

**Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority  
Board Meeting**

**Call to Order:** 12:06

**Members Present:** Amy Bridges, Jim Masek, Richard Lundy, Willard Whitson, Kitty McCammon, Mary Jaeger-Gale, Lynn Brown, Jeff Geisler

**Members Absent:** Chuck Martell, Dave Long

**Ex-Officos Present:** Eddie Holland

**Ex-Officos Absent:** Paula Roach

**Others Present:** Karen Tegen, Emily Ostertag, Taylor Hardin, Don Cason, Destination by Design (2), The Agency (2), Spin City Café (2) Media (1),

**Public Comments:** -----

**Agenda (changes if necessary):** No Changes

**Approval:** 1st: Jeff Geisler

2nd: Mary Jaeger-Gale

Motion Passed.

**Prior Meeting Minutes (changes if necessary):** No Changes

**Approval:** 1st: Amy Bridges

2nd: Richard Lundy

Motion Passed.

**Executive Director Report:**

- Welcomed Emily as new administrative assistant
- Barbara Meliski has resigned from the board and extend thanks for her service
  
- County wide tour of Rutherford County with the Agency
- EDC dinner with the State Director of Economic Development
- Spent time in various communities working on Strategic Plan
- Meeting with Duarte Moralis partnering for Agri-tourism
- Cycle NC – TDA coordinated site visit for Rutherford County for potential host of 2020 and/or 2021
- County Commissioner quarterly report
- Keep Rutherford County Beautiful
- NCTTC Meeting
- NCTIA Tourism Day
- WNCW Radio Station Tour and partnership opportunities

**Welcome Center Update:**

- Welcome center activity increasing
- Construction held off until late fall

**Marketing Update:**

- Ad ran in Smokey Mountain Living
- Organic mention in forbes.com

-Upcoming ads in USA today, and Carolina living

- TRAVEL GUIDE: Jenna is working on Ads to be complete this week and sent for proof next week
- Completed 2 proofs of the travel guide
- Projection date of printed and in hand: April 1

The Agency: Kersten and Mary Mac

- Started first week of January taking over all social media accounts
- Goal for January and February was to get a baseline
- Increase in followers for all social media accounts. Most increase in Pinterest
- Top posts: based off organic content.
- Media Influencer engagement: low activity now based on time of year. Plans to increase in the coming months with warmer weather
- First two months is drastic based on change in content

-WEBSITE: updated photos to remove holiday. First quarterly SEO call with simple view complete-goal is to figure out how to best utilize them  
Top cities, top referrals

Social Media Aesthetic digital presentation

- Badges added to Instagram

Average monthly views on Pinterest of 708-moving forward with Pinterest

**Committee Reports**

Marketing: No meeting. Meeting after board meeting

Strategic Plan: No meeting

Presentation: Destination by Design: Eric Woolridge and Tim Johnson

Progress report provided regarding product development in the countywide, Main Street and Mountain regions, and capital campaign

Showed video

Digital presentation: "R U tag line"

Print materials: draft stages

TAF: Discussion on TAFs role in the strategic plan

Finance: No meeting

Finance Report:

Occupancy tax receipts continue to increase  
Up 50% from last year for December including 1%  
369,000 over last year in receipts-WEG, STR and new Programs

Motion to accept finance report:

**Approval:** 1st: Jim Masek  
2nd: Lynn Brown

Motion Passed.

Grant:

4 new grants

1 has been approved but not yet occurred  
3 will be sent to committee next week

Tourism Master Plan Application

Sent out to board to review in advance. No discussion

Motion to approve Tourism Master Plan Application:

**Approval:** 1st: Lynn Brown  
2nd: Jeff Geisler

Motion Passed.

Information: No meeting

Wayfinding: No Meeting

Update: Ellenboro has met and sites have been submitted for signs

Color samples with logo  
Meeting with Ruth to be scheduled

Executive:

- Provided Wayfinding Update – Provided Installation Time-line and reviewed timeline for Ruth, Ellenboro and Bostic
- Reviewed Marketing– Reviewed Marketing Programs and Results. Discussed The Agency and Marketing Plan program of work
- Provided staff program of work for 2018-2019 (Status of Marketing Manager position with current staff)
- Provided Welcome Center staff update and reviewed Welcome Center renovation project delay. Date moved to November at the earliest
- Board Meeting Agenda – Approved
- Provided TDA Tourism Master Plan Update – Reviewed current progress and update. Towns continue to support the TDA program of work
- Keep Rutherford County Beautiful - Summary Review and Need TDA Committee

- Provided TDA Community Grant Update
- Finance Committee – Review February RFF
- Legislative Issues – Occupancy Tax and School Calendar Law
- Board Member Seat – Barbara Meliski seat available

**KRCB:**

Don presented an overview of the Administrative Committee meeting to the full committee.

Need to form 501C3

Need to establish Adopt-A-Highways by area businesses, schools, etc...

Don and Doug will present overview and needs of KRCB to town mgrs. and mayors

Need to do fundraising

Litter Pick-up committee presentation was given by George Moyer

First p/u of year to be held on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>

HS student Shivam Patel is organizing a litter competition between the 3 HS's

Supplies are needed for the clean-ups

Jenna Bailey presented an update on the Marketing Committee

New branding was introduced

It was reported that ROC will be doing a river clean-up

Recommended that the Chambers send letters to businesses to clean their properties

Name of FB group has officially been changed to KRCB

Next meeting date determined: April 18<sup>th</sup>

**Meeting Adjourned** 1:58