

Minutes of  
CHEROKEE COUNTY  
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
March 19, 2012

The Cherokee County Tourism Development Authority met at 11:00 a.m. on March 19, 2012 in the classroom Hiawassee Valley Pool & Wellness Center.

Members present were Eric Carlson, David Wood, Gil Hargett, Karen Nash, Danny Slucher, Callie Moore and Phylis Blackmon. Absent was Candy Roberts. Guests present were Bob Ferreira, Erica Wood and staff person, Lillian Threlkeld.

The meeting was called to order by Eric Carlson. After a moment of silence and the pledge of allegiance, Eric Carlson welcomed guests.

The minutes of February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting were unanimously approved following a motion and second by Karen Nash and David Wood respectively.

Motion for approval of the day's agenda was made by Karen Nash and seconded by David Wood and unanimously approved.

The next topic for report was the upcoming Freestyle Kayaking event. Gil Hargett suggests we (Cherokee County) are on our own to devise strategies to encourage media persons to stay and report on our area. He suggests that Andrews might consider it a better strategy to concentrate on the annual Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC) anniversary celebration and a regular appeal to over-flow guests to that event. The current strategy for the TDA is to provide free overnight accommodations (4 days, 3 nights), meals, and transportation to the kayaking event to select media persons who are chosen from the responders to our invitation. Invitees are to be selected from outdoor magazines and the newspapers of chosen cities from surrounding states. Lillian Threlkeld is to search out the newspapers and David Wood is to bring a list from the magazines previously collected. Gil Hargett will draft a letter of invitation.

The next item of discussion was the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rest Area Visitors' Center proposal. At a meeting with representatives of the NCDOT and the TDA on March 14<sup>th</sup>, a draft of a suggested agreement was presented to the TDA for consideration. It was suggested that the agreement or contract be with the Andrews Chamber of Commerce instead of the TDA. There is need for a budget for the start-up and operations according to the rules of the agreement. Karen Nash agrees to develop this budget. It is decided to call a special meeting next week, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. at the Rest Area to consider all the proposals on-site.

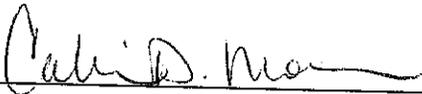
The Strategic Plan is the next order of business. The discussion is the need to create TDA's own web-site. It is agreed to post a request for bids for this project in the newspaper. The committee to create the specs for the web-site includes Eric, Callie and Phylis. The Grant program committee consists of Danny, Karen and Callie. They will work on the form and

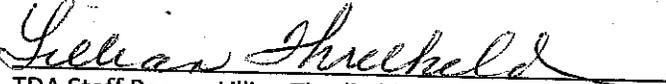
communicate by email. Maps will be brought to the next meeting by David Wood. A discussion of signage suggested a real need and considerations would be for the specific locations and the color of the signs be other than blue or brown, maybe orange.

There was a presentation by David Brown and Kit Carson from the local newspapers about the proposed outline for 2012 *Celebrate Cherokee Magazine*.

At the public forum Bob Ferreira pointed out that Tourism Development Authority has no member from either of the major hotels in the area and the state guidelines for TDA states this as a requirement. It was decided to add this topic to the agenda for a future meeting. It was stated that the current members were appointed by County Commissioners and that prior to this appointment, the newspaper posted requests for interested parties to respond and there were none.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned to be followed by a lunch-time joint meeting of TDA and the Cherokee County Chamber Board.

  
Approved

  
TDA Staff Person Lillian Threlkeld  
CDM