

Town of Franklin Tourism Development Authority Meeting

July 8, 2013

Present: Chair Candy Presley, Matt Bateman, Josh Drake, Mike Grubermann, Leland Rykse, Vickie Springer and Summer Woodard (designated by Warren Cabe.)

Absent: Cheryl Pullium

Guests: Karen Flowers and John Henning Jr.

Chair Candy Presley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mike Grubermann made a motion to excuse Cheryl Pullium from the meeting. Josh Drake seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Chair Candy Presley called for a motion to add John Henning Jr to the agenda.

Vickie Springer made a motion to add John Henning Jr to the Tourism Development Authority agenda. Summer Woodard seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The June 10 and June 18, 2013 meeting minutes were reviewed.

Josh Drake made a motion to approve the June 10 and June 18, 2013 minutes as presented. Mike Grubermann seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

Summer Woodard stated there would not be a financial report until the August 12, 2013 meeting. The Town Finance Officer is closing out fiscal year 2012-2013.

Sub-Committee Reports

Finance/Budget Chair

Mike Grubermann: No report

Policy and Rules of Procedure Chair

Vickie Springer: No report

Application Review Chair

Summer Woodard: No report

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John Henning Jr- There has been some criticism by the news media that the Tourism Development Authority and Tourism Development Commission are granting funds to private entities. I wanted to reiterate to the board that it is well within the board's authority to grant funds to private entities as long as the funding is being used to promote tourism. The board is responsible for determining the receiving entity is using funds to promote or enhance tourism in Franklin, NC. One way the TDA board determines that funds are properly used is by having all funding recipients sign a contract between the receiving agency and the TDA.

Old Unfinished Business

Board decision on Sponsorship Opportunity for Appalachian Trail Biennial

Summer Woodard- The dates for this event are July 21 through July 25, 2013.

Candy Presley- The board needs to make a decision on this request tonight. This request was first received in March 2013. The board decided to post-pone their decision until the July 2013 meeting.

Mike Grubermann- I attended the previous Appalachian Trail Biennial two (2) years ago in Virginia that was also held at a school. There were bus trips to Town, but that was about it. The majority of attendees stayed at the school, they did not stay at local lodging facilities. I looked at the upcoming Appalachian Trail Biennial website and as far as I could see everything seems to be centered in Sylva and Cullowhee, NC. There was nothing listed on the schedule about coming to Franklin, NC.

Matt Bateman- I noticed there is a not for profit table at no cost. I know we have an Appalachian Trail committee. I do not know what their stance is on this. Maybe someone from there committee could represent Franklin as opposed to the TDA allocating funds for this.

Mike Grubermann- The TDA does not really have anything to exhibit.

Josh Drake made a motion to deny sponsoring the Appalachian Trail Biennial. Mike Grubermann seconded. The motion passed. Vote 6 to 1. Voting yes: Drake, Grubermann, Presley, Rykse, Springer and Woodard. Voting no: Matt Bateman.

Board decision on Funding Request for the Ruby Bash Rally

Mike Grubermann- Will the entire event be at the Rose Creek Campground?

Karen Flowers- Yes.

Josh Drake- Did we sponsor this last year?

Summer Woodard- No. The TDA has never sponsored this event.

Vickie Springer- They are requesting \$7,500.00?

Summer Woodard- Yes.

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Josh Drake- Why is your organization only putting in a third of the amount of money it did last year? Last, year your organization put in \$7,300.00. This year you are only putting in \$2,500.00.

Karen Flowers- \$2,500.00 is what we have remaining from last year.

Vickie Springer- Your organization only has \$2,500.00 for this year?

Karen Flowers- Yes.

Vickie Springer- I thought the board decided not to pay for an organizations entire event.

Candy Presley- We discussed having festival become self sufficient.

Josh Drake- How many people attended last year?

Karen Flowers- Approximately 300 to 350 people attended last year.

Candy Presley- This was a two day event?

Karen Flowers- Yes.

Leland Rykse- Do you have any other sources of funds for the event?

Karen Flowers- We have a couple of sponsors.

Josh Drake- I think this is a great event. My concern is the TDA is spending a seventh (7th) of its budget on one (1) event that is only going to bring 300 people to Town.

Leland Rykse- Does Rose Creek camp ground pay occupancy tax?

Mike Grubermann- Not to the Town. If they did it would be to Macon County.

Summer Woodard- Have you approached the Tourism Development Commission? This event seems more appropriate for the TDC.

Karen Flowers- No.

Summer Woodard- I do not feel comfortable funding an event that is outside the Town. I would suggest that this group approach the TDC.

Mike Grubermann- I agree.

