

Tourism Development Authority

Minutes – January 2, 2007

The Town of Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority met on Tuesday, January 2, 2007 at 8:30 a.m. in a regular meeting. Present were Chairperson Bernie Keele, Authority members Phil Pickett and Lynn Drury, and Ex-officio members Scott Hildebran and Margaret Pierce. Executive Director Tracy Brown and Dave Tomsy, of WC&T, were also present.

Vice-Chair Kent Tarbutton and Authority Member Keith Tester were out of town.

Call to Order

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

Approval of Minutes – November 7, 2006

Chairperson Keele entertained the approval of the November 7, 2006 meeting minutes. Motion by Member Drury and seconded by Member Pickett to approve the November 7, 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 November 2006. She stated that November revenues, totaling a gross of \$50,879.85, were up compared to November 2005. Ms. Pierce also advised that revenue continues to be up and that expenditures for the year were in line with projections.

FY 2006-07 Audit

Chairperson Keele entertained the approval of the FY 2006-07 Audit Contract with Combs, Tennant & Carpenter, P.C. for \$3,500. Motion by Member Drury and seconded by Member Pickett to approve the FY 2006-07 Audit Contract with Combs, Tennant & Carpenter, P.C. for \$3,500. Unanimously approved. (**Attachment #1**)

Operations Activity Report

The Authority briefly reviewed the Operations Activity Report on Visitor Center activities. Due to the short time frame of employment for the new executive director, the update on the Visitor Center, Web Site, etc. was deferred to the upcoming annual retreat.

WC&T Agency Update

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

Charlotte Taste – article on Hayes Performing Arts Center

Tampa Bay Magazine – article on Blowing Rock

Asheville Citizen-Times – article on Christmas in Blowing Rock

Gourmet Magazine – upcoming article on high-end dining in Blowing Rock

Knoxville Magazine – upcoming February article on Blowing Rock

He also mentioned upcoming visits of foreign travel writers from both Germany and Canada. Mr. Tomsy then inquired about a potential invitation to travel writer Jerry Shiver of *USA Today* regarding the Wine Festival. The Authority requested that Mr. Tomsy discuss the issue with Director Brown and then make a decision on the invitation.

The Authority briefly discussed the need for better communication with the various Blowing Rock events (Winterfest, Wine Festival and Mitford Festival) and requested Director Brown to work toward those interests.

The Authority thanked Mr. Tomsy for his efforts.

Master Signage Plan Update

Ex-Officio Member Hildebran advised that the Town had received tentative approval from the N.C. Department of Transportation on placement of signage in the DOT right-of-way – specifically regulatory signage. He stated that staff hoped to have the signage manufactured and erected in the next month or so. He also stated that the next phase of the Master Signage Plan would be to have information kiosks designed in the near future, which would replace the few remaining street business directory signs.

Retreat

Chairperson Keele shared a tentative 2007 Retreat Agenda with the Authority for their review and comment. (**Attachment #2**) He reminded the Board that the retreat would be held on January 11, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. at Chetola Resort and would probably last most of the day.

Other

Chairperson Keele welcomed Director Brown to his first meeting since taking his position and asked if he had any comments. Mr. Brown stated that he was getting acclimated to the position and would discuss his initial observations at the upcoming retreat.

Adjournment

With no further business, motion by Member Pickett and seconded by Member Drury 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 – FY 2006-07 Audit Contract

#2 – Tentative Retreat Agenda

