

# **Town of Blowing Rock**

## **Tourism Development Authority**

### **Minutes – October 21, 2004**

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority met on Thursday, October 21, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. in a special meeting. Present were Chairperson Bernard Keele, Vice-Chair Kent Tarbutton, Authority members Keith Tester, Lynn Drury and Phil Pickett, and Ex-officio member Scott Hildebran. Ex officio member Margaret Pierce was out of town. Deputy Town Clerk Sonya Clerk was also in attendance.

#### **Call to Order**

Chairperson Keele called the meeting to order and welcomed the members and guests. He advised all those in attendance that Crown Communication (Kathryn Blanchard and Tim Minor) would be reporting on their initial branding/marketing/web site design concepts.

#### **Presentation**

Member Drury introduced Crown Communications representatives Kathryn Blanchard and Tim Minor.

Ms. Blanchard stated that Crown Communications had met with numerous local citizens and groups in gathering information on Blowing Rock, including meeting with members of the TDA, the Chamber of Commerce, NC State Tourism, High Country Host, and Southwood Corp. signage, etc.

Mr. Minor distributed an agenda of the topics to be covered during the meeting (Attachment #1) – Report on State Tourism activities, web site development, brand development, advertising calendar and preparation for public meetings.

#### Report on State Tourism activities

Mr. Minor provided the TDA with copies of the NC State Division of Tourism and Film 2004-05 Strategic Plan (Attachment #2).

#### Web site development

He then reviewed the outline for a tourism web site (Attachment #3). He advised that the web site would be functional as well as attractive. He requested the Authority to provide a list of all stakeholders and contact information for all possible Blowing Rock tourism destinations. He also stated that cross-linking of items would be available throughout the site.

Member Tester suggested creating a category for arts and culture and an area for tourism packages.

Vice-Chair Tarbutton mentioned including some type of rating system, i.e., price range, quality rating - AAA/Mobil, etc. for the various tourism venues.

Member Drury recommended assisting local businesses with their web site development via some type of tourism grant.

Chairperson Keele emphasized the need for a focus on Blowing Rock businesses and developing a rate schedule for those outside of Blowing Rock.

Mr. Minor stated that they would keep all these comments in mind as the web site development process continued.

### Brand

Mr. Minor stated that in branding campaigns you must be authentic. He further stated that the brand concepts were developed based on the review of Town Center minutes, the TDA Strategic Plan, the branding vision statement and on the premise that "you deliver what you promise" (Attachment #4).

Mr. Minor then reviewed the initial branding concepts developed by Crown Communications (Attachment #5 - A through E) --

A – Nostalgia (The Blowing Rock)

Classic, scenic

B – Contemporary (Art, Outdoor, Food, Shopping)

Modern, 4 colors for 4 seasons

C – Conservative Contemporary (Food, Shopping/Art, Outdoor)

Classy

D – Folksy (Main Street)

Clean and simple, invites exploration

E – Seal Modification (Town Seal)

Crown of the Blue Ridge

Mr. Minor then asked for TDA member reactions and comments.

After a discussion of each concept, the TDA consensus was to eliminate option A, B, and D from consideration. It was recommended that Crown Communications pursue a rework of options C and E and also include a Blowing Rock word mark for further consideration. The modifications will include more vibrant colors, additional photo components and examples with variations of size.

Ms. Blanchard suggested the use of a focus group from the Charlotte area once a consensus is reached on a concept to gain feedback from potential visitors.

Mr. Minor stated that tag lines for a media campaign would be developed and discussed at a future meeting.

### Advertising Calendar

Mr. Minor concluded by stating that they would discuss media concepts and co-op opportunities in the coming weeks for the March 2005 advertising campaign. He advised that they would need to reserve space in various outlets in the near future.

Chairperson Keele thanked Crown Communications for their efforts and advised that the TDA would continue discussions on all of these issues at the next meeting.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

It was the consensus that a special meeting be held on Friday, October 29, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss personnel, with follow-up with Crown Communications to discuss branding/marketing/web site design concepts at 10:00 a.m.

Due to November 2<sup>nd</sup> being an Election Day, it was the consensus that the November 2, 2004 regular meeting date will be instead held on Monday, November 1, 2004 at 4:00 p.m., with a public session with Crown Communications to be held at 5:00 p.m.

Member Drury agreed to prepare a media press release on the public meeting session.

### **Other**

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus that the TDA should join the High Country Host.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, Chairperson Keele adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

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Bernard Keele, Chairperson

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Scott E. Hildebran, Secretary

### **Attachments**

**#1 – Meeting Agenda**

**#2 – NC State Division of Tourism and Film 2004-05 Strategic Plan**

**#3 – Tourism Web Site Outline**

**#4 – Qualities and Vision Statement**

**#5 – Branding Concepts**

**A – Nostalgia (The Blowing Rock)**

**B – Contemporary (Art, Outdoor, Food, Shopping)**

**C – Conservative Contemporary (Food, Shopping/Art, Outdoor)**

**D – Folksy (Main Street)**

**E – Seal Modification (Town Seal)**