

**Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority  
Board Meeting**

**Call to Order:** 12:03 Public hearing Regarding the 2017-2018 budget

**Public Comments:** No public comments

Motion to exit public hearing and resume regular session.

**Approval:** 1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Tammy Martell

Motion Passed

**Members Present:** Amy Bridges, Barbara Meliski, Dave Long, Diane Barrett, Lynn Brown, Ruthie Hanson, Richard Lundy, Tammy Martell, Willard Whitson

**Members Absent:** --

**Ex-Officicos Present:** --

**Ex-Officicos Absent:** Paula Roach, Eddie Holland

**Others Present:** Don Cason, Karen Tegen, Taylor Hardin, Media (2), Michelle Yelton

**Agenda(changes if necessary):**

Insert Closed Session regarding G.S 143-318.11 Attorney – Client Privilege after finance report

Insert Closed Session regarding G.S 143-318.11 Personnel after announcements

**Approval:** 1st: Diane Barrett

2nd: Willard Whitson

Motion Passed.

**Prior Meeting Minutes (changes if necessary):**

**Approval:** 1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Dave Long

Motion Passed.

**2017-2018 Budget**

2016-2017

- Installed new website
- Built relationships with town managers/mayors
- Staff implement efficiencies
- Worked with marketing group
- Progressed with Wayfinding
- Worked with county leaders
- Strategic Plan-Destination by Design

2017-2018

- 10% growth – new hotels and renovated hotels
- Occupancy monitoring program
- 13 goals to complete
- Tourism Strategic Plan Completion

- Build Relationships with Towns, County, State Representatives and Partners
- Evaluate Marketing Efforts
- New Vacation Guide
- Enhance Trails
- Maximize Rutherford County's Benefit for WEG

Richard: Thanks to the staff for the work and time put into the budget. We have tried for a number of years to really dial in on the budget. Projections is a robust 10% but we will use the funds wisely. If funds are materializing, the budget can be cut back.

Motion to approve the 2017-2018 budget as presented

**Approval:** 1st: Willard Whitson

2nd: Lynn Brown

Motion Passed.

**Budget Ordinance:**

Read by Board Chair Richard Lundy:

**WHEREAS**, the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018 ("Fiscal Year 2018") was presented to the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority Board on May 4th, 2017 by the Executive Director of the Tourism Development Authority; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 15th, 2017, the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority held a public hearing on the budget pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §153A-155;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority Board, meeting on the 15th day of June, 2017;

**REVENUES:**

Occupancy Tax Receipts	\$ 1,000,000
Fund Balance Appropriated	\$0
TOTAL	<u>\$ 1,000,000</u>

**APPROPRIATIONS:**

Tourism-Related Expenditures (Special Projects)	\$ 199,800
Administrative	\$ 390,392
Professional Services	\$ 30,050
Public Relations & Marketing	\$ 302,000
Facilities	\$ 20,285
Reserve for Special Projects	<u>\$ 57,473</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 1,000,000</u>

GRAND TOTAL \$ 1,000,000

This ordinance shall be the basis of the financial plan for the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority during the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

The Rutherford County Finance Officer shall administer the Annual Operating Budget and shall insure that operating officials are provided guidance and sufficient details to implement the budget. The Finance Officer shall also establish and maintain all records, consistent with this ordinance, and the appropriate state statutes of the State of North Carolina.

The Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority Executive Director shall be able to transfer up to \$10,000 between line items; however, the Board must approve any transfers in or out of the operating budget or salary-related line items, or for capital projects.

A copy of this ordinance shall be furnished to the Executive Director and the Finance Officer of the Tourism Development Authority to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.

Adopted this 15th day of June, 2017.

Motion to adopt the 2017-1018 budget ordinance as read

**Approval:** 1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Diane Barrett

Motion Passed.

**Finance Report:**

-April is up \$8,166 (14.78%) over 2016

-April year-to-date is up \$80,581(10.63%)

-If remaining month finishes the same as last year, we will exceed the \$912,000 mark

-98.28 % of projected budget amount collected year to date

-All financial reporting line items continue to remain on budget

**Approval:** 1st: Diane Barrett

2nd: Barbara Meliski

Motion Passed.

**Closed Session: G.S 143-318.11 Attorney Client Privilege**

Motion to Enter Closed Session

**Approval:** 1st: Amy Bridges

2nd: Willard Whitson

Motion Passed.

