

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Tourism Development Authority
October 6, 2015

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority (TDA) met on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street Blowing Rock N.C. Present were Chairperson Kent Tarbutton, Authority Members Rob Dyer, Dean Bullis, Doug Matheson and Lianne Mattar. Others present were Ex-officio Members Scott Fogleman and Nicole Norman, TDA Executive Director Tracy Brown and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes as written for the July 21, 2015 meeting was made by Member Matheson, seconded by Member Bullis. Unanimously approved.

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. Financial Report – Occupancy Tax Proceeds

Finance Officer Norman gave a brief financial report stating that occupancy taxes through August 2015 collections had increased 10.53% or \$23,524.68 fiscal year to date over fiscal year 2014-2105 while August collections came in 6.67% or \$7,109.84 higher than August 2014 collections. As of October 1st expenditures should be on average at 25% of the total budget and expenditure items running higher were reviewed.

Member Matheson asked for clarification regarding the increase in occupancy tax revenue. He stated that it had been in the press, the increase was due to room rate increases instead of an increase in traffic.

TDA Director Brown advised that he had called 17 different motel/hotels in Town and there had been a slight increase in rates; however, the majority of the increase in occupancy tax revenue was due to traffic and demand.

Member Tarbutton agreed the increase was due to a combination of traffic and demand as well as an increase in rates.

2. Operations Report

TDA Director Brown began with a power point presentation that showed a gross revenue comparison of January through August 2014 and to the same period in 2015.

He also reviewed visitor center information statistics and updated everyone on several marketing efforts being made.

Director Brown commented there had been only 20 inclement weather days this past quarter which had contributed to an increase in occupancy tax revenue as well. He advised that the TDA staff was currently maintaining 4 different websites, such as Winterfest, Wine Fest, Symphony by the Lake and blowingrock.com.

Director Brown also advised that the visitor and dining guides were updated during the first quarter. He advised the recent Art and Antique Show had been a success with vendors seeing an increase in sales and traffic.

In reference to public relations, Director Brown stated the TDA had created a logo and press release for the fall classic bike ride. A press release was created and distributed for the Mayview Madness race as well. Examples of ad placements were presented.

3. Other

TDA Chair Tarbutton updated everyone on the status of the High County Host.

A six-month lease renewal between the TDA and the Blowing Rock Art & History Museum which would expire in April 2016 was discussed. Ex-officio Member Fogleman stated the rate would remain the same.

Member Bullis made a motion to approve the lease renewal as presented, seconded by Member Dyer. Unanimously approved. **Lease Agreement – Attachment A**

TDA Director Brown also mentioned the possible consolidation of the TDA and BRAHM front desk position during the fall/ winter months in order to save on cost.

Member Dyer made a motion to approve the consolidation of the front desk position during the fall/winter months as discussed, seconded by Member Bullis. Unanimously approved.

The Authority agreed to hold their annual planning retreat on Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at BRAHM from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Kent Tarbutton, TDA Chairperson

Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

Lease Agreement – Attachment A