

**JACKSON COUNTY
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, May 1, 2013 1:00 p.m.
Cashiers Glenville Recreation Center**

MINUTES

Attendees: Alex Bell, Cherie Bowers, Bob Dews, Stephanie Edwards, Ken Fernandez, Darlene Fox, Vicki Greene, Jim Hartbarger, Debby Hattler, Mary Lanning, Mickey Luker, Clifford Meads, Vick Patel, Brien Peterkin, Russ Seagle, Julie Spiro and Merrily Teasley. Absent: Julie Stockton and John Woods.

Chairman Clifford Meads called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. A motion was made by Ken Fernandez, seconded by Debby Hattler, to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 13, 2013, which was unanimously approved.

Darlene Fox presented the financial report including taxes collected. Revenues generated in April 2013 were \$24,612.72 which was 38% higher than the previous year with more accommodations reporting.

Stephanie Edwards, Executive Director of the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce, reported on current activities including visitor inquiries and special events. Of note were the upcoming Tour de Cashiers Mountain Cycling Experience on May 4 with more than 300 riders expected; The Mountain Challenge to be held in Cashiers July 25 & 27, featuring World #1 tennis professionals Andy Roddick and Jim Courier, with more than 2,000 spectators expected; and a Legislative Update on May 3 by US Congressman Mark Meadows who will speak on transportation and economic issues which impact community and tourism development.

Julie Spiro, Executive Director of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, reported on current activities including: Visitor inquiries, media coverage, cooperative advertising placement in AAA Going Places and other public relations activities.

Chair Russ Seagle presented the Finance Committee's recommendations for 2013-2014 TDA grants. He explained that due to confusion about grant guidelines, the deadline for submission will be extended. Several applicants will be contacted for additional information before decisions will be made on their requests. The following applications for grants up to \$1,200 were approved: Greater Cashiers Area Merchants Association (Blues, Brew & BBQ and Motorcycle Poker Run, Groovin' on the Green concert series; and Leaf Festival), Western North

Carolina Pottery Festival/Dillsboro, Dillsboro Merchants Association Holiday Luminaries, and Mountain Wildlife Days/Sapphire Valley.

A motion was made by Mickey Luker, seconded by Merrily Teasley, to approve funding for those recommended and further consideration of pending and other applications in the future. In discussion, Seagle confirmed that funding may only be directed to non-profits and townships and will be disbursed directly to vendors rather than to the requesting organization. It was agreed that the board will develop a formal process for the future and may consider two grant cycles per year. The motion was then unanimously approved.

Seagle also raised the issue of grant compliance and suggested that the TDA may want to create a grants committee to review fund recipients' required reports. Vicki Greene volunteered to lead the effort.

Chair Debby Hattler reported on the Marketing Committee's work including 4th Quarter Fiscal Year 2013 and 1st Quarter Fiscal Year 2014 advertising placements. She presented subcommittee assignments for: Communications with accommodations about TDA activities; filtering ad solicitations; and identifying cooperative marketing opportunities. She also announced meetings with Craig Distl, public relations consultant, Mary Ann Baker, social media consultant, and Townes Osborn, advertising firm executive, for an overview of their capabilities and support. She invited input from the board and thanked the committee for its work.

Meads inquired about the budget deadline and Seagle advised that his committee was scheduled to meet with Fox next week to finalize the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 TDA budget. It will be presented for approval to the Board on May 15th and for informational purposes to the County Commission on May 22nd and for public hearing with the County's budget.

Meads announced that BCF will present 4 to 5 brand concept boards at the May 15th TDA meeting. Board members will be asked to narrow down options to two, which will be considered in more depth on May 22nd with a final selection on brand concept to be made at the June 4th meeting. Stakeholders and County Commissioners are invited to participate in the May 22nd meeting.

Guest George Ware complimented the Finance and Marketing Committee's work supporting "heads in beds." He encouraged the group to explore "shoulder season" opportunities for promotion and to extend cooperative opportunities to all accommodations.

The next meeting of the TDA Board will be held on Wednesday, May 15th, 1:00 p.m. at the Jackson County Recreation Facility in Cullowhee, followed by a meeting on May 22nd at the County Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 1:00 p.m. and on June 4th at the Cashiers Glenville Recreation Center.

A motion to adjourn made by Mickey Luker, seconded by Jim Hartbarger, and was unanimously passed. The meeting concluded at 2:10 p.m.

Prepared by:

Mary Lanning, Secretary

Approved by the Board: _____

(SLE 5/08/13)

Note: No audio recording is available of this session.