

**Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority
Board Meeting**

Call to Order: 12:01pm

Members Present: Dave Long, Jeff Geisler, Jim Masek, Dana Bradley, Kitty McCammon, Margaret Annunziata, Mia Chapman, Mary Jaegar-Gale, and Janet Mason

Members Absent: David Hislop

Ex-Officios Present: David Hunt and Paula Roach

Ex-Officios Absent:

Others Present:

Additions / Deletions from Agenda: ----

Motion to approve Agenda:

Approval: 1st: David Hunt
2nd: Janet Mason

Motion Passed.

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

Approval: 1st: Jim Masek
2nd: David Hunt

Motion Passed.

Finance Report:

Finance Report Highlights:

- Highlights
 - Occupancy tax growth has been great compared to prior years
 - Reviewed RFF for this quarter and the year-end number
 - Will review finance documents at the Commissioner's meeting Nov. 1st
 - Fund balance is 2.7 million with about 713k of fund balance being in appropriations
 - Revenues are up and expenses are down
 - Looking for changes in travel for the winter months, reflection of this seen in the projections on RFF
 - Projected to wrap up the year with about a 2.4 million fund balance after 2 million was put into all different RB projects

Motion to approve Finance report:

Approval: 1st: Mary Jaegar-Gale
2nd: Margaret Annunziata

Motion Passed.

Executive Director Report:

Highlights:

- Participated in the NC State movie documentary
- Participated in the Henderson/Transylvania/Ecusta Trail TBRT tour
- Participated in the Rutherford County Leadership Tourism Day
- Attended HNG board meeting- Annual planning day
- Attended DbD & rail trail partners planning meeting (Zoom)
- Coordinated multiple town meetings for tourism plan preliminary planning meetings
- Met with Raw Productions- Provided tour of Bechtler Mint site and Bechtler House
- Attended STS tourism conference

- Attended NCTIA leadership conference
- Met with Bostic town council- Rutherford Bound
- Met with mayor pro-tem of Ellenboro – Liz Blanton
- Met with Farmer’s Museum in Forest City
- Met with Hunter Consulting Group (Funding Campaign)
- Participated in the ICC Peer to Peer mentorship program
- Met with HNG chamber to review economic study
- Attended/Met with Farmer’s Museum Board of Directors
- Participated in the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce golf tournament
- Met with Jackson County TDA & presented RB for their future planning model
- Attended the Chimney Rock’s Planning committee meeting

Welcome Center Update:

Continuing to exceed last year’s visitors’ numbers even throughout work week
Still looking for a cleaning company to deep clean the Welcome Center

Marketing Report:

- **Marketing Committee Update**

- Internal Marketing Report

Tourism website is launching November 11th at 10am MT

The 2021 travel guide won the Gold Award through NCTIA

68 cases remaining left to distribute of the 2021 guide

Looking for a release date of March 1st, 2022, for new travel guide distributed which is about 3 months early based on past years

6 full page, 7 half page, and 3 quarter page ads have been sold thus far for the 2022 travel guide

- The Agency Slides presented by Taylor Hardin:
 - Review of August & September data
 - Looking at a little bit of decrease on website analytics which is not necessarily a bad thing because it is no longer being compared to 2019 as this was the time things were “returning to norm” post-covid
 - All organic sessions through Simpleview’s SEO report continue to be up

Committee Updates:

Marketing Committee:

- Met on 10/5

Reviewed travel guide info

Looking to have a coffee talk on either November 9th or 16th location TBD

The Agency gave an update and discussed the possibility of ads with the Equestrian Center and other possible opportunities

Agri-Tourism Committee:

- *No meeting*

Finance Committee:

- Met on 10/14

Year-end, quarterly RFF, and occupancy tax collections review

Audit to follow

Keep Rutherford County Beautiful Committee:

- No in person meeting, an emailed update was sent out to all committee members

The committee has agreed to function with Keep America Beautiful

The Trash Bowl was held Sept 11th through 25th and the county collected over 6,000 lbs. of trash within the county
Lake Lure Classical Academy was the winner of the Trash Bowl with 1,880 lbs. of trash

Trails Committee:

- Met on 9/21

The committee is continuing with the running spreadsheet
Jerry Stensland is working to add the GIS map to the spreadsheet
Looking at what grants can be applied for
DbD is going to be looking at the trails system to bring it into the RB plan

Relocate to Rutherford Committee:

- Met on 9/20

TDA was driving this committee to try and get product funding, administration, and marketing/communications
It was decided that advertising and marketing for this program of work should be put on hold for the time being until there is more housing available for relocation within Rutherford County
The committee members decided to put a hold on this but agreed to finish up with the website redesign and then reconvene in about 6 months

Information Committee:

- *No meeting*

Strategic Plan Committee:

- *No meeting*

Meeting with all the towns on the 27th and 28th of October
Looking at a ribbon cutting for Chimney Rock on December 9th
Looking at a ribbon cutting for Spindale on November 9th or 16th
Chimney Rock Climber's Trail ribbon cutting November 17th
Still looking at different fundraising efforts to get citizens more involved

Executive Committee:

- Met on 10/14

- **Wayfinding/Kiosks** – Kiosks timeline late October to mid November
- **Website** – New website to go live late November
- **Agency** – Increased budget request for marketing/implementation plan for marketing going well
- **Tourism Strategic Plan** – PMA on hold; Fundraising campaign to be reviewed – DbD meeting with all towns Oct. 27th and 28th to start
- **Welcome Center** – Staff update – RB display in Welcome Center coming soon
- **Committee Update** – Marketing, Agri-tourism, Relocate, KRCB and Trails
- **TDA – Staff Update** – TDA staff in place and doing well
- **TDA Budget Discussion** – Reviewed financials for year-end and Oct. RFF

Announcements:

Meeting Adjourned: 1:18pm