

**Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority  
Board Meeting**

**Special Called Board Meeting**

**Call to Order:** 11:31 am

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

**Others Present:** Don Cason, Merri Oxley

**Closed Session:** GS 143-318.11 (a)(3) – Attorney Client Privilege

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Barbara Meliski

2<sup>nd</sup>: Willard Whitson

Motion Passed.

**Motion to end closed session**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Amy Bridges

2<sup>nd</sup>: Dave Long

Motion Passed.

No action taken.

**Regular Scheduled Board Meeting**

**Call to Order:** 12:02

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

**Members Absent:** ---

**Ex-Officos Present:** Paula Roach, Eddie Holland

**Ex-Officos Absent:** ---

**Others Present:** Don Cason, Karen Tegen, Taylor Hardin, Media (1), Merri Oxley, Michelle Yelton

**Public Comments:** ---

**Agenda (changes if necessary):**

**Approval:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Diane Barrett

2<sup>nd</sup>: Barbara Meliski

Motion Passed.

**Closed session: G.S 143-318.11(a)(3) – Attorney Client Privilege**

Motion to go into closed session

1<sup>st</sup>- Amy Bridges

2<sup>nd</sup>- Willard Whitson

Motion Passed

Motion to end closed session:

1<sup>st</sup> – Willard Whitson

2<sup>nd</sup> - Barbara Meliski

Motion Passed.

No action taken.

Motion to resume regular session:

1<sup>st</sup> - Amy Bridges

2<sup>nd</sup> – Ruthie Hanson

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

**Approval:** 1st: Ruthie Hanson

2nd: Lynn Brown

Motion Passed.

**Finance Report:**

- March was up 3.42%

- Up 75,000 (11.52%)

- If we come in same as last year we will exceed \$900,000 mark

- RFF Summary: all items are on budget

**Approval:** 1st: Willard Whitson

2nd: Diane Barrett

Motion Passed.

**Don Cason – Tourism Strategic Plan**

- DbD has been in the community having one on ones

- DbD has met with the 5 major towns managers and mayors

- Meetings with county leadership on May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> (County Commissioners)

- Additional meetings to take place on May 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>

**Executive Director Report:**

- Polk County TDA meeting

- Forming a WEG Committee – May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting with TIEC (Sharon Decker), Polk County TDA (Melinda Massey), Rutherford County TDA (Don Cason) and IPDC (Scott Dadson)

- Rail Trail Meetings with Forest City

**Welcome Center Update:**

- Attendance slightly down in March but back up in April

- Season is back open now

- Train is back up and running

**Marketing Update:**

- Strong Press Month

- NC Field and Family - Rutherfordton

- Our State Magazine – Washburn's General Store

- WNC Magazine – Hickory Nut Gorge/Chimney Rock

- South Bound

- Media Tours

- Upstate Lake Living Magazine - Cleghorn

- NY Times – Lake Lure/Chimney Rock

- HGTV – Lake Lure Home

- Website

- Lodging is the main

- NYC in April - spent two days with press

 **Committee Reports**

**Marketing:**

- Marketing Plan
- Website statistics
- Advertising in Travel guide and website (waiting on presentation from Simple View)
- WEG Committee
- Marketing and Communications Manager – New Position

WEG Committee Discussion: committee to be formed to get ready for the World Equestrian Games.

Members: Tammy Martell, Dave Long, Lynn Brown, Willard Whitson

Don will work with this committee and be the lead to work TIEC.

Committee will make recommendations to the Marketing Committee

Motion to form WEG Committee consisting of Tammy, Willard, Lynn, and Dave

1<sup>st</sup> - Barbara

2<sup>nd</sup> – Amy

Motion Passed.

**TAF:**

- Coin and rifle display is complete – ready by June - hoping to incorporate during FUNC
- 8 more coins have been purchased for the gold mile trail
  - Raffle gold mile coin during Mayfest
- UNC-TV

 **Finance:**

- Reviewed year end numbers
- Presented budget detail, message and all other documents for review
- Reviewed 2017-2018 budget

**Executive:**

- Website Update
- wayfinding discussion
- WEG Committee
- 2017-2018 Budget
- Welcome center update
- Marketing Plan

**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

- Build State relationships
- Evaluate Marketing Efforts
- New Vacation Guide
- Trails/Trail System
- WEG

**Motion to call for call for a public hearing on June 15th 2017**

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Amy Bridges
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – Barbara Meliski
- Motion Passed.

**Announcements:**

- Forest City – annual Memorial Day ceremony: Memorial Day 11am

**Closed Session: G.S 143-318.11 (Personel)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Barbara Meliski
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – Dave long
- Motion Passed.

Motion to end Closed Session

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Barbara Meliski
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – Amy Bridges
- Motion Passed.

In Closed session there was a vote to approve job responsibility and pay grade increases per executive director recommendations for staff and there was a vote to approve Marketing and communications manager position and pay scale.

The motion was made by Barbara Meliski and seconded by Tammy Martell. The motion passed.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

- 1st: Amy Bridges
  - 2nd: Barbara Meliski
- Motion Passed.

Next meeting: June 15<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 12 noon in the Woodrow Jones Building