



MEETING MINUTES
Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
February 15, 2023 (Wednesday) @1:00 p.m.
In Person Meeting – 98 Cope Creek Rd., Sylva, NC

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Mr. Fletcher.

- **Members in attendance:** Executive Director Nick Breedlove; Daniel Fletcher, Chair; Robert Jumper, Vice Chair; Board Members Craig Smith, Dale Collins, Darlene Fox, Julie Spiro, Mark Jones, and Mandy Cantrell
- **Members absent:** Megan Orr, Vice Chair; Ashlie Mitchell, Secretary; and Stephanie Edwards
- **Others in attendance:** Cheryl Osborne, Minutes Clerk, Ann Bernard and Carter Long, Lou Hammond Group; Rachel Covey, BGRM.

Approve Amended Agenda

The closed session has been removed.

MOTION: Robert Jumper moved to approve the amended agenda. Dale Collins seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Recognize Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and County Commissioner

Daniel Fletcher, Chair, introduced Mandi Cantrell as the new Board member.

Megan Orr, Vice Chair, was absent.

Ashlie Mitchell, Secretary, was absent.

Mark Jones, County Commissioner, reported that he recently visited the Jackson County airport to view new airplane traffic tracking equipment installed that shows the number of airplanes flying in the country and tell what type of plane. He also gave statistics on the January airport activity—100 planes landed. Eighty planes were visitors to Jackson County.

All members present introduced themselves by presenting their current positions in the tourism industry.

Review and Approval of December 15, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Minutes of meeting is available on the JCTDA website. They were also attached to the agenda for this meeting. No comments were made.

MOTION: *Robert Jumper moved to approve meeting minutes. Craig Smith seconded. The motion carried.*

Review and Approval of December 31, 2022 and January 31, 2023 Financial Reports

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for December include Occupancy Tax collections of \$205,798.80 with penalties of \$213.33 and YTD collection totals of \$1,460,276.44 which is 70.89% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$32,624.08. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$32,865.00 and the VACASA, NC total was \$8,825.03. 82 accounts reported rentals for November rentals (decrease of 4 accounts from last year). Collections were down 3.08% from the same period in 2021. The December 31, 2022 cash balance is \$318,808.37 with investments totaling \$3,000,000.00. December expenses were \$109,654.98 with FYTD expenses totaling \$919,604.88 with encumbrances of \$64,683.75 for a combined total of \$984,288.63, equaling 36.78% of the budget.

Ms. Fox presented the financial report as follows. Highlights for January include Occupancy Tax collections of \$146,519.05 with penalties of \$15.43 and YTD collection totals of \$1,606,795.49 which is 78.00% of the budget. Airbnb collections totaled \$26,794.96. The Home Away and VRBO total was \$30,380.59 and the VACASA, NC total was \$7,104.59. 77 accounts reported rentals for December rentals (increase of 6 accounts from last year). Collections were down 2.91% from the same period in 2021. The January 31, 2023 cash balance is \$420,850.46 with investments totaling \$3,000,000.00. January expenses were \$55,685.66 with FYTD expenses totaling \$975,290.54 with encumbrances of \$54,845.60 for a combined total of \$1,034,136.14, equaling 38.49% of the budget.

MOTION: *Dale Collins moved to approve the December and January financial reports as presented. Craig Smith seconded. The motion carried.*

Review Grant Request – Greening Up the Mountains

Greening Up the Mountains has requesting \$2,500 for general festival support to get attendance back up to pre-COVID levels. The Executive Committee recommends approval of the request for the full amount.

MOTION: *A motion from the Executive Committee doesn't require a second motion. Motion carried.*

JCTDA Director's Brief

Mr. Breedlove sent Director's Brief by email. Highlights are as follows:

- The new hire for the Social Media Manager, Kara Addy, will be joining the team February 27.
- The new Visitor Guide will be issued mid-to-late March.
- The TDA is anticipating a grant request from Pinnacle Park Foundation within the next month that will be greater than the usual grant request for doing a master plan for Pinnacle Park. The park is the place where visitors are sent, especially during the winter when other hiking venues are closed.
- Mr. Breedlove will be working on on-boarding materials for the new employee during the coming week, then he will focus on the 2023 budget.
- New businesses are coming to Sylva and Dillsboro—Meatballs Pizzeria in Sylva and Carolina Smoothies in Cashiers. The Jarrett House anticipates opening next year. They are currently trying to get a water line installed. Balsam Mountain Inn anticipates opening in April with approximately 50 hotel rooms available.
- The Town of Sylva is going to use grant funds to upgrade the heavily used Bridge Park. The upgrades will cost more than the original amount of the grant the town received and the town is going to apply for a TDA grant for the cost overrun.
- Mr. Breedlove briefed the new County Commissioners on the activities of the JCTDA recently. The presentation was well received, and Mr. Breedlove looks forward to working with the commission.

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Director Report – December/January

Ms. Spiro shared news on the activities of the Chamber.

- The Chamber will hold an open house in March.
- There will be the second annual River Road litter clean-up February 21.
- Advance Business Equipment will be hosting an event at the Lazy Hiker February 23.
- Friends Night Out will be held March 30.
- Concerts on the Creek has been booked, along with the July 4th fireworks.
- Ms. Spiro showed new retail items that are available at the Chamber including the very popular Sourwood Honey.

Cashiers Area Chamber Director Report

Ms. Edwards was absent.

New Business

Tiffany Collins was originally hired as the Social Media Content Specialist as a part-time employee. The Executive Committee has agreed to raise her hourly rate by \$2/hour to \$25.00. The additional funds are in the budget so there is no budget amendment.

MOTION: Robert Jumper moved to approve the hourly rate increase for Ms. Collins. Craig Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Updates from Individual Board Members

Mr. Jumper commented that Cherokee is currently performing a major water and sewer upgrade which will last 6-10 months with a break during tourist season. He also announced that One Feather has added a new column of individual county events with links.

Anne Bernard presented updates on Lou Hammond Group activities.

Rachel Coyle updated BGRM activities of the past month.

Daniel Fletcher asked what was the time-line for construction on Highway 107 between Tuckaseegee and Glenville by the river. Mr. Breedlove said that he would check with DOT. Mr. Breedlove mentioned that the DOT has a feature called "Fix a Pothole." If someone reports a pothole, it is usually fixed the next day.

Craig Smith reported that Bear Lake is working on a social media influencer event at Castle Ladyhawke.

Dale Collins reminded all that the Park Service parking pass goes into effect in March.

Announcements

None

Adjourn

MOTION: Dale Collins motioned to adjourn. seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:59 p.m. by Mr. Fletcher.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held March 15, 2023 in person at JCTDA headquarters unless otherwise posted.



Ashlie Mitchell, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board
Approved: March 15, 2023