Motion to exit Closed Session

**Approval:** 1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Dave Long

Motion Passed.

Motion to Resume Regular Session

**Approval:** 1st: Willard Whitson

2nd: Barbara Meliski

Motion Passed.

Motion to allocate up to \$5000 for Wayfinding Research

**Approval:** 1st: Diane Barrett

2nd: Barbara Meliski

Motion Passed.

**Don Cason – Tourism Strategic Plan**

- DbD and TDA staff coordination plan in process

- Implementation and funding campaign to follow

- May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> – Meetings with county leadership and video interviews

- May 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> – Community and Private sector interviews

- Various one on one meeting/updates with Town Managers and Stakeholders

- June 2<sup>nd</sup> – DbD project team – Site visit to mountain area

- June 14<sup>th</sup> – DbD project team – Site visit to downtown main streets

**Executive Director Report:**

- most is strategic plan related
- county commission meeting
- town meetings
- rail trail meetings
- ringold GA – arc grant process/training

**Welcome Center Update:**

- Karen Tegen has been promoted and has taken the position as the new Welcome Center Manager/Project Manager
  - Visitor count is increasing even during the week.
  - Request to give updates from being on site and issues that may need to be represented

**Marketing Update:**

- Launched pet getaway piece
- loaded new outdoor blog
- Fathers day post
- New York times tour and article
- People magazine
- Washburn general store article in our state
- Country living magazine
- Full day video/photo shoot – 12 models
  - Chimney Rock video being created now
  - More videos next year
- Top locations: Washington made a new appearance. Nashville, and Atlanta also there
- Top Places: Places to stay cabins, homes and camping

**Committee Reports**

**Marketing:**

- Approved the 2017-2018 marketing plan
- Discussion about paid ads on website- we are getting more information from Simple View
- VRBO/Home away discussion

**TAF:**

- NC gold trail continuing to grow (adding two per week to newsletter)
- Working on fundraising event for The Bechtler House
- Coin and raffle event July 13<sup>th</sup> 5:30pm-7:00pm
- Group tours still coming
- Booth at NC gold festival
- Changing hours to accommodate traffic flow (Sunday closed, Saturdays extending hours then apt through the week)
- Exploring internship/graduate history study – in an open room in The Bechtler House
- Working with town of Rutherfordton on a scavenger hunt
- Next batch of coins to be installed in the coming weeks

**Finance:**

- Reviewed 2017-2018 Budget
- Occupancy tax program – flier going out in August tax bills. Revenue/Finance department support

**Information:**

- Still discussing work to be done at the Welcome Center
- Mobile unit status – now on govdeals – listed at \$10,000
- Capacity at Welcome Center – Karen called fire department. Fire department said max occupancy is 24 people.
- July 4<sup>th</sup> talked about staffing for that day

**Executive:**

- Wayfinding Update
- Website/Marketing Update
- New position for marketing
- WEG update
- Tourism Strategic Plan update
- Budget 2017-2018 discussion
- Welcome center update
- Occupancy Tax discussion

**Board Chair Nominations**

Barbara Meliski nominate Richard Lundy as board Chair

Amy Bridges: Seconded the nominations.

No other nominations.

Unanimous vote to recommend Richard Lundy to the County Commissioners as the TDA board chair for 2017-2018

**Announcements:**

- Don: Barbara and Buck Meliski will be honored at an event tonight for all their community support and all they have done for Rutherford County.
- Karen – 3 info stands installed Lake Lure and Chimney Rock
- Amy – July 4<sup>th</sup> 10-2 at owl's stadium – Freedom Fest – Owls game and fireworks. Fireworks also on the 3rd
- Taylor: Next meeting July 27<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 12 noon. The board will be voting on committees and other housekeeping items

**Closed session:**

G.S 143-318.11 Personal

Motion to go into Closed Session:

**Approval:** 1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Amy Bridges

Motion Passed.

Motion to exit Closed Session

**Approval:** 1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Diane Barrett

Motion Passed.

Motion to resume regular session

**Approval:** 1st: Amy Bridges

2nd: Richard Lundy

Motion Passed.

Motion to allocate on part time position at the Welcome Center to full time with benefits.

**Approval:** 1st: Willard Whitson

2nd: Ruthie Hanson

Motion Passed.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

1st: Barbara Meliski

2nd: Lynn Brown

Motion Passed.

Next meeting July 27th 2017 at 12 noon in the Woodrow Jones Building