

Minutes of  
CHEROKEE COUNTY  
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
March 10, 2014

The Cherokee County Tourism Development Authority met at 3:00 p.m. on March 10, 2014 at the Cherokee County Courthouse.

Members present were Margaret DeLuna, Robin Sargent, Aurelia Stone, Phylis Blackmon, David Wood, Steve Dickey and Anthony El-Khoury. Absent was Candy Roberts. Also present were Nancy Lane, who serves as Clerk to the Board, Andrew DeLuna, Bertha Guffey, Claudia Huls, Paula Bryan, Barbara Hughes, Barbara Vicknair, Elo-Ly Bailey, Corey Bailey, Paige Sherrill, Carol Hall, Joy Stein, James Ellis, Liz Carter, Ellen Stephens, Curt Sifers and Ed Figueroa.

The meeting was called to order by Margaret DeLuna, Chair, after which there was a moment of silence and the pledge of allegiance.

After discussion, motion was made by Phylis Blackmon, seconded by David Wood, and unanimously adopted, to approve the agenda as amended.

After motion by Anthony El-Khoury, seconded by Robin Sargent, and unanimously adopted, the minutes of the February 10, 2014 meeting were approved.

The financial report was reviewed with no action being required.

The next item on the agenda was the Grant Program and an update on the cover letter. Motion was made by Robin Sargent, seconded by Phylis Blackmon and unanimously adopted, that the Board would review the cover letter prepared by Aurelia Stone and email edits and suggestions with a consensus being made by email for voting on the final draft.

The first Grant Application to be reviewed was the Valley River Arts Guild, Inc. David Wood made a motion to approve the grant in the amount of \$730.00, with the motion being seconded by Robin Sargent and unanimously adopted. Aurelia Stone made a recommendation that organizations be limited to one application per year.

After discussion, David Wood made a motion, seconded by Robin Sargent and unanimously adopted, to approve up to \$1,000.00 for The Compound's grant request, pending receipt of their budget by the Board no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday March 14, 2014. Robin Sargent made a motion, seconded by Anthony El-Khoury, and unanimously adopted, to approve up to \$1,000.00 for the Andrews Police Pals' grant request, pending receipt of their budget by the Board no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday March 14, 2014. Motion was made by Aurelia Stone, seconded by Phylis Blackmon and unanimously adopted, that the grant request by Southern Appalachian Family Farm Farms be tabled until the April 2014 meeting. The application was accepted within the required 60 days prior to event but more information and a detailed budget must be presented to the Board for consideration.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation regarding the new Scenic Circle publication. Paula Bryan explained the new and ultimate edition of a single, combined publication for Scenic Circle. After discussion, Aurelia Stone made a motion to give Heritage Partners \$1,000.00 from the Mountain Culture line item, the motion being seconded by Robin Sargent and unanimously adopted. Liz Carter, Scenic Circle Publication Project Manager, said if there was a need for a workshop or if the Board had comments for content to please let her know.

The next item on the agenda was a website update by Nancy Lane. Mrs. Lane stated there were a few small issues that were in process of being completed and asked the Board to continue to review and let her know if there were any suggestions, additions or corrections that needed to be made. No action was taken.

During the public forum, Ellen Stephens from the Cherokee County Saddle Club explained the purpose of the club and provided conditions of the Mountain Folk Center arena. Their goal is to have the arena ready for summer events.

Margaret DeLuna spoke for Ralph Robinson who currently videos county commission meetings. Mr. Robinson would like to do some of the Tourism Development Authority videos and he will be added to the April 2014 agenda to give his presentation.

It was also discussed that static cling stickers, labels or bumper stickers could help promote the new website or be used in mailings. After discussion it was decided that Robin Sargent would research possible options.

The next item on the agenda were short and long term marketing items. Phylis Blackmon and Anthony El-Kouri, marketing committee, presented several ideas. The cost for a quarter-page ad in the Smoky Mountain Host Travel Guide is \$1,000.00.

Aurelia Stone made a motion to pay \$1,000.00 for an ad, the motion being seconded by Phylis Blackmon, but failing to be approved with a vote of one in favor and five against. Mrs. Blackmon explained that in a previous vote, \$8,400.00 was allocated for the 2014 NC Travel Guide ad but the actual amount should have been \$8,500.00. Mrs. Blackmon made a motion to pay the additional \$100.00, the motion being seconded by Robin Sargent and unanimously adopted. Mr. El-Kouri distributed information prepared by Lamar Advertising, regarding billboards in the Fort Myers, Florida area. After discussion, Aurelia Stone made a motion to use the number two billboard presented, panel 26329, at a cost of \$2,300.00 per month for the months of May, June and July, 2014. Mrs. Blackmon seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted. It was agreed that Mr. El-Kouri will prepare graphics and email the Board for a final layout decision. After discussion, Aurelia stone made a motion to pay \$660.00 for an ad in Peaks and Valley and \$500.00 for an ad in Accent Andrews for a total of \$1,160.00. Mrs. Blackmon seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted. Mrs. Stone made a motion for two Board members to attend the Tourism Works conference to be held April 11, 2014 in Dillsboro at a cost of \$59.00 per attendee. Mrs. Blackmon seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted.

Robin Sargent made a motion for the Board to move into Executive Session to discuss payroll consistency and compliance, the motion being seconded by Phylis Blackmon and unanimously adopted. David Wood and Steve Dickey were not present for the Executive Session.

After discussion, motion was made by Robin Sargent and seconded by Anthony El-Khoury as follows:

That TDA staff become employees of TPG/Carolina Workforce, and work with the direction of the TDA Board to the appointed TDA supervisor, with the cost factor at the recommended Cherokee County Pay Grade 57 for the Information Specialists and Pay Grade 59 for the Supervisor.

The job description for the Information Specialists is as follows: "The main requirement for this position would be that they have an extensive knowledge of Cherokee County and surrounding areas, with a strong knowledge of directions to various attractions, businesses, etc. They must be proficient in computer and phone skills and be professional and businesslike in appearance. This job is a good fit for mature workers, possibly retired, who have great people skills and a strong knowledge of the area. They would need to be extremely dependable and would have minimum supervision."

The job description for the Supervisor is as follows: "Duties would include providing information to visitors at a Visitor's Center, website maintenance, taking minutes at meetings, supervising staff at two Visitor's Centers, including approving schedules, approving time sheets and submitting, and training."

In order to execute cleanly with both Chambers, we elect the ninety-day without cause cancellation of the agreements in order to accommodate the changes.

A substitute motion was made by Aurelia Stone, and seconded by Phylis Blackmon, to table the vote until all members of TDA have the opportunity to read the material referenced during discussion, the vote to be done at a called meeting within the next 10 days. The motion failed with a vote of two in favor and two against, with one person not voting.

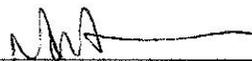
A vote was then taken on the original motion, which passed with a vote of four in favor and one against.

The Board then returned to open session.

Motion was made by Anthony El-Khoury, seconded by Robin Sargent, and unanimously adopted, to adjourn.

  
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Phylis Blackmon, Secretary

Approved:

  
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