

September 5th 2019 Board Minutes

(Approved October 17th 2019)

Call to Order: 12:07 p.m.

Members Present: Dave Long, Richard Lundy, Willard Whitson, Kitty McCammon, Brandon Higgins, Jim Masek, and Jeff Geisler

Members Absent: Mary Jaeger-Gale

Ex-Officos Present: -----

Ex-Officos Absent: Eddie Holland and Paula Roach

Others Present: Don Cason, Taylor Hardin, Emily Ostertag, Karen Tegen, Agency (2), Media (2)

Public Comments: Gayle Clayton

Agenda (changes if necessary):

Approval: 1st: Dave Long

2nd: Brandon Higgins

Motion Passed.

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

Approval: 1st: Brandon Higgins

2nd: Richard Lundy

Motion Passed.

Finance Report:

Budget:

-One month of occupancy tax revenue, \$15,000 over last year

-Rolling Financial Summary reviewed

-Audit will begin in October

-Year End numbers reviewed

-2019-2020

- Current operating budget

- Next board meeting: report on quarterly results

Budget Amendments:

Budget Amendment #1

Capital Outlay – Wayfinding (70-6520-510-03-000)

Carryforward from unallocated funds from 2018-2019 budget of \$155,610 and move to the 2019-2020 budget line item to complete original scope of work

Budget Amendment #2

Professional Services-Strategic Plan (Implementation) (70-6520-191-00-000)

Carryforward from unallocated funds from 2018-2019 budget of \$250,000 and move to the 2019-2020 budget line item to complete original scope of work

Motion to Approve Budget Amendments 1 and 2:

Approval: 1st: Jeff Geisler

2nd: Jim Masek

Motion Passed.

Motion to accept finance report:

Approval: 1st: Kitty McCammon

2nd Dave Long

Motion Passed

Executive Director Report:

Highlights:

- Visit NC Meeting in Raleigh. There were several legislative representatives at the meeting, so it was a great opportunity to meet them.

- Attended Civil War Trail meeting. We learned about what a great asset our civil war sites can be, and how the trail is becoming more popular year after year

Welcome Center Update:

- Next meetings traffic/visitor numbers will reflect the Dirty Dancing Festival, which was rescheduled from August to September this year

Marketing Update:

- Full Page ad placed in Our State Magazine

- Organic mention of Dirty Dancing Festival in Carolina Country

- Half page ad placed in Carolina Panthers' Yearbook
- Placed ad on back of County-Wide coupon booklet published by the Daily Courier
- Organic mention of Chimney Rock in 'Only in Your State'
- Upcoming organic mention in WNC Magazine next summer for Lake Lure and Chimney Rock
- Cary NC Magazine is featuring Rutherford County as a travel destination, March of 2020
- Three media influencers visited Rutherford County during the month of August
- Visit NC will feature Rutherford County 'from a dog's perspective'
- Played Karen Waldrup music video, which was featured in Billboard's Top 100 list, featuring downtown Forest City
- Played Fork2Farmer video produced by NC State University featuring Rutherford County Agri-Tourism

The Agency Presentation

- Created, Developed & Managing Annual Marketing Plan in conjunction with RCTDA
- Reviewed the Working Budget
- Reviewed Graphic Design, TV, Digital, Website and Social Media Projects
- After the May approval, efforts were put toward producing television advertisements
- Played a new commercial featuring 'adventure' activities available in the county
- Played a new commercial featuring food, drink and entertainment in Forest City
- TV ads placed in July on WLOS made 573,952 impressions, with 15.95% reached. TV ads also ran in Raleigh, Charlotte, etc. They continue to rotate throughout all markets.
- Produced multiple digital advertisements during the time of video production
- Targeted areas:
Nashville, Asheville, Raleigh, Charlotte.
- Reviewed PPC Ad. Groups – key words used in online searches by target audiences
- All Social Media numbers are up

Committee Reports

Marketing:

Presentation from the Agency

- Reviewed Marketing Plan & Results:

- Print Ads.
- Website
- Social Media
- TV Ads.

Finance:

- Reviewed Year-End 2018-2019 Finance
 - Agreed upon line item & amounts to be rolled over to 2019-2020

-Wayfinding

-Tourism Asset Plan Implementation

- Discussed Timeline for Year-End Audit
- Continuing with STR Program
- Mary Jaeger-Gale and Jeff Geisler are the new committee members

Grant:

- Review grant requests
- Approved some grant applications
- Discussed over-arching ways in which we can improve
- Discussed the possibility of editing the eligibility guidelines

Information:

- Discussed meeting with Laura Doster from the Hickory Nut Gorge Chamber of Commerce
- Gave Welcome Center update, and discussed application/interview process for a new employee
- Determined that cleaning company will clean 2x per week for a deep cleaning of the Welcome Center

Retire NC:

- Did not meet, but will be meeting in September

Keep Rutherford County Beautiful:

- Litter Pick-Up Committee update

- Goal of 500 volunteers for fall clean-up
- Voted to purchase cameras, monitored by law enforcement, that will be placed throughout the county to catch people actively littering
- Discussed involvement with 'Recycle More NC'

TAF:

- Discussed the relationship between TAF and the RCTDA in managing funds generated by the Rutherford Bound Capital Campaign

Tourism Strategic Plan:

- Reviewed Grant and Local Funding
- Discussed Kick-Off
- Every town's Phase I project is underway (Lake Lure's Marina, Chimney Rock's Riverwalk entrance and streetscape, Rutherfordton's Kiwanis Park, Spindale's Streetscape, etc.)
- Destination by Design is working on various grants throughout the county

Executive:

- Reported and gave overviews on KRCB, Finance, Wayfinding, TAF, Tourism Master Plan, STR, etc.

Announcements:

- Board members provided with updated sheets of current committee members and board member information

Meeting Adjourned: 1:30 p.m.

Approval: 1st: Jeff Geisler

2nd: Jim Masek

Motion Passed.