

**TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
ANNUAL RETREAT – November 1, 2017**

The Tourism Development Authority (TDA) held their annual retreat on Thursday, November 1, 2017 beginning at 9:00 a.m. The retreat was held at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street Blowing Rock. Present were Chairman Dean Bullis, Members Rob Dyer, Doug Matheson, Lorry Mulhern and Lance Campbell. Others present were Ex-officio Member Nicole Norman, TDA Executive Director Tracy Brown, Assistant Director Amanda Lugenbell, and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner, who recorded the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bullis called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Matheson made a motion to approve the August 1 regular meeting and October 5, 2017 special meeting minutes as written, seconded by Member Campbell. Unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT/BUDGET REVIEW

- **FY 2017 Audit Report**

Jason Carpenter from Combs, Tennant and Carpenter reviewed the fiscal year 2017 Audit. Mr. Carpenter advised the TDA received the highest level of audit opinion and the TDA had a positive change in fund balance in the amount of \$148,392. Mr. Carpenter further advised he felt that change was attributed to about \$100,000 additional occupancy tax collected in the prior year. Mr. Carpenter stated currently the unassigned fund balance is sitting at 47% of expenditures. Mr. Carpenter thanked the TDA Board for allowing Combs, Tennant and Carpenter to serve as their audit firm for FY 2016. **FY 2017 Audit - Attachment A**

- **FY 2018 Audit Contract**

The Board briefly discussed the audit contract. Member Mulhern made a motion to accept the 2018 audit contract from Combs, Tennant and Carpenter in the amount of \$4,500, seconded by Member Dyer. Unanimously approved. **FY 2018 - Attachment B**

- **Budget Amendment**

Ms. Norman presented a Budget Amendment to the Board. Member Mulhern made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment, seconded by Member Dyer. Unanimously approved. **Budget Amendment - Attachment C**

FY 2017 REVIEW & FUTURE PLANNING

- **Occupancy Tax Collections & Financial Statement Review**

Finance Officer Nicole Norman stated occupancy gross tax collections July through September 2017 totaled \$350,720.32, 3% below last September. Ms. Norman advised fiscal year to date collections were down 6.23% or \$23,000 compared to the same period last year. She commented this is the first down September in approximately four years. Ms. Norman advised

current year expenditures were at 33% and reviewed several expenditure items in more detail with the Board.

Ms. Norman presented a Budget Ordinance Amendment to the Board. Member Dyer made a motion to approve the amendment, seconded by Member Mulhern. Unanimously approved.

- **Update from Chamber of Commerce**

Executive Director Brown reviewed the Chamber events; Winterfest, Savor, Art in the Park and Symphony by the Lake for the upcoming year via Power Point. **Chamber Update - Attachment D**

- **Operations Report**

Executive Director Brown reviewed the first Quarter operation via Power Point. **First Quarter Report - Attachment E**

- **STR Helper Presentation Session via Phone**

Members listened via phone to a presentation on Short Term Rental (STR) helper. After the call Members briefly discussed. Chairman Bullis advised he felt this should be a Town and a TDA cooperative effort. Member Matheson stated the Town needs an ordinance for Short Term Rentals. Mr. Brown asked for a price quote to be sent via email.

Member Mulhern made a motion to proceed with STR and for the Town to put into place a policy/ordinance and a cost share of fifty/fifty with the Town, seconded by Member Campbell. Unanimously approved.

- **Infrastructure Support**

Executive Director Tracy Brown discussed upcoming infrastructure donation requests from Middle Fork Greenway, Blue Ridge Parkway and Laurel Lane for the upcoming budget. Members briefly discussed Shuttle Service in Blowing Rock. Ex-officio Norman advised the Shuttle wouldn't be infrastructure, be operational. Members also briefly discussed the Gateway project.

- **Strategic Plan Review and Update**

Executive Director Brown gave Members a minor revised version of the Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority Strategic Plan. Members unanimously agreed to review the Strategic Plan and discuss at the March 13, 2018 Meeting. **Revised Strategic Plan - Attachment F**

Other

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 2:25 p.m. Member Mulhern made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Member Campbell. At 2:40 p.m. Member Campbell made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Member Mulhern. Unanimously approved. Member Mulhern made a motion to give Mr. Brown a \$3,000 performance bonus effective next pay period, seconded by Member Campbell.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

TDA Chairman, Dean Bullis

Town Clerk, Hilari Hubner

Attachments

FY 2017 Audit – Attachment A

FY 2018 - Attachment B

Budget Amendment - Attachment C

Chamber Update - Attachment D

First Quarter Report - Attachment E

Revised Strategic Plan - Attachment F