

2012-13 Proposed Budget

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

Paula Roach introduced the new Assistant Finance Director, Chris Roberts to the board.

Michelle Whitaker stated that the budget is determined by the estimated revenues for 2012-13 fiscal year. The numbers are gathered from the real income for the first six months (Jul-Dec) and the numbers from the previous year (Jan-Jun) which are then combined and that determines the estimated revenue for the upcoming year; based on real numbers. Michelle Whitaker presented the proposed budget in regards to fund balance, revenue, and operating expenses.

Motion to adjourn made by Dan Hegeman. Seconded by Dawn Hemmelgarn. Motion carried.