

**JACKSON COUNTY**  
**TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2013 10:00 a.m.**  
**Jackson County Recreation & Parks Dept/Cullowhee Facility**

**MINUTES**

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

Chairman Clifford Meads called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. After a brief welcome and review of previous meeting minutes, a motion was made by Mickey Luker, seconded by Julie Stockton, to approve the minutes of January 24, 2013 as presented, which was approved unanimously. A motion was then made by Alex Bell, seconded by Mickey Luker, to approve the minutes of January 15, 2013 as presented, which was approved unanimously.

Finance Director Darlene Fox did not make a formal report but requested guidance as to the financial management of new revenues collected as of January 1, 2013. She recommended entering into new contracts for the remainder of the fiscal year (through June 30, 2013) for services provided by the chambers for visitor center operations because the former contracting travel and tourism authorities no longer exist. Discussion followed concerning remaining balances and committed funds. Chairman Meads suggested this issue be considered by the Finance Committee as an urgent item and return a recommendation to the Board regarding transitional budgeting. Fox recommended closing the previous accounts and rolling into one new budget. She will report tax collections from northern and southern townships as combined but will leave as separate accounts for tracking purposes.

Stephanie Edwards, Executive Director of the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce, provided a brief update on current activities including: Continued response to phone, written, web and walk-in visitor inquiries while working to enhance tracking and proactive communication systems; production of a visitor's guide planned for March release and identification of additional collateral needs; distribution of 7,500 brochures through Lavidge & Associates to AAA Offices and regional welcome centers; and review of current advertising placement commitments and interim response to other numerous advertising requests pending completion of market research and strategy development.

Julie Spiro, Executive Director of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, reported on current activities including: Updated NC Division of Tourism statistics (attachment); inquiry reports through 1/30 (attachment); media placement calendar; public relations contacts with Georgia Magazine re: fly fishing and AAA re: wildflower workshop; and government relations activities for designation of Sylva, Webster and Dillsboro as NC Fish & Wildlife "Trout Cities." Discussion was held about lifetime hunting and fishing license options as well as the value of the city designations as an introduction to new visitor audiences and priority elevation for other programs.

Chairman Meads advised that he had collected responses from board members as to areas of committee interest and proposed that a slate of committee chairs be considered for approval. After discussion with a number of members and in an effort to match skills/talent/interests, he proposed: Secretary-Mary Lanning and committee chairs Governance-Alex Bell, Marketing-Debby Hattler and Finance-Russ Seagle. For continuity, he proposed that Seagle also serve as Vice Chairman. A motion was made to by Luker, seconded by Debby Hattler, to approve the slate as presented and approved unanimously. It was agreed that committee chairs would report their memberships and initiate work as soon as possible.

As a follow up to the January 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, a detailed proposal by BCF (attachment) for market research, interviews and brand positioning was discussed. Meads solicited feedback and members indicated very favorable support including comments by Vicki Greene, Cherie Bowers, Seagle, Luker, Ken Fernandez and Chairman Meads. Hattler inquired as to the branding approach and recognition of market diversity as well as outreach to other possible agencies. Extensive discussion occurred concerning BCF's interview process, travel cost approvals and possible consultation with Western Carolina University staff. It was agreed that the effort was a time-sensitive, first and critical step for comprehensive strategy development and that BCF's destination marketing expertise, historical success, and staff resources justified its selection. It was agreed that the document would be presented to the county attorney for review as a professional services agreement not subject to bid as confirmed by Fox. It was further agreed that this contract does not designate BCF as the Authority's agency of record but rather as a project specialist and all work product and intellectual rights will remain the property of the JCTDA. A motion was made by Luker, seconded by Fernandez, to accept the proposal subject to review by the county attorney and move forward with the work, which was unanimously approved.

The meeting schedule was then discussed for convenience and conflicts. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held as scheduled on Wednesday, February 13, 10:00 a.m. at the Cashiers Glenville Recreation Center and that next month's meetings would take place on March 3 and March 20, both at 1:00 p.m. at the Recreation & Parks Cullowhee facility.

Chairman Meads invited general comments from the audience and received none.

A motion was made by Luker, seconded by Fernandez, to adjourn, which was unanimously passed. The meeting concluded at 11:15 a.m.

Prepared by:

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Mary Lanning, Secretary

Approved by the Board: \_\_\_\_\_

(SLE 1/31/13)