

Tourism Development Authority

Minutes – September 5, 2006

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority met on Tuesday, September 5, 2006 at 8:00 a.m. in a regular meeting. Present were Chairperson Bernie Keele, Vice-Chair Kent Tarbutton, Authority members Phil Pickett, Lynn Drury and Keith Tester, and Ex-officio members Scott Hildebran and Margaret Pierce.

Dave Tomsy, of WC&T was also present.

Call to Order

Chairperson Keele called the meeting to order and welcomed the members.

Approval of Minutes – July 5 & August 21, 2006

Chairperson Keele entertained the approval of the July 5 & August 21, 2006 meeting minutes. Motion by Member Pickett and seconded by Member Tester to approve the July 5 & August 21, 2006. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Chairperson Keele introduced Finance Officer Margaret Pierce to review the FY 2006-07 budget to date.

Finance Officer Margaret Pierce then reviewed the monthly financial statement and the FY 2006-07 Occupancy Tax collections year-to-date through July 2006. She stated that July revenues, totaling a gross of \$120,889.02, were up compared to July 2006. Ms. Pierce also advised that revenue has been up for the past fifteen months and that expenditures for the year were in line with projections.

Member Tester asked for an explanation of the purchased services line-item. Ms. Pierce responded that this line-item includes photography services and that a budget amendment would be needed later in the year to reflect this expense.

Monthly Activity Report

Chairperson Keele asked the Authority if there were any questions related to the report on Visitor Center activities (**Attachment #1**).

Visitor Guide

The Authority discussed their desire to continue to review the intent of the Visitor Guide prior to printing. Various questions raised included – are we missing any additional merchants?; what are the increased costs with a 40-page guide rather than a 32-page guide?; and how often do we print and update the guide?

Chairperson Keele suggested that the Authority discuss this matter further in the next few weeks.

Visitor Map

The Authority briefly discussed their concern with the newly produced Chamber of Commerce Visitor Map, as it is called the “Official Map and Guide” and the exclusion of many in-town restaurants/shops/lodging establishments. Vice-Chair Tarbutton informed the Authority that an insert was being produced that would include these excluded establishments.

WC&T Agency Update

Dave Tomsy updated the TDA on the marketing activities underway. He stated the following publications had articles on Blowing Rock –

Tampa Bay Magazine – will be visiting this week

Relaxation Magazine – Winston-Salem based for N.C. physicians

Southern Living Magazine – photo of Rumples Church

Asheville Citizen-Times – 1½ page article on Blowing Rock

Palmetto Parent – supplement distributed in Greenville, Columbia, Low Country, S.C.

Orlando Magazine – article over the summer

Charlotte Taste – upcoming article on Hayes Performing Arts Center

Womans Day – upcoming article to run regionally in October 3, 2006 issue

Southern Living Magazine – article on woman's weekend to run in 8-12 months

Marquee Magazine – article ran in July/August 2006 edition

The Authority thanked Mr. Tomsy for his efforts.

Master Signage Plan Update

Ex-Officio Member Hildebran advised that the Town was working on issues with the N.C. Department of Transportation on placement of signage in DOT right-of-way – specifically regarding safety issues of non-DOT signage. He stated that the Town Council has contracted with former N.C. DOT Boardmember Sam Erby to follow-up on the matter.

Closed Session

Upon motion of Member Pickett and seconded by Vice-Chair Tarbutton, the Authority convened at 8:25 a.m. in closed session pursuant to - N.C.G.S. 143.318.11 (a)(6) for discussion of personnel issues. Motion unanimously approved.

At the conclusion of the discussions, the closed session was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Other

After a brief discussion, motion of Member Pickett and second by Vice-Chair Tarbutton to approve a salary increase to \$10 per hour for part-time employee Marcia Vaughn. Motion unanimously approved.

Motion by Member Pickett and second by Member Drury to place Sonya Long on the part-time employee roster. Motion unanimously approved.

The Authority then agreed to a joint meeting with the Chamber of Commerce Executive Board to discuss tourism-related personnel structure issues scheduled tentatively for Saturday, September 16, at 8:00 a.m. at Chetola Resort, with an alternate date of Friday, September 29, at 8:00 a.m. at Chetola Resort. Vice-Chair Tarbutton agreed to follow-up on the meeting.

Adjournment

With no further business, motion by Vice-Chair Tarbutton and seconded by Member Pickett to adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously approved. Chairperson Keele adjourned the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Bernard Keele, Chairperson

Scott E. Hildebran, Secretary

Attachments

#1 – TDA Monthly Report