Summer Woodard made a motion to deny the Ruby Bash Rally funding request for \$7,500.00. Josh Drake seconded. The motion passed. Vote 6 to 1 Voting yes: Bateman, Drake, Grubermann, Presley, Rykse and Woodard. Voting no: Springer.

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Funding request for Hiker Transportation

Josh Drake- This application is not sufficient. This application was not filled out correctly.

Summer Woodard- The board should not fund this request based on Article 2.2 in the TDA bylaws. Article 2.2 states the TDA board may approve projects and make grants that, in its discretion promote travel and tourism, pursuant to Session Law 2004-105 and these bylaws. However, the TDA disfavors uses of TDA funds for recipients current operating expenses, including but not limited to salaries, rent, purchase of insurance, and payment of utility expenses such as electricity, water and sewer service, and fuel.

Mike Grubermann- The TDA board voted a couple of years ago to fund advertising on Mr. Havens bus. The TDA board followed through with that commitment. I do not agree with this request to fund general operating expenses.

Josh Drake made a motion to deny the funding request for Hiker Transportation for \$8,000.00. Mike Grubermann seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Sponsorship opportunity for the Smoky Mountain Theater

Candy Presley- I would like to see the TDA board pledge funding to the Smoky Mountain Theater.

Vickie Springer- How much funding does the board feel comfortable with?

Summer Woodard- At the joint meeting with the TDA and TDC the consensus seemed to be that each group would commitment \$15,000.00 to the Smoky Mountain Theater. If the TDA board decides to commitment funding, I would like to see it go for the advertisement and promotion of a season.

Mike Grubermann- Is this something we need to decide tonight?

Candy Presley- Yes. We have put our decision off for months.

Leland Rykse- Do we know if the TDC is willing to commit funding?

Summer Woodard- The next TDC meeting is July 18, 2013. I can present this to the TDC board and see what they are going to do.

Vickie Springer made a motion to designate Summer Woodard as the liaison between the TDA and TDC and make the following proposal to the TDC: The TDA is considering \$15,000.00 to the Smoky Mountain Theater for sponsorship for the spring and summer season of 2014, if the TDC consider \$15,000.00 to the Smoky Mountain Theater for sponsorship for the fall and winter season 2013. Mike Grubermann seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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New Business

Discussion on Facebook and Google ad words

Summer Woodard- It has been brought to my attention that the only way the TDA can place ads on Facebook and Google ad words is by credit card. The TDA does not have a credit card and there are no plans for the TDA to get a credit card. I have discussed other payment options with Premier marketing and Town attorney John Henning Jr. The only alternative for billing is for Premier to place the Facebook and Google ad words ads and bill the direct cost to the TDA.

John Henning Jr- I have drafted a memorandum of understanding between the TDA and Premier marketing (please see attachment.)

Mike Grubermann made a motion to authorize Premier marketing to place ads for the TDA Facebook and Google ad words page and bill the direct cost to the TDA. Vickie Springer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on Electronic Billboard campaign

Summer Woodard- I emailed the board the first two (2) electronic billboard posters. We were on a time crunch to get the billboards approved. Jessica Mason with Premier marketing will be presenting the next billboard campaign to the TDA board.

Matt Bateman- Will "make mountain memories" be the tag line for all billboards? Who decided on this tag line?

Candy Presley- Premier marketing decided on the tag line.

Vickie Springer- I like the design.

Leland Rykse- What is wrong with "make mountain memories"?

Matt Bateman- It seems to be the focus point. I do not like the glare it puts off.

The TDA board did not taken any further action on this item.

Discussion on Website Hosting for TDA websites

Summer Woodard- Since Tony Angel Media will no longer be contracting with the TDA board the board needs to decide what company they would like to host their websites. The TDA currently has two (2) websites discoverfranklinnc.com and shopandinefranklinnc.com.

Josh Drake- The TDA should bid this out. The board should go with the lowest bid.

Candy Presley- I agree.

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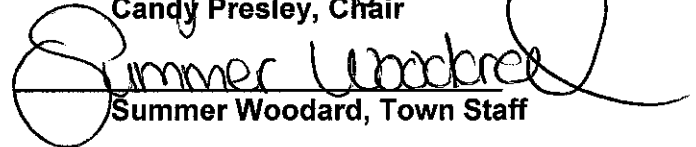
Josh Drake made a motion to authorize Summer Woodard to solicit bids for website hosting and updating; and to authorize Summer Woodard to accept the lowest bid for website hosting and updating. Vickie Springer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled TDA meeting will be Monday August 12, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board room.

Adjourn

At 6:40 p.m. motion was made by Josh Drake, seconded by Leland Rykse to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.


Candy Presley, Chair

Summer Woodard, Town Staff