

**Town of Blowing Rock
Tourism Development Authority
Minutes – April 7, 2015**

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority met on Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. in a budget work session held at Town Hall. Present were Authority Chairman Kent Tarbutton, Vice Chairman Rob Dyer and Members Dean Bullis, Lianne Mattar and Doug Matheson, Ex-officio members Scott Fogleman and Nicole Norman, and Executive Director Tracy Brown.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kent Tarbutton called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes from December 9, 2014 by Member Matheson, second by Member Dyer, Unanimously approved.

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. Financial Report

Ex-officio Member Nicole Norman began by reviewing fiscal year to date occupancy tax revenue through February 2015 collections. Ms. Norman stated collections for February were up 21.59% or \$7,578 compared to February 2014, while fiscal year to date collections are up 8.35% or \$48,441.24, compared to fiscal year 2014.

She then reviewed the Revenue and Expenditure Statements, indicating the financial statements were printed at the end of March or 75% into the fiscal year. Several line items were reviewed which had one time expenditures or seasonal factors affecting their budgetary progression. **Attachment #1 - Financial Report**

2. Operations Report

Executive Director Brown reviewed the previous quarter's (Jan.-March) operation activities via Power Point presentation:

- Occupancy Tax collections for quarter 1 (2 months collected to date)- up approximately 16%
- Walk-in traffic- up 21%
- Phone inquiries- down 46% (due to mass communication scam in 2014)
- Web Visits- up 20%
- Visitor Guides- up 38%
- Weather issues- 27%
- Annual report to Town Council
- Managed, updated and redeveloped three websites
- Average web session duration- up 6.4%
- Bounce rate- down 20%
- Positive website indicators since platform changes
- New Logos Developed (i.e.: Fall Classic, WineFestival, etc.)
- Promoting: WinterFest, Trout Derby, Valentines Stroll, Beer Month, Favorite Things, Romantic Getaways, etc.
- Using new photography
- Co-ops. with Outside Magazine, Division of Tourism, Garden & Gun Magazine, etc.
- 7 Press releases (Holiday's, Winter in Blowing Rock, TDA End of Year Recap, WinterFest, Polar Plunge, Trout Derby, Beer Month & WineFestival - 28 confirmed placements
- FaceBook fan base up to 28,037
- Weekly Tattler
- Constant Contact e-mailings
- Looking ahead: AAA FAM Tour, Wine & Food Festival, Budget, Web Maintenance, Horse Show, Blowing Rock Fall Classic, etc.

Attachment #2 – Operations Activity Report Power Point

3. Other

Budget Worksession

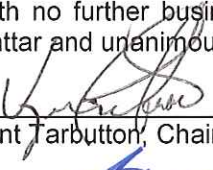
The FY 2016 Budget Worksession meeting was scheduled for April 28th at 3:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

Memorial Park Kiosk Placement

Ex-officio member Scott Fogleman then requested the Authority members provide input on placement of the information kiosk located in front of the Rotary Gazebo currently under construction. Mr. Fogleman indicated the location could be flexible due to a kiosk being located in front of the 1888 Museum in front of the park. A couple locations mentioned were Gossip Park and in front of Tanger Outlet. The idea of an electronic kiosk option was also mentioned. Authority members agreed to give the issue further consideration and discuss it again.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion to close the meeting was made by Member Matheson and seconded by Member Mattar and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.



Kent Tarbutton, Chairman



Scott Fogleman, Secretary

Attachment #1 - Financial Report

Attachment #2 – Operations Activity Report Power Point