

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Tourism Development Authority
June 2, 2015

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority (TDA) met on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street Blowing Rock N.C. Present was Vice-Chair Rob Dyer, and Authority members Dean Bullis, Lianne Mattar, and Doug Matheson. Chairperson Kent Tarbutton and Ex-officio Member Nicole Norman were out of Town and unable to attend. Others in attendance were Ex-officio Member Scott Fogleman, TDA Executive Director Tracy Brown, Assistant Director Amanda Lugenbell and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Dyer called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes for meetings held on April 7th and 28th, 2015 as written was made by Authority member Bullis, seconded by Authority member Mattar. Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. FY 2015-2016 TDA Recommended Budget

A public hearing was opened by Vice-Chair Dyer to receive comments regarding the FY 2015-2016 Recommended Budget originally presented to the Board for discussion during their May meeting. No public comments were made and the public hearing was closed by Vice Chair Dyer.

Authority member Matheson made a motion to approve the FY 2015-2016 Recommended Budget totaling \$826,305 as presented, seconded by Authority member Bullis. Unanimously approved. **FY 2015-2016 Recommended Budget – Attachment 1**

Authority member Mattar asked for clarification regarding the \$150,000 allocated toward the Town's gateway project. Town Manager Fogleman explained those funds were given toward the entire gateway program and as of yet, no decision had been made regarding the design of the gateway program.

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. Financial Report

Ex-officio Member Fogleman gave a brief financial report stating that occupancy tax proceeds were better than what had been budgeted. He stated for fiscal year 2015-2016, the budget reflected only a 3% growth increase which was on the conservative side. Mr. Fogleman stated things were progressing on track with no unexpected items having occurred thus far.

2. TDA Executive Director Report

Executive Director Brown stated that TDA revenue was up by 16.1% for the month of April compared to last year. He also advised, after tracking the months of April and May of this year, walk-in traffic at the Visitor's Center was up approximately 19.89% and website visits were up 33.3%; however, visitor guide distribution was down slightly. Mr. Brown stated that during these two months, there had been weather related issues approximately 25% of the time.

Mr. Brown mentioned that several of the event websites, with the exception of the Winterfest website had been updated for continuity.

Mr. Brown commented that currently Blowing Rock was being advertised on several billboards located in Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, etc. He talked about earned media, television advertisements, etc. Mr. Brown advised the area was currently being advertised on Pandora radio.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Brown mentioned the TDA's partnership with High Country Host was progressing well.

Town Manager Fogleman asked Authority members to give some thought to their preferences regarding the Town's Gateway Program and showed renderings of the design samples.

Authority members also expressed they did not want the Hwy 321 By-Pass to be called a "by-pass"; and suggested the road be named "Blowing Rock Boulevard."

Authority members discussed the use of golf carts, trolleys, mini buses, etc. as potential ways to help with public transportation in Town.

Town Manager Fogleman reminded everyone of the upcoming ribbon-cutting for the American Legion on Monday, June 8, 2015 at 3:30 p.m.

OTHER

Authority member Matheson mentioned complaints from merchants on Main Street regarding the time for Town parades, due to the disruption of their business on parade days. Authority member Bullis suggested the parades be held later in the day after several of the businesses had closed. Mr. Brown commented that he had been to different areas that held night-time parades and they were beautiful.

ADJORNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. Members were advised their next meeting would be on Tuesday, July 7, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

VICE CHAIR _____
Rob Dyer

ATTEST _____
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENT (06-02-2015)
FY 2015-2016 Recommended Budget – Attachment 1