

**Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority  
Board Meeting**

**Members Present:** Mia Chapman, Janet Mason, Willard Whitson, Jeff Geisler, Jim Masek, Dave Long, David Hislop, and Dana Bradley and Kitty McCammon

**Members Absent:** Mary Jaeger-Gale

**Ex-Officis Present:** Paula Roach and David Hunt

**Ex-Officis Absent:**

**Others Present:** Don Cason, Emily Ostertag, and Taylor Hardin

**Motion to enter into public hearing regarding the 2021-2022 recommended budget.**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Jeff Geisler

2<sup>nd</sup>: David Hunt

Motion passed.

**Are there any comments regarding the 2021- 2022 recommended budget?**

**Motion to end public hearing regarding the 2021-2022 recommended budget.**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: David Hislop

2<sup>nd</sup>: Dana Bradley

Motion passed.

**This ends the public hearing regarding the 2021-2022 recommended budget**

**Call to order:** 12:17pm

**Motion to call the board meeting to order:**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Jeff Geisler

2<sup>nd</sup>: David Hunt

Motion passed.

**Additions / Deletions from Agenda: ----**

**Motion to approve Agenda:**

**Approval:** 1st: David Hunt

2nd: Dave Long

Motion Passed.

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

**Approval:** 1st: Jeff Geisler

2nd: David Hislop

Motion Passed.

**Finance Report:**

**Finance Report Highlights:**

Highlights

- Occupancy tax growth was adjusted for the last two months of the year to reflect a higher RFF
  - Each month is to be raised by \$100,000
  - We are projecting to come in at \$2.4 or \$2.5 million for the year
- Possible projects that will roll over into next year's budget

**2021-2022 Budget**

- Highlights
  - No changes made since last board meeting
  - The projected occupancy tax revenue is very conservative

**Motion to approve the 2021-2022 budget as presented**

**Approval:** 1st: Kitty McCammon  
2nd: David Hunt

Motion Passed.

**Motion to accept the budget ordinance as read**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Jeff Geisler  
2<sup>nd</sup>: David Hunt

Motion Passed.

**RUTHERFORD COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
BUDGET ORDINANCE  
FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022**

WHEREAS, the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022 ("Fiscal Year 2022") was presented to the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority Board on May 13th, 2021 by the Executive Director of the Tourism Development Authority, and

WHEREAS, on June 10th, 2021, 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 10th day of June, 2021;

REVENUES:		
Occupancy Tax Receipts	\$	1,980,000
Investment Earnings	\$	20,000
Misc./Website/Strategic Plan/Vacation Guide/Website Ads	\$	420,500
Fund Balance Appropriated	\$	743,311
TOTAL	\$	<u>3,163,811</u>

APPROPRIATIONS:		
Tourism-Related Expenditures (Special Projects)	\$	1,200,000
Administrative	\$	1,252,261
Professional Services	\$	28,350
Public Relations & Marketing	\$	655,000
Facilities	\$	<u>28,200</u>
TOTAL	\$	<u>3,163,811</u>

GRAND TOTAL \$ 3,163,811

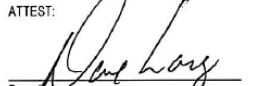
This ordinance shall be the basis of the financial plan for the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority during the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

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 10th day of June, 2021.

ATTEST:  
  
Dave Zohg  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman, Tourism Development Authority

  
Willard Whitson  
Chair, Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority

**Motion to approve Finance report:**

**Approval:** 1st: Dana Bradley  
2nd: Mia Chapman

Motion Passed.

**Executive Director Report:**

Highlights:

- The TDA met with a potential trail development committee for the Hickory Nut Gorge area
- The TDA met with the Town of Lake Lure, and Destination by Design to discuss the Amphitheater project
- Another TDA committee is in the process of being formed to plan for a Rutherford County Golf Trail. More details to come in the future.
- Attended the Travel and Tourism Coalition board meeting, virtually. The next board meeting is being planned for August and will be in-person
- The Full KRCB Committee met on May 27<sup>th</sup>
- The TDA met with the Rutherford County Theatre group. More details to come in the future.
- Attended the Lake Lure Utility Board meeting as the Town continues to plan and discuss their infrastructure needs
- The TDA held a Coffee Talk in the Woodrow Jones Building on June 7<sup>th</sup>

- The TDA also presented at the County Commissioners meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup> where Margaret Annunziata, President of Isothermal Community College, was appointed to the TDA Board. She will be attending the next board meeting for the first of the fiscal year on July 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Welcome Center Update:**

- Visitation continues to be up
- April and May visitations numbers are up
- The Lake Lure Welcome Center recently hired a new full-time Information Specialist
- The staff changes discussed during the last board meeting will officially take place June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Marketing Report:**

**Marketing Committee Update**

- Internal Marketing Report
  - The TDA ran ads. in Our State Magazine's June issue as well as in USA Today's Summer Travel Guide
- The Agency Slides presented by Taylor Hardin:
  - Review of April and May
  - Based on a recommendation from the last board meeting, The Agency has started to add numbers from 2019 to the social media and website number to account for the impact of COVID in 2020
  - Social media impressions are currently down compared to 2020
  - Facebook and Instagram continually increase
  - Website analytics – 'places to stay' and 'things to do remain' our top two landing pages
  - Charlotte, Atlanta, Raleigh and Nashville continue to be our top cities. We have started to do a little bit more marketing in Charlotte because of this trend
  - All website traffic continues to be up by 195%
  - Ads. were in Romantic Asheville, Our State Magazine and USA Today
  - The tourism website is still under renovation with a summer release date
  - The 2021 Rutherford County Travel Guide is printed and ready for distribution
  - All TDA commercials are being re-filmed with new footage being shot next week
  - Avery Roberson will be writing a jingle about Rutherford County for these new commercials
  - WLOS will be filming an episode of Road Trippin' on June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - 5 or 6 marketing grant applications have been submitted
  - The TDA held a Coffee Talk. All information that was shared will be distributed

**Committee Updates:**

**Marketing Committee:**

\*See marketing report\*

- No meeting
- Coffee Talk held June 7th

**Agri-Tourism Committee:**

Extended committee met June 8<sup>th</sup>

Three or four separate meetings occurred and reconvened with this full committee on the 8<sup>th</sup>

Topics of discussion

Branding

Education

Asset development

Marketing

How to engage the middle 60% (the middle class)

Looking into an Ameri-Corp Vista

Better connecting restaurants to farms

Events – Farm Tour starts this weekend on June 12<sup>th</sup>

**Finance Committee:**

- No meeting

**Tourism Strategic Plan Committee:**

- Tourism Advisory Committee met May 18<sup>th</sup>
- The Strategic Plan Committee continues to work very closely with all Rutherford Bound partners. Each partner is currently working on their 21-22 contracts

Date: .....6/10/21.....

Approved as Minutes: .....7/22/21.....

- In summary, from working with all of the partners, towns, etc., the vision for 21-22 is to continue with press events, all Town developing their Phase II projects, seeking grants, and continuing with the funding campaign

**CFHC Committee:**

No Meeting

Review of current donation status - \$26,400

**Keep Rutherford County Beautiful Committee:**

- Full committee met May 27<sup>th</sup>

- Committee approved \$30,000 for the KRCB budget

- During the Spring Litter Sweep 8 tons of trash were picked up, with 215 volunteers and 370 bags of trash

**Information Committee:**

- No Meeting

\*See Welcome Center Update\*

**Relocate to Rutherford Committee:**

- No Meeting

**Executive Committee:**

- Met June 3<sup>rd</sup>

\*See Executive Director Report\*

**The TDA Board nominations for the TDA Board Chairman for the 2021-2022 fiscal year**

- Jeff Geisler nominated Dave Long

- David Hunt seconded Dave Long

**Does Dave Long accept the nomination as TDA Board Chairman?**

- Dave Long accepts the nomination

**Motion to recommend Dave Long as chair of TDA Board for the 2021-2022 fiscal year**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: David Hunt

2<sup>nd</sup>: Jeff Geisler

Motion Passed.

**The TDA Board will make a recommendation, by unanimous vote, for Dave Long to be the 2021-2022 TDA Board Chair, to the county commissioners to be voted on at their July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. Emily will be sending this unanimous recommendation to Hazel Haynes, the county clerk.**

**Announcements:** Don Cason presented Willard Whitson with a commemorative plaque, on behalf of the TDA board and staff, for his service on the TDA Board from 2015-2021—serving as Chairman from 2019-2021.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 1:13pm