

**Franklin Tourism Development Authority
Agenda
September 14, 2026
5:30 p.m.**

- 1.) **Call to Order – Tim Crabtree, Chairman**
- 2.) **Approval of the August 10, 2026 regular meeting minutes** **Pages 2 – 9**
- 3.) **Financial Reports – ending July 31, 2026** **Pages 10 - 13**
- 4.) **New Business**
 - A.) Follow Up Report from 80's Flashback Weekend **Pages 14 - 18**
 - B.) Vote on Application – KIDS Place
828Treasure Quest - Saturday, October 10, 2026
Requested Amount - \$2,500 **Pages 19 - 24**
 - C.) Vote on Application – Macon County Farmer's Market
Saturdays – May through November 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Requested Amount - \$5,000 **Pages 25 - 29**
 - D.) Vote on Application – Outdoor 76
The Naturalist 25/50K – Saturday, October 3, 2026
Requested Amount - \$1,600 **Pages 30 - 38**
 - E.) Vote on Application – Plein Air Art Festival
Plein Air Art Festival – October 22 – 24, 2026
Requested Amount - \$1,600 **Pages 39 - 44**
- 5.) **Items from the Board**
 - A.) Marketing Report – Stewart Communications **Page 45**
 - B.) Subcommittee Report **Pages 46 - 48**
- 6.) **Announcements:**
 - A.) The next regularly scheduled TDA meeting is Monday, October 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.
- 7.) **Adjourn**



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 2

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Minutes from August 10, 2026 regular meeting

Suggested Motion: If favorable – accept the minutes from the August 10, 2026 regular meeting as presented.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____

TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOURISM DEVELOPEMNT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

August 10, 2026

Present: Members: Chair Tim Crabtree, Town Manager Amie Owens, Steve Crabtree, Heather Childress
Heather Dombroskie, Guy Gooder, Hannah Edwards, Daniel Lawton, Colin McGinnis, and Rob Reale.

Others present: Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk
Stacy Guffey, Mayor
Robbie Tompa, Councilman
Mia Overton, The Franklin Press
Daryna Thiemann, Macon Sense
Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications
Jodi Moses – Mountain Roots Bluegrass Festival
Kellie Burns, Sweet Carolina Musica Festival Organizer
Devon Dupuis, Macon County Farmers Market
Rob Gasbarro, Outdoor 76
Bobby Fuqua, Visit Smokies
Kim Gambo – Uptown Gallery, Plein Air Art Festival
Cheryl Ledford - Plein Air Art Festival
Christine Brown - Plein Air Art Festival

1. Call to Order- Chair Tim Crabtree

The meeting was called to order at 5:29 p.m.

2. Approval of the July 13, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Member Hannah Edwards made a motion, seconded by Member Heather Dombroskie to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2026 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10 -0.

3. Financial Reports- ending June 30, 2026

Town Manager Amie Owens presented the Financial Report through the end of June 2026. The total collections for June were \$18,025.91 (4th highest June on record and above the 10-year average). Total expenses for FY 2025/2026 were \$152,820.48 leaving a balance of \$36,036.43 and \$182,300.70 remains in fund balance. The report is incorporated into these minutes as Exhibit A.

Member Heather Dombroskie made a motion, seconded by Member Hannah Edwards to approve the financial reports ending June 30, 2026, as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10-0.

4. **New Business**

A.) Follow Up Report from:

1. Mountain Roots Bluegrass Festival

Jodi Moses gave an update on this event. She showed their Facebook recap video. She noted that the weather wasn't the best; lots of rain. The biggest problem they ran into was the muddy field parking. She thanked the Cullasaja Fire Department for this assistance with parking. She estimated they had approximately 1,000 people in attendance and overall, the event was a success. She stated that next year they would not sale t-shirts. They plan to look for additional banner sponsors and might possibly look for a new location. They do plan to change the date of the event to June 1st in hopes to avoid the rain.

2. Macon County Transit

Darlene Asher submitted her follow up report. In the report she noted that the Hiker Route gave rides to 1,729 hikers.

There was discussion on future funding of this route. Several hikers had said they only came into Franklin because the ride was free. There was also discussion of investing in marketing of Macon Transit.

B.) New Application for Consideration – KIDS Place – 828 Treasure Quest – Saturday, October 10, 2026 – Requested amount \$2,500

Kellie Burns, event organizer, submitted an application for funding. The event will take place on October 10, 2026 at the Macon County Recreation Park and in Downtown Franklin. The requested amount is \$2,500. She noted that last year the event raised \$21,872 for KIDS Place. They had 75 teams to participate and this year are opening up the event to 200. They do encourage teams to come to downtown Franklin to visit. This year they are lowering the cost to participate to \$100. This item will be voted on at the September meeting.

C.) New Application for Consideration – Macon County Farmer's Market – Saturday's – May through November 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Requested amount \$2,500

Devon Dupuis, Market Manager, submitted an application for funding of the Macon County Farmer's Market. She noted that this is their third year, but the second year in the Town Hall parking lot. They have seen an uptick in customers and a rise in the number of participating vendors. Each Saturday they have anywhere from 20 to 45 vendors and can accommodate up to 58. She stated that this year they did increase their marketing efforts with the funding that they had received. The plan for next year is to increase their digital marketing to outside areas. This item will be voted on at the September meeting.

D.) New Application for Consideration – Outdoor 76 – The Naturalist 25/50K – Saturday, October 3, 2026 – Requested amount \$1,600

Rob Gasbarro, event organizer, presented their application for funding. This is the 12th year for this event. They typically have over 100 racers. To date they have already had 96 racers registered. After the race on Saturday, they will have "festival" with music and food behind

O76. He also noted the approximately 500 to 600 folks come to downtown for this event. This item will be voted on at the September meeting.

E.) New Application for Consideration – Plein Air Art Festival - October 22-24, 2026 – Requested amount \$1,600

Kim Gambo, Mountains & Main Committee member, presented this new event application for funding. She gave an overview of what a Plein Air Art Festival entails. After the event, the paintings will be on display at the Uptown Gallery and will be available for purchase. The event is open to 35 painters. They will advertise the event on social media, print media and via radio ads. This item will be voted on at the September meeting.

5. Items from the Board

A.) Monthly Marketing Report- Stewart Communications

- Social Media Post and Ads
 - 11 Social Media post and 3 Paid Ads
 - Facebook – 58 new followers
 - Instagram – 41 new followers
- Website
 - More than 13,000 users
 - Top Pages for views
 - Home Page & 80s Flashback
 - Top Pages for engagement
 - Things to Do & Places to Stay
- Google Searches (4.18K Clicks & 253K Impressions)
- Email/Newsletter Performance
 - 21.7 % Open rate & 6.05% Click rate
- Media Relations
- Next Steps
 - Fall Advertising
 - Videos (The Naturalists & Museums)
 - Follower sweepstakes
 - Travel Guide
 - Chatbot

B.) Report from TDA Subcommittee

Chair Tim Crabtree and Morgan Stewart presented Town Council with the TDA's 1, 3, 5-year plan at the August Town Council meeting.

There was discussion on the new application process and downtown murals.

Next steps: Member Colin McGinnis will breakdown the 1-year project plan. He would like each subcommittee member to pair with a TDA non-subcommittee member on these projects and then report back to the group.

Mayor Stacy Guffey stated that Town Council is thankful to the TDA for going above and beyond and doing all this work.

6. Announcements

A.) The next regular scheduled TDA meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

7. Adjourn

Member Colin McGinnis made a motion, seconded by Member Guy Gooder to adjourn the meeting at 6:39 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10-0.

Tim Crabtree, Chair

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk

Month	FY 2010-2011	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
July	\$14,609.25	\$13,523.75	\$12,199.87	\$12,074.19	\$12,933.83	\$14,781.99	\$16,490.96	\$16,483.17	\$15,894.85
August	\$10,802.81	\$9,436.83	\$10,574.60	\$10,142.03	\$11,288.22	\$10,743.41	\$12,801.13	\$15,268.63	\$12,353.78
September	\$9,825.43	\$8,981.30	\$11,900.99	\$9,362.51	\$9,523.55	\$10,624.11	\$11,754.89	\$14,815.74	\$14,636.43
October	\$13,997.93	\$13,580.58	\$13,809.73	\$13,204.00	\$13,826.66	\$15,955.17	\$19,377.43	\$18,874.81	\$18,173.60
November	\$5,868.77	\$5,767.06	\$6,100.84	\$6,611.03	\$6,311.47	\$7,439.21	\$8,790.32	\$9,873.21	\$13,471.11
December	\$4,501.02	\$4,718.42	\$4,746.80	\$5,173.04	\$5,300.33	\$6,574.55	\$6,879.39	\$8,375.77	\$7,878.56
January	\$4,267.06	\$3,884.80	\$3,742.12	\$4,299.16	\$4,398.08	\$5,152.86	\$6,243.12	\$5,137.19	\$3,999.90
February	\$4,902.24	\$4,085.65	\$4,746.80	\$4,471.66	\$4,919.27	\$5,152.04	\$4,546.77	\$5,404.38	\$6,630.27
March	\$5,824.17	\$5,424.68	\$7,111.54	\$7,875.74	\$6,695.48	\$7,336.92	\$7,233.81	\$8,649.55	\$10,302.99
April	\$7,615.57	\$6,997.08	\$7,814.07	\$7,796.15	\$9,098.44	\$10,186.71	\$11,146.26	\$11,234.35	\$10,830.29
May	\$9,638.25	\$9,306.44	\$10,079.92	\$9,554.36	\$11,368.53	\$11,844.69	\$12,413.42	\$12,024.60	\$14,666.32
June	\$9,781.24	\$9,738.55	\$9,166.06	\$9,084.51	\$11,097.29	\$11,603.51	\$12,131.45	\$12,313.74	\$14,915.56
Totals:	\$101,633.74	\$95,445.14	\$101,993.34	\$99,648.38	\$106,961.15	\$117,395.17	\$129,808.95	\$138,455.14	\$143,753.66
Month	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	Comments	10 year average
July	\$17,886.04	\$10,041.66	\$19,844.89	\$19,505.33	\$20,240.73	\$16,996.76	\$ 16,844.68	Above Avg: below previous 4 yrs	\$16,463.66
August	\$14,413.61	\$12,113.26	\$14,807.56	\$19,036.53	\$13,498.54	\$14,874.97	\$ 17,023.38	2nd highest; above average	\$13,745.42
September	\$12,866.27	\$11,026.88	\$15,164.14	\$17,939.80	\$15,579.41	\$15,903.02	\$ 16,927.28	2nd highest; above average	\$13,621.29
October	\$19,422.94	\$16,212.69	\$18,302.14	\$25,726.85	\$18,956.17	\$23,391.35	\$ 19,631.27	3rd highest; above average	\$18,929.07
November	\$10,692.08	\$9,202.11	\$14,285.57	\$14,836.36	\$16,668.76	\$15,022.50	\$ 18,458.96	Includes late payment from Oct - \$4,261.56; above average	\$11,508.43
December	\$7,013.79	\$6,079.70	\$11,423.43	\$11,503.51	\$12,879.95	\$10,102.09	\$ 12,027.75	2nd highest; above average	\$8,564.64
January	\$6,966.05	\$6,514.55	\$8,193.43	\$10,562.53	\$6,694.79	\$11,129.64	\$ 10,838.80	2nd highest; above average - Jan payment made in Feb added back	\$6,817.47
February	\$6,479.11	\$6,328.60	\$8,862.11	\$8,900.44	\$7,764.10	\$8,474.67	\$ 10,042.76	2nd highest; above average	\$6,678.34
March	\$4,085.98	\$9,189.78	\$13,973.25	\$13,903.25	\$10,640.82	\$15,940.74	\$ 11,414.88	Highest on Record; 4th Highest on Record; above avg	\$9,813.87
April	\$707.20	\$14,346.44	\$16,311.64	\$14,428.14	\$14,456.82	\$15,576.98	\$ 19,107.03	Highest on Record	\$11,665.75
May	\$4,265.21	\$16,649.89	\$14,899.46	\$19,148.76	\$14,634.68	\$14,698.74	\$ 18,514.21	2nd highest on Record; above avg	\$13,328.57
June	\$11,137.06	\$16,794.03	\$19,839.83	\$16,077.48	\$19,806.29	\$18,609.36			\$14,938.69
Totals:	\$115,935.34	\$134,499.59	\$175,907.45	\$191,568.98	\$171,821.06	\$180,720.82	\$170,831.00		

7 Exhibit A

TDA BUDGET ORDINANCE FY 2025-2026

	Total Budgeted	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Balance
Advertising & Marketing	\$ 130,000.00	\$ 126,570.48	\$ 3,229.52	\$ 3,429.52
Allison Outdoor Advertising		\$ 5,400.00		
Stewart Communications - marketing and advertising		\$121,170.48		
Audit & Bond	\$ 3,650.00	\$ 3,850.00	\$ -	\$ (200.00)
Martin Starnes - audit Quarterly payment		\$ 3,500.00		
Bond for Finance Officer - annual payment		\$ 350.00		
Festivals & Events	\$ 31,125.00	\$23,300.00		\$7,825.00
Tribal Vibes Promotions - Annual Come Together Festival		\$ 1,000.00		
Macon County Farmers Market		\$ 5,000.00		
Outdoor 76 - The Naturalist 50/100K		\$ 1,600.00		
Crabtree Family Ent - Ruby Drop		\$ 4,000.00		
Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council		\$ 1,200.00		
Macon County Transit - Hiker Route		\$ 1,000.00		
Sweet Carolina Music Festival - Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Ctr		\$ 4,000.00		
Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival		\$ 1,500.00		
Taste of Scotland		\$ 3,000.00		
Inside Map Destination Macon		\$ 1,000.00		
Undesignated/Miscellaneous	\$15,225.00	\$100.00		\$15,125.00
Visit Smokies Conference		\$100.00		
Totals:	\$ 180,000.00	\$153,820.48	\$3,229.52	\$26,179.52
Tim Crabtree, Chair				
Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk				

