Tourism Development Authority
Board Meeting
September 30, 2015- 9:30 am
Town Hall Council Chambers
Minutes

Present: Brian Barnes, Talia Freeman, Carl Marquardt, Judy Decker, Calder Smoot. Representing the Chamber: Dottie Moretz. Representing the Town: Rebecca Ward. Staff to Board: Kate Gavenus. Guest: Jim Brooks

I. **Call to Order**: Chairman Brian Barnes called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

II. **Adoption of Agenda:** Carl Marquardt moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Talia Freeman, all approved.

III. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the June 29, 2015 meeting were approved unanimously upon a motion by Carl Marquardt and a second by Talia Freeman.

IV. **Discussion- Mobile Accessibility Options**: Boomer Sassmann, Webmaster for the BeechMtn.com website, talked with the group about the various methods used to allow viewing and navigation of a website via a phone or tablet. In order to be able to see and use the site exactly as a desktop or laptop would show it, the site needs to be mobile-responsive. This entails a rebuild of the current site.

V. **Financial Report:** The YTD budget and the Capital budget were reviewed. Talia Freeman explained that the resort wouldn't be able to use the capital funds that had been allocated for lighting. Kate Gavenus told the board that funds for Visitor Center repairs and maintenance would be a capital expense and a column for those expenses, without a funded amount, was added to the Capital Funds budget sheet. Upgrades needed for BeechTV would also need an amount allocated, as would the Carl Marquardt motioned to move capital funds from the Resort Lights project to the following: BeechTV upgrade $1000, Visitor Center Repairs $3000 and Website Enhancement/Rebuild $2000, with $5000 added to the Town Lights column, which will include lighting the Resort sign. Calder Smoot seconded, all approved.

VI. **Chamber Report:** Dottie Moretz reported that she is still working on the cartoon map. She will send out proofs to everyone today. She is still working on the Member Spotlight project, but hasn't yet done anything to upload to BeechTV. The Kite Festival went well with good attendance, though the chamber didn't make any money. 124 volunteers are signed up for Oz. Next year lodging partners will be encouraged to purchase. Bald Guy Brew is a new member of the Chamber.

VII. **Old Business:**

Cartoon Map- see VI. Chamber report above

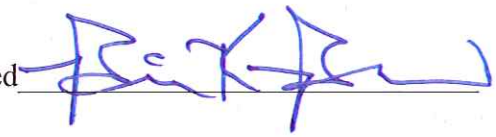
Buckeye Creek Paving- Governor McCrory has signed off on our grant application to pave Buckeye Creek Road, and has asked that it be added to DOT's workload, with total funding increased to $1.2 million. There will be no cost to the town. The final

sign-off still needs to take place at ARC in Washington DC; Kate has alerted Congressman Mark Meadows' staff, who have already expressed the Congressman's interest in seeing this go forward. We should hear a final word at the end of October.
Review of Goals- The 20/20 Visioning process will be a focus for the next year. With the goal of standardizing processes for funding decisions met, and paving of Buckeye Creek likely, the board determined that it was time to add a new goal. Kate has been working with SCORE and BRNHA regarding a Hospitality Certification program. The board agreed that a program of this nature that could serve businesses on the mountain should be an additional goal.

VIII. **New Business:** Meeting dates were discussed and the following changes were made: October meeting—October 21, 2015, November meeting—December 2, 2015, December meeting—January 6, 2016.

IX. **The Marketing Report**: Big House Marketing will be giving us reports at the end of each month regarding the performance of our website and our ads. Craig Distl has sent several links to articles that have featured Beech Mountain, and he is working on winter ad placements.

X. **The TDA Director Report:** Kate Gavenus reported that in-office visits to the Visitor Center were up by 86% in September over the previous year, with 477 vs. 256.
Phone logs show 57% of July's calls were from NC, 9% from FL and 6% from SC.
New seating and storage benches have been added to the visitor center.

X. **Adjournment**: Chairperson Barnes adjourned the meeting at 10:44 am.

Signed