

Beech Mountain Tourism Development Authority
November 28, 2012 9:30am, Regular Meeting

Town Hall Council Chambers

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order – meeting was called to order at 9:32am. All were present.
- II. Adoption of Agenda – Since the agenda was mailed on Monday, Amy added Charles Bateman to the agenda under other. He will speak to the board on advertising opportunities on High Country 365.
- III. Consideration of Minutes-
 - October 31 – Regular Meeting – Brian Barnes asked that the minutes be changed under the discussion about new proposed regulations regarding rentals. Technically, no rentals are permitted, the minutes says that no large rentals are permitted. Brian Barnes motioned to approve the minutes pending this change. Candi Catoe seconded. All were in favor.
- IV. Financial Report
 - Occupancy Tax/Budget to Date – tax collections for this fall continue to be down. Amy noted that to date, we are still up about 6,000.
 - Invoice Approvals
 - Blue Ridge Propane – \$301.59
 - Staples – \$67.82, \$118.59
 - Bryce Holder – Audit - \$1,800
 - Romantic Asheville - \$600
 - Craig Distl - \$2200
 - Brian Barnes motioned to approve the invoices as presented, which was second by Candi Catoe. All were in favor of approval.
 - Jim Brooks suggested trying to save money by getting motion sensors in the bathrooms because the fans run and pull heat out. John and Amy will get a quote.
- V. Chamber Report - John Troxler
 - 385 visits this November, 290 last winter, could be due to a better Thanksgiving, with the sledding hill being open this past weekend.
 - BMR opens Friday, November 30th.
 - Upcoming Events:
 - Dec 15 – Santa Visits Beech Mountain at 4 Seasons
 - Dec 29- Bonfire and Hayride at Brick Oven Pizzeria
 - New Years Eve Bash at Buckeye, and Party at BMR; both on 31st

- Town Sledding is open conditions permitting, M-F 1-5pm, Weekends and Holiday's – 9am-5pm
- Chamber Annual Meeting was in November – New board members are Jim Brooks and Debbie Canady, with Talia Freeman returning to the board, Daniel and Judy leaving board. The new board will come in on the next meeting in December.
- Close to launching the business directory on the chamber website with help from Kathy Khalifa
- Daniel spoke about A Cool 5 Race title sponsorship at the Annual Meeting, the Recreation Department hopes to have businesses in line for sponsorship December 31st, before they take it off the mountain to other entities.

VI. Marketing Report – Craig Distl

- Winter Marketing Budget Proposal
 - High Points from this year:
 - New website in the past year, has been updated every season, traffic is up.
 - Hiking packages, Summer of 79, Stay & Ski Packages
 - Worked with Talia on the Winter Brochure.
 - 80's weekend – new event, launched advertised in one month
 - Emerald Outback site, traffic, about 100 requests for maps
 - Brews N Views did well, Gravity Nationals media day
 - Occupancy collections are up
 - Most of the Marketing budget was formulated from one of the marketing meetings. Craig met with Amy to fill in some of the other holes, which shows in the proposed budget. The funds represented were taken from the proposed contract advertising budget that was approved in June. Candi Catoe motioned to approve the proposed Winter budget as presented. Gil Adams seconded.
 - Media Tour – Dec 12-16. Boone/Watauga TDA has coordinated with Craig (NC division tour) 11 people coming, not all from different outlets, but it is a great list. Can we invoice the state for Gas cards? Lowes home improvement can do shell cards for \$25 or \$50. The board approved to pay for the cards and get reimbursed by the state.
 - Mom bloggers Tour will be January 4-6 – 8 or 9 on the list, each bringing one child – Atlanta, Greenville, Raleigh, and Charlotte are all represented. Some have 10-20 thousand followers on Twitter/Facebook. Hosting one writer from the Tennessean – has one coming from Tampa.
 - Would like to capitalize on the \$45 weekday special that the Ski Resort is doing for Learn to Ski Mont – (includes group lesson, rentals, lift ticket)
 - Skiing 101 – \$101 per person, includes \$45 ski package = \$112 a night for weeknight. Per night deal. Run all of January, book

through Talia. Brian Barnes asked if we can we promote this through the budget which was just approved? Craig said we can stay within budget, use the website and online advertising

- Elevate Yourself Brochure – we have a copy ready for print. Calder asked if we should wait until we hear about the bike park at the Ski Resort? The board would like to include the lift access. Gil said it would be available. There was discussion about how many brochures should be ordered and what the budget should be. Amy pointed out that in the Proposed Marketing Budget that Craig had gotten approved, he had budgeted 1500 to redo the brochure. Amy was able to edit the old brochure using Adobe Indesign without any monetary outlay. The board would like to approve up to \$500 to get more brochures.
- Sled Hill Rack Card – Amy Morrison was asked by the new marketing director at the HCH if we had any information on the sledding hill she could place in the Visitor Center. She thinks that with a small budget, she could produce a rack card that would be much more professional looking. Gil wasn't sure if we needed to advertise the sledding hill. Amy understands it isn't the Ski Resort, but people do enjoy the hill that stay in lodging, and thinks for a very small outlay, it might be worth it just to have something that looks nice instead of a flyer. Calder also said it would gain us another spot in the local and regional visitor centers. The board approved to create a small amount of Sledding informational cards.

VII. TDA Coordinator Report - Amy Morrison

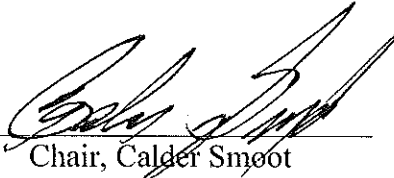
- Presented the TDA accomplishments at the Chamber Annual Meeting November 13th
- Hiking Packages – sold 15 packages in October; 2 in November (\$3400 in lodging), she feels like it has been a successful endeavor.
- New Elevate Yourself Brochure – Amy has been working with Craig on the new brochure. Changes had already been discussed.
- Banner Ad Sign-Ups
 - 3 new ads added in November, 2 year round, 1 seasonal
 - \$1,000 in revenue
- Winter Newsletter will be distributed today. It will announce all of the events, as well as information on the sledding hill, snowshoe hikes, and BMR opening day.
 - 38 sign-ups in October, 17 in November
- Social Media Update
 - Twitter and Facebook continue to grow. Amy would like the board to review the Locations and Cities, as it is very beneficial information about our target audience.

VIII. Other

- Charles Bateman – High Country 365

- Charles overviewed the website and mobile traffic information and explained that HC365 is a spinoff of the same company that creates the area maps that are circulated throughout the high country (been around for over 10 years).
- Calder asked if High Country 365 would list events/attractions with enough advertising, or do you have to pay for each listing? Great question – you get a free listing on the calendar, but paying a small amount could get more content. Paid social media campaigns, etc. How much??? \$400 for one year of events listings. Content, etc. Banner Ads - \$450 a year, we could choose to focus that advertising when we need to.
- Charles will send more information to Amy for distribution by the next TDA meeting
- New TDA Employee & TDA Intern
 - Replace John for up to 29 hours, more likely 24 per week, which would allow for a budget for an intern.
 - Brian Barnes motioned to approve replacing John with a new assistant, Gil Adams seconded. All were in favor.
 - Amy will prepare a Part Time employee listing, as well as an internship listing.
- Brews N Views 2013
 - Does the board want to pursue this again? The same weekend is open next year
 - Amy would like to grow on the event, perhaps even hold a contest, in which the winner would be served in the Beech Tree during Ski Season.
 - The board seemed unanimous that they would like to see the event continue.

IX. Adjournment – meeting was adjourned at 11:45am


Chair, Calder Smoot