

TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOURISM DEVELOPEMNT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2025

Present: Chairperson Connie Grubermann, Members: Town Manager Amie Owens, Hannah Edwards, Rob Reale, Angela Martin, Kevin Covell, Guy Gooder and Tim Crabtree arrived 5:31 p.m.

Absent: Members Matt Holland and

Others present: Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk
Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications
Mia Overton, The Franklin Press
Robbie Tompa, Town Councilman
Jenny Golding & Kellie Burns, Sweet Carolina Music Festival Coordinators

1. Call to Order- Chair Connie Grubermann

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Approval of the December 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Member Rob Reale made a motion, seconded by Member Angela Martin to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2024 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

3. Financial Reports- ending December 31, 2024

Town Manager Amie Owens presented the Financial Report through the end of December 2024. She noted that the amount of occupancy tax collected in November was \$15,022.50 (2nd highest November to date and above the 10-year average) and the amount of occupancy tax collected in December was \$10,102.09 (4th highest December to date and above the 10-year average). Total expenses thus far \$89,269.82 leaving the balance of \$7,020.87 and \$171,958.35 remains in TDA Fund Balance. The report is incorporated into these minutes as Exhibit A.

Member Kevin Covell made a motion, seconded by Member Hannah Edwards to approve the financial report ending December 31, 2024. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

4. New Business

A.) New Application for Consideration

Macon County Transit submitted an application for funding for their Hiker Route that runs March through May 2025. The requested amount is \$6,000. It was noted that last year the TDA funded \$2,000 for the Hiker Route. This item will be voted on at the March meeting.

B.) New Application for Consideration

Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Center (SMPCC) submitted an application for funding for their Sweet Carolina Music Festival Fundraiser on May 3, 2025. Kellie Burns, Event Coordinator and Jenny Golding, SMPCC Executive Director presented the funding request for \$35,000. This is a new event that will bring various music artists to Macon County to raise money for SMPCC. SMPCC offers free medical services and supplies to residents of Macon County. This item will be voted on at the March meeting.

C.) New Application for Consideration

Jim Adkins, Scottish Tartan Museum Owner, submitted an application for funding for National Tartan Day on April 5, 2025. The funding request is for \$1,525 to be used for a bagpipe band and axe throwing.

5. Items from the Board

A.) Marketing Report- Stewart Communications

Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications, gave the marketing update.

- Discussed the increase engagement on social media
- \$5,000 paid to Our State for the video
- Ad will run in Smoky Mountain Host Guide
- Billboard on Hwy 441 in Georgia (showed photo)
- Valentine’s Day getaway video on social media
- Working on TDA Annual Marketing Plan
- Survey on “why come to Franklin” will be sent out soon

Town Manager Amie Owens noted that there was still a vacancy on the TDA Board. The vacancy is for someone that collects occupancy tax in the Town limits.

Discussion was held on looking at setting guidelines for funding partisan events. It was noted that the events should bring tourist and occupancy tax into the Town and the focus needs to be on the event and not the event sponsor.

6. Announcements

A.) The next regular scheduled TDA meeting will be held on Monday, March 10, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

7. Adjourn

Member Kevin Covell made a motion, seconded by Member Tim Crabtree to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. The motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Connie Grubermann, Chairperson

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk