

**Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority
Board Meeting**

Call to Order: 12:03pm

Members Present: Mary Jaeger-Gale, Dave Long, Willard Whitson, Kitty McCammon, Jim Masek, Richard Lundy, Brandon Higgins, and Janet Mason

Members Absent: David Hislop, Rocky Guarriello, and Jeff Geisler

Ex-Officis Present: Paula Roach

Ex-Officis Absent: Eddie Holland

Others Present: Don Cason, Emily Ostertag, Karen Tegen, Kersten Conklin and Jerry Stahl (The Agency)

Public Hearing:

Motion to enter into public hearing regarding the 2020-2021 recommended budget.

Approval: 1st: Janet Mason

2nd: Dave Long

Motion Passed.

Are there any comments regarding the 2020- 2021 recommended budget?

Motion to end public hearing regarding the 2020-2021 recommended budget. The TDA will be open to accept comments regarding the 2020-2021 budget until Friday June 19th at 5pm. Comments can be made by email to RCTDA@rutherfordcountync.gov.

Approval: 1st: Dave Long

2nd: Kitty McCammon

Motion Passed.

This ends the public hearing regarding the 2020-2021 recommended budget

-
Additions / Deletions from Agenda:

-
Motion to approve Agenda:

Approval: 1st: Richard Lundy

2nd: Brandon Higgins

Motion Passed.

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

Approval: 1st: Richard Lundy

2nd: Kitty McCammon

Motion Passed.

-
Finance Report:

-
Finance Report Highlights:

- COVID-19 severely impacted the revenue stream for April, with a 90% decrease
- All expenses have been altered to reflect COVID-19

- Summary – Flat or up to \$12,000 above year-to-date
- Year-to-Date we are still over plan, but this may change with the impact in May in June
- May was a half-month of revenue with retail, restaurants and lodging re-opening—hopefully, this will have a positive impact
- Actual is well under plan in all line items
- Revenue stream has been cut in half with an \$800,000 decrease for next year
- Wrapping up with a fund balance of about \$550,000 at least

Motion to approve Financial Report:

Approval: 1st: Brandon Higgins
2nd: Dave Long

Motion Passed.

Motion to move the proposed budget to a special called board meeting on Monday June 22nd at 12 noon in the Rutherfordton Town Hall and by Go To Meeting.

Approval: 1st: Dave Long
2nd: Kitty McCammon

Motion Passed.

Executive Director Report:

Highlights:

- Lake Lure is working on a plan to improve their infrastructure along with the state
- The Lake Lure Marina and Boardwalk are now open—the town is now planning Phase II with the TDA
- Rutherfordton hosts a Friday morning program, which Don hosted and gave an update on Rutherford Bound
- A ribbon cutting for Kiwanis Park will be happening in October
- Forest City Owls held a brainstorm session to decide on the year's game schedule
- The TDA is participating in the regional Create Bridges program and will be partnering with Cleveland, McDowell and Polk Counties, with the IPDC leading that effort
- The TDA met with the marketing manager of Jellystone Park to develop a partnership

Welcome Center Update:

- The Welcome Center re-opened on May 23rd
- Staff are taking every precaution to keep everyone safe during this time, with social distancing and extra cleaning, etc.
- There are face shields, touch-less hand sanitizer dispensers and tape marking spaces for social distancing. The history room and furniture have also be taped off
- Attendance has been very high at the Welcome Center

Marketing Report:

-The Agency Presentation:

- The Agency
 - The Agency won a Global Communicator Award for the marketing campaign they've done with the TDA, "Moments that Matter"
 - Social media engagement was down for May
 - The top posts were a photo of Main St. Forest City geared toward "missing" our visitors
 - Page views were up in May and Website Analytics were similar
 - There was no paid advertising in May
 - Referral traffic was down
 - Review of the budget for the last 6 months
 - Paid social media advertising started in June (ex: postcard campaign)
 - Reviewed the area's We Care Commitment
 - Reviewed the Count On Me NC Certification, with the intention of encouraging all of our stakeholders to take the training
 - Played new voiceover Rail Trail video

Committee Updates:

Marketing Committee:

- Reviewed during The Agency presentation

Agri-Tourism Committee:

- The extended committee had an opening meeting before COVID-19, and will reconvene in the Fall
- The TDA is partnering with Polk and McDowell Counties for the Farm App. software

Finance Committee:

- Revenue streams are being heavily monitored

Tourism Strategic Plan Committee:

- Reviewed the re-opening of the Rutherford Bound campaign
- A lot of Phase I projects are being completed
- TDA staff will be meeting with Rutherford Bound partners in the coming weeks to discuss restarting this campaign
- The TAC will hopefully meet in late July
- The TDA is planning to have kick-off celebrations for Lake Lure and Rutherfordton projects in the coming months

TAF Committee:

- The TDA and TAF met to discuss future plans, and their transitioning program of work
- The TDA will be transitioning to raise Rutherford Bound and Keep Rutherford County Beautiful funds with the help of the Community Foundation of Henderson County
- By August 1st, the goal is to have our contract with CFHC complete
- By the July 30th Board Meeting, we are hoping to have a contract ready for approval
- TAF will present their future program of work with the TDA at the next Board Meeting

Keep Rutherford County Beautiful Committee:

- All programs have been put on hold until the Fall
- The Cycle NC route is being monitored for volunteer/paid trash pick-ups
- A decision to have the Cycle NC event will be made by July 1st
- The committee will reconvene in the Fall

Information Committee:

- Potential meeting in August

Relocate to Rutherford Committee:

- Reconvening in the Fall

Executive Committee:

- By-Law Amendments
- The Treasurer was put on the Executive Board

Motion to approve the TDA By-Law amendments as presented.

Approval: 1st: Kitty McCammon

2nd: Richard Lundy

Motion Passed.

Announcements: -----

Meeting Adjourned: 1:23pm