



**RUTHERFORD COUNTY TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 29, 2013
BECHTLER HOUSE HERITAGE CENTER
RUTHERFORDTON, NC**

Members Present: Jeff Bradley, Dwayne Harris, Dan Hegeman, Denise Holland, Ann Washburn Hutchins, Lisa Sullivan, Ruffin Tanner

Members Absent: Dawn Hemmelgarn, Tim Ferris, James Ledgerwood

Staff Present: Jackie Wallace, Michelle Whitaker

Others Present: Michelle Yelton (McConnell Group), Jerry Stensland (Rutherford Outdoor Coalition), Raeann Turner (Finance)

Call to Order

Dan Hegeman called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Agenda

Lisa Sullivan made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Seconded by Jeff Bradley. Motion carried.

June 27, 2013 Minutes

Ann Washburn Hutchins made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by Jeff Bradley. Motion carried.

TDA Activity Reports

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

NC State Travel and Tourism numbers for 2012 indicated that Rutherford County remains 26th overall for dollars in regards to economic impact. Rutherford County had the 16th in highest growth (5.6%) in NC and Rutherford County has grown more in regards to economic impact as compared to the counties ranked immediately above it.

Financial Report

From June 2012 we are currently up 6.43% in occupancy tax collections. Jeff Bradley made a motion to accept the Financial Report. Seconded by Ann Washburn Hutchins. Motion carried.

Asset Development

Michelle Yelton, presenting

The TAF received corporation papers and are working on non-profit status. An event scheduled for Thursday, October 17th Celebrating Rutherford County Bechter Legacy will take place as a community-wide celebration. This is the first of many fundraisers.

Marketing

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

A new campaign is being developed for this year and will be unveiled at a later date. The campaign will continue to tie in many different types of media.

Public Relations

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

Michelle Yelton attended a media event in Charlotte promoting Rutherford County. Articles appeared in *USA Today* and *Our State* magazine. A couple of media tours are scheduled for this year as well. Media impressions are up 293 million since June; a lot of this results from the Dirty Dancing Festival. App and website work is progressing.

VIN-Wayfinding Committee Report

Dan Hegeman, presenting

After researching all options for the Wayfinding Master Plan, the committee voted to go with a joint proposal from Teague and Associates/Arnett Muldrow. This plan should be complete in the next six months and will involve countywide input.

Economic Impact Study on Recreation

Jerry Stensland, presenting

Studied outdoor recreation from a tourism perspective. Surveys of visitors showed that if there were more outdoor recreation opportunities they would stay longer and come more often. The same survey also showed a high interest from the outdoor recreation community in other types of tourism including agritourism and history and heritage. Recommendations included the creation a regional outdoor recreational partnership to consolidate resources, money and energy, possibly through the TAF, Chambers, and ICC.

Board Handbook 2013-14

Michelle Whitaker, presenting

Last year there were six work areas, but have recategorized to four. Asked board members to sign the Code of Conduct for the 2013-14 year.

Board Request

Lisa Sullivan stated that after looking over the budget again and prior to the TDA making additional hires, she suggested that Michelle Whitaker take a look at duties and staffing and come back to the executive committee with recommendations. There being no disagreement from the board, Whitaker said she would review this matter in a timely manner.

The next scheduled TDA board meeting was announced for Thursday, October 24th at the Powers Room in the 1927 Lake Lure Inn & Spa.

Motion to adjourn by Lisa Sullivan. Seconded by Dwayne Harris. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:22 p.m.