Exhibit
A

Room Occupancy Tax Report	
5/31/2026	
FY 2025/2026 Budget	\$180,000.00
7/31/2025	\$16,844.68
8/31/2025	\$17,023.38
9/30/2025	\$16,927.28
10/31/2025	\$19,631.27
11/30/2025	\$18,458.96
12/31/2025	\$12,027.75
1/31/2026	\$10,838.80
2/28/2026	\$10,042.76
3/31/2026	\$11,414.88
4/30/2026	\$19,107.03
5/31/2026	\$18,514.21
6/30/2026	
Net Collections:	\$170,831.00
Budgeted Expenses:	
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$800.00
Macon County Farmer's Market	\$5,000.00
Tribal Vibes Promotions	\$1,000.00
Stewart Communications	\$11,330.64
Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA - audit	\$875.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$11,932.45
Outdoor 76 - The Naturalist	\$1,600.00
Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA - audit	\$875.00
Stewart Communications	\$9,615.91
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$800.00
Stewart Communications	\$13,688.61
Crabtree Family Ent - Ruby Drop	\$4,000.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$6,229.16
Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA - audit	\$875.00
Stewart Communications	\$15,362.03
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$600.00
Stewart Communications	\$7,458.03
Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council	\$1,200.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Macon County Transit - Hiker Route	\$1,000.00
Stewart Communications	\$7,296.04
Sweet Carolinas Music Festival - SMPCC	\$4,000.00
Visit Smokies Conference	\$100.00
CNA Surety - Finance Director Bond	\$350.00
Stewart Communications	\$10,266.59
Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA - audit	\$875.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$10,106.83
Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival	\$1,500.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Taste of Scotland	\$3,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 134,936.29
Collections (minus) - Expenses	\$35,894.71
TDA FUND BALANCE:	\$181,750.69

Exhibit A



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 3

Department/Agency: Financials

Subject Matter: July 2026 Financial Reports

- 16-year comparison month to month occupancy tax collections
- Budget spreadsheet with expenditures
- Monthly report with collections versus expenditures

Suggested Motion: If favorable – accept financial reports ending July 31, 2026, as presented.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____

Month	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
July	\$13,523.75	\$12,199.87	\$12,074.19	\$12,933.83	\$14,781.99	\$16,490.96	\$16,483.17	\$15,894.85	\$17,886.04
August	\$9,436.83	\$10,574.60	\$10,142.03	\$11,288.22	\$10,743.41	\$12,801.13	\$15,268.63	\$12,353.78	\$14,413.61
September	\$8,981.30	\$11,900.99	\$9,362.51	\$9,523.55	\$10,624.11	\$11,754.89	\$14,815.74	\$14,636.43	\$12,866.27
October	\$13,580.58	\$13,809.73	\$13,204.00	\$13,826.66	\$15,955.17	\$19,377.43	\$18,874.81	\$18,173.60	\$19,422.94
November	\$5,767.06	\$6,100.84	\$6,611.03	\$6,311.47	\$7,439.21	\$8,790.32	\$9,873.21	\$13,471.11	\$10,692.08
December	\$4,718.42	\$4,746.80	\$5,173.04	\$5,500.33	\$6,574.55	\$6,879.39	\$8,375.77	\$7,878.56	\$7,013.79
January	\$3,884.80	\$3,742.12	\$4,299.16	\$4,398.08	\$5,152.86	\$6,243.12	\$5,137.19	\$3,999.90	\$6,966.05
February	\$4,085.65	\$4,746.80	\$4,471.66	\$4,919.27	\$5,152.04	\$4,546.77	\$5,404.38	\$6,630.27	\$6,479.11
March	\$5,424.68	\$7,111.54	\$7,875.74	\$6,695.48	\$7,336.92	\$7,233.81	\$8,649.55	\$10,302.99	\$4,085.98
April	\$6,997.08	\$7,814.07	\$7,796.15	\$9,098.44	\$10,186.71	\$11,146.26	\$11,234.35	\$10,830.29	\$707.20
May	\$9,306.44	\$10,079.92	\$9,554.36	\$11,368.53	\$11,844.69	\$12,413.42	\$12,024.60	\$14,666.32	\$4,265.21
June	\$9,738.55	\$9,166.06	\$9,084.51	\$11,097.29	\$11,603.51	\$12,131.45	\$12,313.74	\$14,915.56	\$11,137.06
Totals:	\$95,445.14	\$101,993.34	\$99,648.38	\$106,961.15	\$117,395.17	\$129,808.95	\$138,455.14	\$143,753.66	\$115,935.34
Month	FY2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY2025-2026	FY 2026-2027	Comments	10 yr avg
July	\$10,041.66	\$19,844.89	\$19,505.33	\$20,240.73	\$16,996.76	\$ 16,844.68	\$ 17,922.97	4th Highest on Record; above 10 yr avg	\$ 17,022.91
August	\$12,113.26	\$14,807.56	\$19,036.53	\$13,498.54	\$14,874.97	\$ 17,023.38			\$ 14,619.14
September	\$11,026.88	\$15,164.14	\$17,939.80	\$15,579.41	\$15,903.02	\$ 16,927.28			\$ 14,661.39
October	\$16,212.69	\$18,302.14	\$25,726.85	\$18,956.17	\$23,391.35	\$ 19,631.27			\$ 19,806.93
November	\$9,202.11	\$14,285.57	\$14,836.36	\$16,668.76	\$15,022.50	\$ 18,458.96			\$ 13,130.10
December	\$6,079.70	\$11,423.43	\$11,503.51	\$12,879.95	\$10,102.09	\$ 12,027.75			\$ 9,416.39
January	\$6,514.55	\$8,193.43	\$10,562.53	\$6,694.79	\$11,129.64	\$ 10,838.80			\$ 7,628.00
February	\$6,328.60	\$8,862.11	\$8,900.44	\$7,764.10	\$8,474.67	\$ 10,042.76			\$ 7,343.32
March	\$9,189.78	\$13,973.25	\$13,903.25	\$10,640.82	\$15,940.74	\$ 11,414.88			\$ 10,533.51
April	\$14,346.44	\$16,311.64	\$14,428.14	\$14,456.82	\$15,576.98	\$ 19,107.03			\$ 12,814.52
May	\$16,649.89	\$14,899.46	\$19,148.76	\$14,634.68	\$14,698.74	\$ 18,514.21			\$ 14,191.53
June	\$16,794.03	\$19,839.83	\$16,077.48	\$19,806.29	\$18,609.36	\$ 18,025.91			\$ 15,965.07
Totals:	\$134,499.59	\$175,907.45	\$191,568.98	\$171,821.06	\$180,720.82	\$188,856.91			

