

**Town of Blowing Rock
Tourism Development Authority
Minutes – May 29, 2013**

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority met on Wednesday, May 29, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. in a special meeting at Town Hall. Present were Chairperson Kent Tarbutton, Authority members Rob Dyer, Dean Bullis, Doug Matheson and Lianne Mattar, Ex-officio member Scott Hildebran and Executive Director Tracy Brown.

Ex-officio member Nicole Norman was absent.

Call to Order

Chairperson Tarbutton called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to review the proposed FY 2013-14 TDA Budget (**Attachment #1**). He also advised that a public hearing on the proposed FY 2013-14 Budget would be held at the June 4, 2013 TDA meeting.

Current Budget - Review

Chair Tarbutton opened discussions on the current budget. Ex-officio Member Hildebran began by reviewing the current year budget revenue and projected year-end estimates. Mr. Hildebran advised that occupancy tax revenues for April 2013 were 12.45% higher than April 2012, and that occupancy tax revenues for FY 2012-13 (July-April) were up 5.68% over FY 2011-12 (July-April).

Mr. Hildebran then reviewed the Revenue and Expenditures for the year and advised they were in line with projections. He reminded the Authority of an upcoming need for a budget amendment to cover revenue/expense for both the Wine Festival website domain and advertising with the Chamber of Commerce. He stated that the amendment would be on their June agenda for consideration.

Proposed Budget - Review

Chair Tarbutton opened discussions on the proposed FY 2013-14 Budget. Ex-officio Member Hildebran and TDA Executive Director Brown began by reviewing the projected revenue. The proposed budget conservatively increases occupancy revenues from \$684,980 in FY 2012-13 to \$693,890 in FY 2013-14.

Both then outlined expenditures for the proposed budget.

Topics discussed included:

- Tourism Marketing Survey budgeted at \$2,500 to cover ECU Survey. The East Carolina University Business School Division of Sustainable Tourism will be conducting a Visitor profile, specific to Blowing Rock. The survey will require registration by email, which will remain private with no solicitation. A drawing for a \$50 gift card will be held every two months from June-December academic purposes,

with a grand prize trip to Blowing Rock. The goal of the effort is to better identify our visitor and their motivations for visiting, etc.

- Increased travel by \$1,500 to cover costs associated with involvement with Blue Ridge Parkway Association and other tourism functions or conferences.
- Budget continues to fund \$14,000 for cooperative Events Planner position with Chamber of Commerce. The Authority agreed to review funding on a year to year basis, with the desire to:
 - Obtain demographic data (zip code survey) for events.
 - Stress quality over quantity (Polish feel/look)
 - Theme events to the area and our heritage
 - Entertain thoughts/suggestions of our consultants

With no further questions, the Authority agreed to move forward with the proposed budget and thanked Mr. Hildebran and Mr. Brown for their efforts on the proposed FY 2013-14 Budget. Chair Tarbutton once again reminded the Authority that a public hearing on the proposed FY 2013-14 Budget would be held at the June 4, 2013 TDA meeting.

TDA Executive Director Tracy Brown left the meeting. The Authority then discussed employee compensation and agreed to include a 2% cost of living market adjustment for the TDA full-time staff.

Other

Chair Tarbutton reminded the Authority that Bob Morgan, President of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, and Pat Riley, with Allen Tate Realtors, will be at Chetola tomorrow (May 30th) at 2:00 p.m. in the Evergreen Room to discuss the Charlotte economy and the possible impacts on Blowing Rock. He invited all members to attend if their schedules allowed.

Member Mattar mentioned that Jim Cottrell suggested the TDA think about ways to increase tourism during winter months. The Authority agreed to take the suggestion under advisement.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chairman Tarbutton adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Kent Tarbutton, Chairperson

Scott E. Hildebran, Secretary

Attachment

#1 – FY 2013-14 Proposed Budget