

**Town of Blowing Rock
Tourism Development Authority
June 2, 2020**

The Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority (TDA) met on Tuesday, June 2, 2020 beginning at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held via Webex virtual session. Present were Chairman Dean Bullis, Vice-Chairman Kevin Walker, Members Greg Tarbutton, Virginia Powell and Tim Gupton. Others present were Ex-officio Members Nicole Norman and Shane Fox, TDA Executive Director Tracy Brown, Assistant Director Amanda Lugenbell, and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner, who recorded the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bullis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Gupton made a motion to approve the March 3, 2020 regular meeting minutes as written, seconded by Member Tarbutton. Unanimously approved.

Member Powell made a motion to approve the May 19, 2020 budget presentation/budget work session minutes, seconded by Member Gupton. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- **FY 2020-2021 Budget Adoption**

Member Tarbutton made a motion to approve the FY 2020-2021 budget as presented, seconded by Member Gupton. Unanimously approved.

Monthly Reports

- **Financial Report – Occupancy Tax Proceeds Update**

Ex-Officio Member Nicole Norman stated occupancy tax collections through March of this FY '19 - '20 was down 42% or \$18,756 compared to last FY. For Fiscal year to date occupancy tax collection is up 3% or \$26,256 which is good considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Norman also reviewed expenditures and stated projections are staying in line. With no questions or comments from the Board, Chairman Bullis thanked Ms. Norman for her update.

- **Operations Report**

Executive Director Tracy Brown reviewed the third quarter operations report via PowerPoint.
Third Quarter Update– Attachment A

- **Media Discussion – Going Forward**

Mr. Brown reviewed the media plan and advised going forward he didn't feel the needed to spend money on advertising in vanity magazines. He explained that currently the TDA doesn't have

the funds to do so. He further explained advertising dollars should be spent going forward on trackable, digital ads.

Member Tarbutton asked if there was a way to see the demographics of who ads go out to; ie: age, gender etc.

Member Gupton asked what the businesses are seeing on the ground currently. Chairman Bullis advised a few months ago they were mainly seeing younger patrons, but now are seeing a more mature clientele which are bigger spenders. He further explained he surveyed people shopping in his store as to where they were from. He advised most are within a 80 to 100 mile radius of Blowing Rock.

Member Tarbutton advised at Chetola they are seeing more couples and groups which is encouraging. He felt for the foreseeable future most will be more “staycation” types of folks.

Mr. Brown advised he can dive into the analytics and have them to the Board for the next meeting. He further advised this was just of the Board’s information and to get some feedback but did not require a vote from the Board.

- **RFP for Management Plan**

Mr. Brown advised the purpose of this plan is to help guide the next five (5) years and assist with gauging success and failures. He explained the process will be to bid out to three (3) companies and will entail a year long study of tourism. Mr. Brown explained he left the dates blank as he felt like starting in the spring of 2021 and going through the following spring would be a good time frame. He further explained he would like to go ahead and start looking into firms as he felt their schedule would begin to fill up when the pandemic starts to slow down.

Member Gupton advised he liked the idea of spreading out over two budget years which will help with financing as well as getting the right answer from a detailed study.

Member Tarbutton made a motion to approve getting the ball rolling on looking into finding an entity to start the process, seconded by Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

Other

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Member Tarbutton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m., seconded by Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

TDA Chairman, Dean Bullis

Town Clerk, Hilari Hubner

Attachments

Third Quarter Update - Attachment A