TDA BUDGET ORDINANCE FY 2026 - 2027

	Total Budgeted	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Balance
Advertising & Marketing	\$ 148,500.00	\$ 10,724.88	\$137,775.12	\$ 137,775.12
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$ 5,356.00	\$ 1,236.00	\$ 4,120.00	
Stewart Communications	\$ 143,144.00	\$9,488.88	\$133,655.12	
Audit & Bond	\$ 3,950.00	\$ 900.00		\$ 3,050.00
Martin Starnes - audit Quarterly payment	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 900.00		
Bond for Finance Officer - annual payment	\$ 350.00			
Festivals & Events	\$ 30,000.00	\$8,500.00		\$21,500.00
80's Flashback Weekend		\$ 7,500.00		
Come Together Festival - Tribal Vibe Promotions		\$ 1,000.00		
Undesignated/Miscellaneous	\$42,550.00	\$0.00		\$42,550.00
Totals:	\$ 225,000.00	\$20,124.88	\$137,775.12	\$204,875.12
Timothy Crabtree, Chair				
Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk				



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-A

Department/Agency: 80's Flashback Weekend

Subject Matter: Event Follow Up Report

The 80's Flashback Weekend team will present a follow up report.

The event follow-up report is included in the packet.

Suggested Motion: Received for information only.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____



Town of Franklin

Project Report

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828) 524-2516

Name of Organization: 80's Flashback Weekend

Street or PO Box: PO Box 534

City, ST Zip: Franklin, NC

Representative: Tracy Griffith & George Young

Phone: 828-347-5214

E-Mail: 80sflashbacknc@gmail.com

Web Site: www.80sflashback.org

Project Title: 80's Flashback Weekend

Project Date(s): 07/31/26
thru
08/01/26

Budgeted Cash Flow: \$50,000

Actual Cash Flow: \$63,750

I certify that the project is complete and that to the best of my knowledge and Belief all information presented herein is factual.

Signature: George Young

Title: VP/Treasurer

Date: 09-07-26

Project Success

Describe how the project enhanced tourism in the Franklin area and the tools used to measure this success.

The event drew an estimated two-day crowd of 4,000 – 6,000 people to the center of downtown Franklin. Many hotels in the immediate area informed us that they were at capacity or close to capacity for the weekend of 07/31/26 thru 08/02/26.

We had QR code surveys requesting their zip code to complete along with a free giveaway each night and they only way to register was scanning a QR code and giving your zip code.

The 2026 event drew more attendees than we have ever seen in our 12 years. All food vendors sold out on Saturday Night Aug 1st.

We also are donating the most money ever to our charity Shriners Children's Greenville Hospital.

Project Lessons Learned

Prepare two lists. Plus list: covers those things about the project that went well and you would not change given the opportunity to do the project again. Delta List: covers opportunities for improvement – those things that would enhance the success/effectiveness of the project if you were given the opportunity to repeat it

Plus list	Delta list
Weather Cooperated and it didn't rain and wasn't really hot	More Security Officers
Location of infrastructure. Stage, Vendors and Raffles	A few more vendors that are prepared for large crowds

Financial Results

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

	Current Year Budget	Current Year Actual	Prior Year Actual
Sources of Cash:			
Franklin/Nantahala TDC	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$12,500
Town of Franklin TDA	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$3,500
Sponsorships	\$25,000	\$26,500	\$22,400
Booth fees / Food Trucks	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$1,500
5K/Raffles/Auction/50-50	\$10,000	\$12,500	\$7,500
Sales -- T-Shirts and Merch	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$1,000
Other -- sales percentage	\$2,500	\$2,800	\$2,000
Total Sources of Cash	\$63,750	\$68,550	\$50,400
Uses of Cash:			
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits	N/A	N/A	
Contracted services	\$9,500	\$9,500	
Cost of merchandise sold	\$2,750	\$2,750	
Rental of facilities (Sanitation)	\$1,000	\$1,000	
Rental of equipment (Stage)	\$27,000	\$27,000	
Expendable supplies	\$5,500	\$5,500	
Printing/Signs/Billboards	\$12,700	\$12,700	
Social Media Advertising	\$2,200	\$2,200	
Radio Advertising	\$1,200	\$1,200	
Streaming TV Advertising	\$1,900	\$1,900	
Other expenses - specify			
Total Uses of Cash	\$63,750	\$63,750	
Net Cash Flow	\$0.00	\$0.00	



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-B

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: New Application for Consideration

KIDS Place submitted an application for consideration for funding on July 14, 2026. The request is for \$2,500.00 for the 828 Treasure Quest. This is the second year for the event. The event is scheduled for October 10, 2026 at the Macon County Recreation Park and throughout Franklin for stops on the Treasure Hunt.

Kellie Burns presented information on the event at the August 10, 2026 meeting.

Suggested Motion: If favorable - vote to approve and determine funding amount.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____



Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828) 524-2516

Due two months prior to regularly scheduled meeting where the request will be considered.

The Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin allots funds for the purpose of PROMOTING TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN.

Conditions of all funds allotments include:

- ☐ Subject to approval and availability of funds.
- ☐ Applicant recognizes the contribution made by the Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin through the use of the TDA/Franklin logo in all print media.
- ☐ Applicant utilizes the TDA/Franklin logo or tagline on all print media.

Only funding requests received two months prior to monthly TDA meetings will be considered.

For billboard requests, copy ready electronic proof must be submitted with request.

Billboard (s) Request Yes/ No	Number of Billboards	Date of Event
Name of Organization	Kids Inter-Disciplinary Services, Inc. (d.b.a. KIDS Place)	
Street or PO Box	P.O. Box 693	City, ST Zip Franklin NC 28744
Representative	Alisa W. Ashe Kellie Burns	Phone 828-524-3199 828-332-3211
E-mail	Alisa.ashe@kidsplacecac.org Kellie.burns@firstcitizens.com	Web Site www.kidsplacecac.org www.828TreasureQuest.com

Project Title

828 Treasure Quest 2026

Project Date(s)

10/10/2026

Total Budgeted Cash

51,350.00 TDA Request

2,500.00

Sources

The Project

Please describe your project and include the following paragraph headings:

- ☐ The event or purchase – what are you proposing to do?
- ☐ Marketing – how will you market the project (be specific)?
- ☐ Tourism Enhancement – how does the project enhance tourism in the Town of Franklin?
- ☐ Measurements – what tools will you use to measure the effectiveness / success of the project?
- ☐ Improvements – if you have done it before, what are you going to do to make it better?
- ☐ Net Cash Flow – how will you put to use any net cash flow generated by project?

The event or purchase:

The Second Annual 828 Treasure Quest (2026) is a great family fun day. The two-part event begins with a field day at the Macon County Rec Park where teams of two compete in 10 different field day events that may challenge memory, dexterity, speed, and problem-solving skills. For example, one of last year's field day activities included a relay race while carrying a ping pong ball on a spoon. Another was a timed race to stack blocks the highest. The challenges are well-planned, challenging, yet doable!

The five teams winning the most points of this portion of the competition advance to the treasure hunt portion of the day. The team raising the most money for KIDS Place will also advance to the treasure hunt regardless of performance in the field day activities.

With these six teams pulled out to advance to the treasure hunt, the remaining teams have the opportunity to complete the round of field day activities again for a chance at \$1,000 that will go to the top point winning team.

The six teams that advance to the treasure hunt are provided with clues that will lead them to downtown businesses where they must successfully complete a challenge. They are then provided with their next clue and challenge. The final clue leads them to the treasure chest. The first team to find the treasure chest wins the \$10,000 grand prize. Second place winners receive \$2,000; third place \$1,000.

Marketing:

The event will be publicized through print ads, the Franklin Sports Network, social media ads, the www.828treasurequest.com website, and billboards.

Tourism Enhancement and the TDC Mission:

Last year's 828 Treasure Quest event pulled in more than 60 two-person teams. There were teams from Waynesville, Cullowhee, Pittsboro, Weaverville, Fletcher, Sylva and Bryson City. Now that the public knows that competitors have a chance at the \$14,000 in prizemoney (that we really did award

the \$10,000)! This year's event promises to draw an even bigger pool of competitors from a wider geographic area who will shop, eat, and stay in Franklin. We are getting an earlier start to advertising this year. That will help too! Contestants are encouraged to visit the Franklin area multiple times to become acquainted with downtown businesses prior to the big day of the event.

Measurements:

We will track the number of website landings, social media clicks, post engagements, video views and the location of online visitors. Registration forms provide hometown information of contestants. Financial success will be noted through number and amount of sponsorships and the number of teams competing in the event.

Improvements:

1. Begin planning earlier than last year!
2. Begin advertising the event earlier.
3. Streamline registration process.
4. Lower registration cost for teams from \$250 to \$100 (feedback from last year).

Proceeds:

KIDS Place is a private, nonprofit, nationally accredited child advocacy center that provides critical services for child victims of abuse in Macon County. Proceeds will go toward mortgage debt reduction on our facilities located at 37 & 59 Georgia Road, Franklin.

Project Budget

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

	Current Year Budget	Prior Year Actual (if appropriate)
Sources of Cash:		
Your organization		
Town of Franklin TDA	2,500.00	0
Sponsorships	40,000.00	20,520.00
Booth fees – Food Trucks	350.00	328.00
Other – specify:		
Donation from 2025 Winners		5,000.00
Foundation Grants	6,000.00	6,000.00
Total Sources of Cash	51,350.00	34,348.00
Uses of Cash:		
Rental of facilities (sanitation)	400.00	370.00
Expendable supplies	850.00	87.00
Print media	1,000.00	900.00
Radio media	500.00	450.00
Other advertising – specify (digital marketing)	1,200.00	1,069.00
Other expenses – specify	14,000.00	9,000.00
Prize Money		
Total Uses of Cash	18,950.00	12,476.00
Net Cash Flow	32,400	21,872.00

I certify that any significant alterations in the project will be reported to this committee as soon as possible and that I will provide TDA with the required Project Report within thirty (30) days of the completion of the project.

Signature:

Rosa W. Ashe

Title: President/ VP

Executive Director

Date:

7-14-2026



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-C

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Macon County Farmers Market

The Macon County Farmers Market (MCFM) submitted an application for consideration of funding on July 2, 2026. Request is for \$5,000 to assist with marketing for events to be held during the season - every Saturday May through November.

Devon Dupuis presented information at the August 10, 2026 regarding the request.

Suggested Motion: If favorable, vote to approve and determine funding amount.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____



Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 · Franklin, North Carolina 28744 · (828) 524-2516

Due two months prior to regularly scheduled meeting where the request will be considered.

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- ☐ Applicant utilizes the TDA/Franklin logo or tagline on all print media.

Only funding requests received two months prior to monthly TDA meetings will be considered.

For billboard requests, copy ready electronic proof must be submitted with request.

Billboard (s) Request No	Number of Billboards	Date of Event
Name of Organization	Macon County Farmers Market, Inc.	
Street or PO Box	95 E Main Street	City, ST Zip Franklin, NC 28734
Representative	Devon Dupuis	Phone 828-200-7876

E-mail	maconfarmersmarket@gmail.com	Web Site	maconcountyfarmersmarket@gmail.com
Project Title	Macon County Farmers Market	Project Date(s)	Saturdays May-Nov
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	\$33,450	TDA Request	\$5,000

The Project

Please describe your project and include the following paragraph headings:

- ☐ The event or purchase – what are you proposing to do?
- ☐ Marketing – how will you market the project (be specific)?
- ☐ Tourism Enhancement – how does the project enhance tourism in the Town of Franklin?
- ☐ Measurements – what tools will you use to measure the effectiveness / success of the project?
- ☐ Improvements – if you have done it before, what are you going to do to make it better?
- ☐ Net Cash Flow – how will you put to use any net cash flow generated by project?

The Event

The Macon County Farmers Market launched in May 2024, led by MountainWise, Macon County Public Health, and the Macon Food Council. The Market operates annually on Saturdays, May-November, 9:00AM-1:00PM at the Franklin Town Hall on Main Street. During the 2025 Season, the market saw **over \$200,000 in total sales** for participating local vendors.

The Market includes:

- 1) 70+ local farmers, bakers, and makers
- 2) Food Trucks
- 3) Enrichment activities including cooking demonstrations, wildlife education, hands-on activities, farm animal education, food cultivation demonstrations, and local nonprofits.
- 4) Live music
- 5) Children's activities
- 6) SNAP/EBT processing for customers, including a Double SNAP Grant program.

Marketing

Social Media: Facebook & Instagram posts 2-4 times per week including colorful graphics, Market logo, vendor spotlights, etc. Tag & Share to local Pages. Paid Ads.

Other: Multiple Macon Sense ads.

Memberships: Franklin Chamber of Commerce Membership and Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) Memberships include print and digital listings.

Send weekly newsletters to email list.

Tourism Enhancement

The Macon County Farmers Market serves as an every Saturday event downtown May-November, including live music, family-friendly activities, and 40+ local vendors selling fresh/homemade/handmade products. In 2025, the Farmers Market saw an average foot traffic count of **400+ people per Saturday** during our town's main tourist season.

Measurements

Throughout the 2026 Market season, the Farmers Market will track our reach and engagement via website visitor data, as well as Facebook ad results metrics. The Farmers Market will also continue to estimate and record weekly foot traffic.

Improvements

Based on analysis from the 2025 season, the market plans to:

- 1) Maintain Consistent Hot Food Truck Presence
- 2) Expand Regional Digital Marketing
- 3) Increase Weekly Photography for Marketing Assets
- 4) Build Stronger Partnerships with Local & Downtown Businesses

Net Cash Flow

Any net cash flow generated by the market will be invested back into the market operations and may be used to enhance activities offered by the market or purchase additional advertising opportunities.

Project Budget

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

2026 Projected Expenses:

Projected Regular Expenses

Bank Checks	\$400
Nonprofit Tax Filing	\$500
Marketing fees	\$2,000
Liability Insurance	\$200
Website Hosting	\$375
Constant Contact Newsletter Software	\$144
Music	\$3,000
Manager Salaries	\$20,000

Expendable Supplies	\$600
------------------------	-------

\$27,219

2026 Projected Income:

**Projected Regular
Income**

Vendor Fees	\$15,950
Music Sponsorship	\$2,500
Merch sales	\$5,000
TDC Grant	\$5,000
TDA Grant (pending)	\$5,000
\$33,450	

I certify that any significant alterations in the project will be reported to this committee as soon as possible and that I will provide TDA with the required Project Report within thirty (30) days of the completion of the project.

Signature: *Devon Dupuis*

Title: Market Manager/Officer

Date: 07-02-2026



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-D

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Outdoor 76

Outdoor 76 submitted an application for consideration of funding on August 5, 2026 for the Naturalist 25/50K. The request is for \$1,600 and is the same contribution as in the previous year. The event is on October 3, 2026.

Rob Gasparro provided information at the August 10, 2026 meeting and Stewart Communications provided the streaming ad for the event.

Suggested Motion: If Favorable – vote to approve and determine funding amount.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____



Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828)-524-2516

Due two months prior to regularly scheduled meeting where the request will be considered.

The Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin allots funds for the purpose of **PROMOTING TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN.**

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- ☐ Applicant utilizes the TDA/Franklin logo or tagline on all print media.

Only funding requests received two months prior to monthly TDA meetings will be considered.

For billboard requests, copy ready electronic proof must be submitted with request.

Billboard (s) Request Yes/ No	Number of Billboards	Date of Event
-------------------------------	----------------------	---------------

Name of Organization	Outdoor 76		
Street or PO Box	35 E. Main Street	City, ST Zip	Franklin NC 28734
Representative	Rob Gasbarro	Phone	(828) 349-7676
E-mail	outdoor76@gmail.com	Web Site	outdoor76.com
Project Title	The Naturalist 25/50k		Project Date(s) 10/3/26
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	\$10,900		TDA Request \$1,600

The Project

Please describe your project and include the following paragraph headings:

- ☐ The event or purchase – what are you proposing to do?
- ☐ Marketing – how will you market the project (be specific)?
- ☐ Tourism Enhancement – how does the project enhance tourism in the Town of Franklin?
- ☐ Measurements - what tools will you use to measure the effectiveness / success of the project?
- ☐ Improvements – if you have done it before, what are you going to do to make it better?
- ☐ Net Cash Flow – how will you put to use any net cash flow generated by project?

The Naturalist 25 / 50K Trail Race

The Event

The Naturalist 25K & 50K Trail Race & Fall Celebration is an annual destination event hosted by Outdoor 76 in Franklin, North Carolina. Now entering its 12th year, The Naturalist has become one of Franklin's signature outdoor recreation events and a cornerstone of Macon County's fall tourism season. Scheduled for October 3, 2026, the event attracts runners and their families from across the Southeast to experience Franklin's nationally recognized trails, vibrant downtown, and welcoming outdoor community.

Beginning on Main Street in Franklin, the runs to the Wallace Branch trailhead and climbs the Bartram Trail to the iconic summit of Wayah Bald, showcasing some of Macon County's most scenic lands. Funding from the Franklin Tourism Development Authority will support marketing and promotional efforts designed to attract participants from outside the region, increasing overnight visitation and tourism related spending within Franklin.

Beyond the race itself, The Naturalist serves as a full day outdoor celebration at Outdoor 76. Participants and spectators enjoy live music throughout the day, local food trucks, craft beer provided by our event sponsor, and a festive atmosphere celebrating Franklin's outdoor culture. By combining a destination trail race with a community focused Fall Celebration, the event encourages visitors to spend the entire day, or entire weekend, in Franklin, generating additional economic activity for local businesses.

In 2025, The Naturalist welcomed **159 participants representing 13 states**, demonstrating the event's continued growth as a regional tourism asset.

Marketing

The primary objective of our marketing strategy is to attract visitors from outside Macon County and position Franklin as one of the Southeast's premier trail running destinations.

Marketing efforts include:

- Targeted Facebook and Instagram advertising focused on trail runners throughout the Southeast.
- Promotion through Outdoor 76's website, email newsletter, and social media platforms.
- Event listings on race registration platforms including: UltraSignup.com
- Digital promotion through regional trail running calendars and outdoor recreation websites.
- Partnerships with trail running clubs, race ambassadors, and outdoor organizations throughout the Southeast.
- Collaboration with local lodging providers, breweries, restaurants, retailers, and tourism partners to encourage participants to extend their stay.
- Press releases and earned media distributed to outdoor publications and regional media outlets.

Marketing begins several months before race weekend and targets communities within a day's drive of Franklin, encouraging participants to make a weekend trip rather than simply attending the event.

Tourism Enhancement

The Naturalist is specifically designed to attract visitors to Franklin and introduce them to the community's outdoor recreation opportunities, vibrant downtown, and locally owned businesses.

2025 - Event Recap

- 159 registered participants
- 13 states represented
- 50.9% of participants traveled from outside North Carolina
- Participants traveled from Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin
- Race begins and finishes in Historic Downtown Franklin
- Visitors support local hotels, vacation rentals, restaurants, breweries, coffee shops, retailers, and outfitters
- Live music, food trucks, local craft beer, and the Outdoor 76 Fall Celebration encourage visitors to remain in downtown Franklin throughout the day
- 100% of net positive proceeds are donated to the Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy to support trail maintenance, conservation, and stewardship of the Bartram Trail

2026 - Registration Snapshot

As of August 2026, registrations for this year's event already demonstrate The Naturalist's continued ability to attract visitors from outside the local area. These early registration numbers reinforce The Naturalist's continued appeal as a regional destination event and demonstrate its ongoing contribution to Franklin's tourism economy.

Current registrations include:

- 94 registered participants
- 11 states represented
- 40.4% of participants registered from outside North Carolina
- Participants currently registered from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia
- Registration remains open, and participation is expected to continue growing through race weekend based on historical registration trends.

Now in its 12th year, The Naturalist has established itself as one of Franklin's longest-running outdoor recreation events. The continued growth in participation and geographic reach

demonstrates the event's ability to consistently attract visitors while reinforcing Franklin's reputation as a premier destination for trail running and outdoor adventure.

Because many participants travel several hours to attend, they frequently arrive the day before the race and remain after the event, generating business for Franklin's hotels, vacation rentals, restaurants, breweries, coffee shops, and downtown retailers. Friends and family accompanying participants also contribute to the local economy by dining, shopping, and exploring Franklin throughout race weekend.

The event experience extends well beyond the finish line. Live music, food trucks, local craft beer, and the Outdoor 76 Fall Celebration create a festival atmosphere that encourages participants, spectators, and community members to remain downtown throughout the day. This extended visitor experience increases opportunities for shopping, dining, and exploring Franklin while providing local businesses with additional exposure during one of the community's busiest outdoor recreation weekends.

The race showcases Franklin's nationally recognized outdoor resources, including the Bartram Trail and Wayah Bald, while introducing first time visitors to Historic Downtown Franklin. Many participants return throughout the year for hiking, camping, fishing, mountain biking, and additional trail running opportunities after discovering everything Franklin has to offer.

By bringing new visitors into the community, encouraging overnight stays, and highlighting Franklin's outdoor recreation assets, The Naturalist directly supports the Town of Franklin's mission of growing tourism through outdoor recreation.

Measurements

Outdoor 76 evaluates the success of The Naturalist through measurable tourism and participation metrics, including:

- Total participant registrations.
- Participant ZIP codes and states of residence.
- Percentage of participants traveling from outside Macon County and North Carolina.
- Number of states represented.
- Website traffic and online registration analytics.
- Social media reach, impressions, engagement, and advertising performance.
- Year-over-year growth in registrations and geographic reach.

These measurements provide meaningful data to evaluate the event's economic impact, demonstrate tourism growth, and guide future improvements.

Improvements

As The Naturalist enters its 12th year, Outdoor 76 continues to build upon more than a decade of experience producing a successful destination event. Each year we evaluate participant feedback, volunteer input, sponsor recommendations, and operational performance to enhance both the participant experience and the event's tourism impact.

For 2026, we will expand marketing into additional metropolitan markets throughout the Southeast, strengthen partnerships with Franklin lodging providers and tourism businesses, improve participant communication before race weekend, enhance the downtown start and finish line experience, and continue refining race operations, volunteer coordination, aid stations, and participant amenities.

Our goal is to continue growing The Naturalist as one of the Southeast's premier trail running events while showcasing Franklin as an exceptional destination where outdoor recreation, community, and small town hospitality come together.

Net Cash Flow

The Naturalist is organized as a community-focused event with the mission of promoting outdoor recreation, tourism, and stewardship of the natural resources that make the race possible.

Following the completion of the event and payment of all operational expenses, **100% of any net positive proceeds are donated to the Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy.** These funds directly support trail maintenance, conservation projects, volunteer initiatives, and long term stewardship of the Bartram Trail.

This partnership ensures that the success of The Naturalist extends beyond race weekend by reinvesting in one of Franklin's most valuable tourism assets. As the event grows, so does its ability to attract visitors while helping preserve the trails and public lands that make Franklin one of the Southeast's premier outdoor recreation destinations.

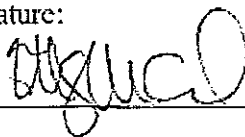
Project Budget

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

	Current Year Budget	Prior Year Actual (if appropriate)
Sources of Cash:		
Your organization	Ø	Ø
Town of Franklin TDA	\$1,600	\$1,600
Sponsorships		
Booth fees	\$6,800	
Entry / other fees	7,253	\$7,253
Sales		
Other - specify TDC	\$2,500	\$2,500
Total Sources of Cash	\$10,900	\$11,353
Uses of Cash:		
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits		
Contracted services ^{music} photographer	\$3,200	\$3,700
Cost of merchandise sold ^{give-aways}	\$2,000	\$1,800
Rental of facilities ^{Porta-johns}	\$600	\$600
Rental of equipment ^{generator tent, sound}	\$1,600	\$1,500
Expendable supplies ^{volunteer + racer food}	\$1,400	\$1,200
Printing Race flyers; signage	\$500	\$350
Print media		
Radio media		
Other advertising - specify		
Other expenses - specify ^{insurance, permits}	\$1,600	\$1,600
Total Uses of Cash	\$10,900	\$10,750
Net Cash Flow	Ø	\$603

I certify that any significant alterations in the project will be reported to this committee as soon as possible and that I will provide TDA with the required Project Report within thirty (30) days of the completion of the project.

Signature:



Title:

CI - owner

Date:

8/4/26



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-E

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Plein Air Art Festival

The Plein Air Art Festival – Mountains & Main Committee submitted an application for consideration of funding on August 10, 2026 for the Plein Air Art Festival. The request is for \$1,600. This is a first-time event. The event is on October 22 - 24, 2026.

Kimberly Gambo provided information at the August 10, 2026 meeting.

Suggested Motion: If Favorable – vote to approve and determine funding amount.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____



Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828) 524-2516

Due two months prior to regularly scheduled meeting where the request will be considered.

The Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin allots funds for the purpose of
PROMOTING TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN.

Conditions of all funds allotments include:

Subject to approval and availability of funds.

Applicant recognizes the contribution made by the Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin through the use of the TDA/Franklin logo in all print media.

Applicant utilizes the TDA/Franklin logo or tagline on all print media.

Only funding requests received two months prior to monthly TDA meetings will be considered.

For billboard requests, copy ready electronic proof must be submitted with request.

Billboard (s) Request Yes/ No	Number of Billboards	Date of Event
Name of Organization	Franklin Plein Air Art Festival - Mountains & Main	Oct 22-24, 2026
Street or PO Box	30 E. Main Street	City, ST Zip Franklin, NC 28734
Representative	C. Brown & C. Blackburn	Phone 828-342-6733
E-mail	franklinpleinair@gmail.com	Web Site facebook.com/Mountains&MainFranklinPleinAir
Project Title	Franklin Plein Air Art Festival Mountains & Main	Project Date(s) Oct 22-24, 2026
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	\$1,600.	TDA Request \$1,600

The Project

Please describe your project and include the following paragraph headings:

The event or purchase – what are you proposing to do?

Marketing – how will you market the project (be specific)?

Tourism Enhancement – how does the project enhance tourism in the Town of Franklin?

Measurements – what tools will you use to measure the effectiveness / success of the project?

Improvements – if you have done it before, what are you going to do to make it better?

Net Cash Flow – how will you put to use any net cash flow generated by project?

THE EVENT - A multi-day outdoor painting festival celebrating the landscapes, architecture, history, and character of our region. The event includes artist registration, painting days, formal judging by a nationally-known artist from Charlotte, NC, a VIP reception, and a public awards reception. Paintings will be available for sale at the gallery through October 31.

MARKETING - Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.), followed with event posters placed in storefront windows, the library, local cafes, etc. We've done one radio promo, hope to do another one prior to the event. We're developing a strong presence with local galleries and art associations. However, most of the artists come from out of the area so we'll rely heavily on a strong social media presence.

TOURISM ENHANCEMENT - Plein air artists routinely travel significant distances to participate in juried festivals and competitions. Unlike many day-trip events, participating artists require lodging, meals, fuel, shopping and often bring spouses or companions, creating a measurable economic impact for local businesses. This travel-based participation is one of the reasons communities across the country invest in plein air festivals as tourism-generating events.

MEASUREMENTS - Unlike many local events, this plein air festival is designed to attract visiting artists from outside Macon County and Western North Carolina. Artists will typically arrive before the event begins and remain throughout the competition, utilizing local lodging, restaurants, coffee shops, shopping, etc. These overnight visitors represent new tourism dollars entering the local economy. We'll track the distance these artists have traveled via their registration applications, thus enabling us to provide the TDA with hard numbers on distance.

IMPROVEMENTS - This is an inaugural event.

NET CASH FLOW - This event is designed to be self-funded by the artist application fees. In the event we do not have the attendance needed to self-fund the event, any funds received from the TDA will go toward the expenses incurred in promoting the event.

Project Budget

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

	Current Year Budget	Prior Year Actual (if appropriate)
Sources of Cash:		N/A
Your organization		
Town of Franklin TDA		
Sponsorships		
Booth fees		
Entry / other fees	\$35 X 35 = \$1,225	
Sales		
Other - specify		
Total Sources of Cash	\$ 1,225	
Uses of Cash:		
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits	0	
Contracted services	0	
Cost of merchandise sold	0	
Rental of facilities (sanitation)	Held at Gallery	
Rental of equipment	0	
Expendable supplies	0	
Printing	(see diagram)	
Print media		
Radio media		
Other advertising – specify (digital marketing)	Social Media - Free	
Other expenses - specify	\$ 1575	
Total Uses of Cash		
Net Cash Flow	[\$350]	0

Judge = \$200
 Prize Money = \$800
 Brochures = \$75
 Reception = \$200
 Artist Snacks = \$130
 Artist Packets = \$45
 Banner = \$50
 Flyers = \$75

TOTAL = \$1,575

Artist Packet = Swag Bag with lanyards, snacks and gift certificates given to the artists at time of registration
 Artist Snacks = Water bottles & granola bars given to artists upon check-in on the first day of event

I certify that any significant alterations in the project will be reported to this committee as soon as possible and that I will provide TDA with the required Project Report within thirty (30) days of the completion of the project.

Signature:

KIMBERLY A. GAMBO

Title: President/ VP

Committee Member

Date:

08/07/26

FRANKLIN PLEIN AIR ART FESTIVAL

Mountains & Main | October 22–24, 2026

PROJECTED TOURISM & ECONOMIC IMPACT

Purpose. Demonstrate the festival's potential to attract overnight visitors, generate direct visitor spending, support local businesses, and strengthen Franklin and Macon County as a cultural tourism destination.

KEY TOURISM METRIC	FIRST YEAR PROJECTION
Participating Artists	Up to 35
Average Length of Stay	3 Nights
Potential Artist Room Nights	105
Estimated Daily Spending	\$175-\$225 per party
Estimated Direct Visitor Spending	\$21,000-\$25,000

WHY TOURISM DOLLARS MATTER

- Visiting artists may require lodging, meals, fuel, groceries, art supplies, shopping, and other services during their stay.
- Collectors, spectators, family members, and companions can create additional spending beyond the artist-party estimate.
- Painting locations throughout Franklin and Macon County encourage visitors to explore the community rather than remain at a single venue.
- The event creates marketing value beyond the festival weekend through artwork, exhibitions, sales, websites, and social media.

A LASTING TOURISM ASSET

"Every painting created during the Franklin Plein Air Art Festival becomes a lasting ambassador for Macon County. Those paintings are exhibited, sold, shared online, and displayed in homes and galleries for years—continuing to inspire future visitors long after the festival has ended."

PROJECTED FIRST-YEAR COMMUNITY REACH

Artists	Up to 35
Artist room nights	Up to 120
Potential companion/family visitation	Additional tourism opportunity
Saturday exhibition & awards	Additional visitor draw
Beneficiaries	Lodging • dining • retail • fuel • attractions

Planning note: Figures above are first-year projections for planning purposes. Actual economic impact will be documented through artist registration data, lodging/ZIP-code information, attendance tracking, and a post-event participant survey.



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5-A

Department/Agency: Stewart Communications

Subject Matter: Marketing Report

There will be a monthly marketing report provided by Stewart Communications to the TDA Board related to activities each month.

Suggested Motion: Received for information only.

Attachments: Yes ____ No X

Action Taken: _____



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5-B

Department/Agency: TDA Subcommittee

Subject Matter: TDA Subcommittee Report

The Town Council received the 1-3-5 year plan presentation on August 3, 2026. The Town Council was complimentary of the work being done by the TDA and impressed by the time and effort put into this plan and directed the TDA to continue moving forward.

The TDA membership will need to take ownership/accountability of certain projects and processes as noted in the plan. The attached project plan template outlines the various tasks, stakeholders, plans, timelines, scope, etc...

Suggested Motion: Received for information and discussion.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____

TDA Project Plan 1/3/5 Master

Project Name	Purpose	Background	Objective	In Scope	Out of Scope	Dependencies	Costs/Budget	Approvals Required	Timeline	Success Criteria	TDA Sponsor/s	Status	Comments
Murals around the Town	Generate excitement and attraction for locals and visitors	Ability to represent the best of our community and showcase our heritage	Identify 5 - 7 locations highly visible locations around the Town that are ideal for Murals	Mural locations, designs, identify local artists, gain approval, and execution	Building and/or wall repair	Building owners agreement	TBD	Design and funding approval from Town Council	24 months	Project completion	TBD	Green	Possibility to leverage other grants and private funding
Event Catendar													
Event Funding Request Form and Process													
X													
X													
X													
X													
X													

Murals

Project Name	Purpose	Background	Objective	In Scope	Out of Scope	Dependencies	Costs/Budget	Approvals Required	Timeline	Success Criteria	TDA Sponsor/s	Status	Comments
Mural by Gazebo	Create a mural that we will be heavily viewed, photographed and filmed as a central location in the Town of Franklin	Ability to represent the best of our community and showcase our heritage	Represent the best of Franklin and our surrounding area	Mural locations, designs, identify local artists, gain approval execution	Building and/or wall repair	Building owners agreement	\$7,000.00	Building owner (name) and Town Council	120 days	Completed on time and at or under budget	TBD	9/4 - Initial conversations with business owner completed, two proposals received	Next steps: Finalize design, get final cost, seek approvals
Mural on ABC building													