

**Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
January 27, 2016**

MINUTES

Present: Noah Bell, Cherie Bowers, Nick Breedlove, Stephanie Edwards, Darlene Fox, Vicki Greene, Jim Hartbarger, Henry Hoche, Sarah Jennings, Robert Jumper, Mary Lanning, Vick Patel, Ann Self, Julie Spiro

Absent: Alex Bell, Kelly Custer, Ashley Iglesias, Joey Laughridge, Clifford Meads, Ken Taft

Guest in Attendance: Mary Ann Baker (INNSights Marketing), Kendra Ferguson (Dickson Hughes Goodman), Holly Kays (Smoky Mountain News), Rich Price (Jackson County Economic Development Office)

Chairman Robert Jumper called meeting to order at 1:03 pm with introductions. A motion was then made by Sarah Jennings, seconded by Mary Lanning, to approve the minutes for November and December. The motion passed unanimously.

Darlene Fox then reviewed the highlights of monthly financial statements, stating that the totals are up 11% from the same time period last year and 8% for the total year. A motion was then made to approve financials by Jim Hartbarger, seconded by Mary Lanning. The motion passed unanimously.

Jumper then asked Kendra Ferguson, of Dickson Hughes Goodman, to discuss the financial audit for Jackson County's Tourism Development Authority. Kendra presented a compiled report to the board of directors that outlined all findings and stated that expenditures are up. The report for the 2015 audit expresses an unmodified opinion on the fair presentation of the financial statements, in all material respects, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. A motion was made by Henry Hoche, seconded by Mary Lanning, to accept the auditor's results. The motion passed unanimously.

Mary Lanning, Marketing Committee, stated that the committee is disappointed in the website and would like to tailor it for improved exposure. Mary then motioned that the Board accept the marketing committee's recommendation to have a RFP (request for proposal) for website services. No second is needed. The motion was accepted by the board.

Nick Breedlove, Executive Director, then suggested eliminating the monthly Google analytics report compiled by the Brandon Agency for the amount of \$900. Robert stated that a vote is not needed and instructed Nick to proceed. Nick stated that Anglers and Appetites would again like to feature fishing in Jackson County in the coming months. The advertising cost is \$15,000 total, with \$7,500 to be deducted from this year's budget. Sarah Jennings motioned, Vick Patel

seconded, to allow \$7,500 to be moved from the management line item to the marketing line item in this year's budget. The motion passed unanimously.

Robert then stated that it is time to replace or renew the Vice-Chair and Secretary positions. Mary Lanning has agreed to continue to serve as Vice-Chair. Henry Hoche motioned, Vick Patel seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Sarah Jennings has agreed to continue to serve as Secretary. Vick Patel motioned, Jim Hartbarger seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Julie Spiro presented an update on Jackson County Chamber and Visitor Center projects including presenting copies of the monthly analytics. She stated that the Visitor Center now has a new addition in the corner of a fly fishing area, the community magazine Our Town is out and that the Dining Guide will be ready next week. She mentioned the Easter Hat Events to be held on March 26th and Concerts on the Creek for this summer. Julie also is finalizing the fireworks events for the Independence Day Celebration by securing two bands and a fireworks company.

Stephanie Edwards presented an activities update on the Cashiers Area Chamber and Visitor Center, including recognizing Ann Self for the photograph that she supplied to the Crossroads Chronicle and the County's Facebook Page. She mentioned the Blue Ridge National Heritage Meeting stating that it is a niche target worth exploring and that the Visitor Center will be working closely with Nick and the Cashiers Historical Society to pursue this opportunity. Sapphire Valley opened for Ski on January 20th and will be hosting their Annual Outhouse Race on February 13th. All information regarding that event has been submitted to Pineapple Public Relations, along with information regarding the Cashiers Designer Showhouse that is to be held later this summer. Stephanie then reported that the Chamber has partnered with Pisgah Production as the operational manager for Tour de Cashiers that is to be held on Saturday, May 14th this year and that Whiteside Mountain Brewing Company and The Ugly Dog will both be opening very soon in Cashiers as well.

Nick Breedlove, Executive Director, presented an activities report including distributing copies of the Agenda, Media Mentions, Monthly Social Media Analytics, STR Report Information, 2016 Wedding Pitch, 2016 Jackson Country Story Ideas and a copy of the Facebook post "Elk in the Oconaluftee River in Cherokee." He mentioned a social media shift, recommended a partnership with Sprout Social for \$99 per month to gauge monthly analytical information board for all social media outlets and that STR will have a representative at next month's meeting. Nick also stated that he established a TDA office and a post office box in Dillsboro.

Under Action Items the Chairman opened the floor for discussion regarding Social Sprout and obtaining aerial footage of Sapphire Valley for the amount of \$1800. A motion was made by Mary Lanning, seconded by Sarah Jennings to approve the monthly fee for Social Sprout and to secure the aerial footage of Sapphire Valley. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.



Sarah Jennings, Secretary
Jackson County TDA Board

Approved: