

Beech Mountain Tourism Development Authority  
April 25, 2012 9:30am, Regular Meeting

Town Hall Council Chambers

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order
  - Meeting called to order at 9:33, Candi Catoe was unable to attend.
- II. Adoption of Agenda – Calder would like to let the Gnarnia guests go first, but no one else had any additions/changes to the agenda, and it was approved.
- III. Consideration of Minutes- March 28, 2012 - Regular Meeting
  - No one had any changes to the minutes. Gil Adams moved that the board approve the March minutes. Fred Barth seconded. All were in favor.
- IV. Financial Report
  - Occupancy Tax/Budget to Date – Fred mentioned that it was the warmest March in 156 years, and the tax collections reflect that. We have run out of contract advertising dollars, but we still have money in other advertising. Calder wondered why the TDA has only taken in 85% of funds, but transferred over 100% of the budgeted amount to the town. Calder will follow-up with Nancy on this.
  - 2012-2013 Budget – the TDA needs to have a budget session. The next TDA meeting is the 31<sup>st</sup>, the week before would be Wednesday 23 at 9:30am. No one had any objections.
  - Invoice/Reimbursement Approvals – Patty Gil – 160.88, Boomer – 510.00, Romantic Asheville – 600, Travel Reimbursement – 53.71
    - Motion to accept and pay invoices and reimbursement made by Gil Adams, seconded by Fred Barth, all were in favor.
- V. Chamber Report - John Troxler
  - 31<sup>st</sup> Town Anniversary will be next Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at 6pm. All are welcome to attend, with live music, food, and games.
  - Summer concerts start May 27 with the Harris Brothers at the Beech Alpen Inn. Fred's concerts will begin the week after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
  - Pig Roast – the Chamber is trying to sell more pre-sale tickets to hedge against bad weather, and bring more money in before the actual event. They will be putting the tickets online through pay-pal or something similar. It will be June 30<sup>th</sup>. Advanced tickets will remain \$15, but will increase to \$20 if they show up at the event.
  - Autumn at Oz Party – John has been working with Cindy on the event, and there is the possibility of a VIP Party, which would include interaction with the actors, dinner, first session tickets to the Land of Oz. There was a meeting about this, in which Craig came out as the point of contact if the TDA is

willing to pursue the event. The chamber and Emerald Mtn would help a little, but cannot be depended upon to coordinate very much because of the amount of work they are doing for Saturday and Sunday.

- 52 people signed up for the Beech Mountain Chamber Summit which is today at noon. The Town entities will be making presentations about summer events and initiatives.
- Chamber approved to take on the permit for the beer fest, since we can get the permit for 4 hours instead of 4 days.
- The contract has been approved for the time that John does Chamber work - \$1250 per quarter.
- John Troxler brought a concept for a banner to welcome back the Summer Residents and Guests. The Town Council felt that this was more of a TDA expense. This is similar to the banners we had talked about getting “Welcome Hikers/Bikers”, and a follow-up of the “Welcome Skiers”. Gil Adams asked who came up with the idea for a welcome residents banner. Amy said that Randy Feierabend did. Gil said that the Town should pay for it then, since it was their idea. Gil Adams moves that the banner be taken back to the Town Council since the TDA transfers to the Town \$60,000 per year, which it could be paid for out of.

#### VI. Marketing Report

- New Billboard – Amy passed around the new design that will go up next week. Craig felt that the billboard should focus on lodging, since we can’t advertise everything we have. Amy had reservations about advertising lodging to people that are already here, and probably already have accommodations. However, since they were crunched for time, the billboard will advertise lodging, and will go up at the end of April.
- Romantic Asheville – is now advertising our summer packages and activities. We purchased 3 months of advertising for \$600.
- Autumn at Oz VIP Party – Judy Decker said that they are still working out logistics, and have not decided whether it would be at the Rec Center or Pinnacle. A few of the interested parties they did say they might not be able to help if they have this at the Pinnacle, which would put stress on Judy to do this. Is there a pivot person for this? Judy said there is nothing for this. Calder said we will see how it goes over the next couple of months. Amy asked if they were willing to put together a committee, because Craig needed to know, but they would like more details. Amy will see if Craig is willing to head the committee.
- Summer Packages Black-out Dates – Amy asked if anyone had any dates they would like us to advertise that the packages are not available. The TDA feels that the lodging offices can simply tell people the rooms they have at that price point are already booked, but they have some other rooms available at \_\_\_\_\_ price.
- Partnership
  - US Airways – fulfillment piece through the High Country Marketing Partnership is out. It is a wonderful article on the High Country, with

many of the partners paying for a page after to showcase their attraction. This was an opportunity for the TDA, but they did not have money in the budget due to the Outside Magazine co-op. Amy hopes that in the future, the TDA does not use all of the advertising money in case amazing opportunities like this crop up. The readership is over 2 million, while Outside magazine is only a few hundred thousand, but is more targeted.

- HCH Visitor Guide – the new Visitor Guide is out, with a short two page article done by the partnership that includes Beech Mountain.

## VII. TDA Coordinator Report - Amy Morrison

- Newsletter
  - Sent to 115 people, 66 of which have signed up for the newsletter via [www.beechmtn.com](http://www.beechmtn.com).
  - 68 of those opened the newsletter, open rate of 59%
  - Industry Average (Travel & Tourism) – 19%
- Business Directory
  - Now populated with Inns, Vacation Rental Companies, Restaurants, and Area Attractions
  - Includes picture and short description, upon clicking, more information is revealed.
  - Still working out a few kinks, but before the site just had the name with a link to your website.
- Town Budget Meeting
  - April 3rd I presented an overview of the TDA budget initiatives for the upcoming year. Randy asked that I also include a few things that I would like to see in the budget. I included the SE Tourism Society Marketing College, and the development of Beech Mountain Promotional Items. A couple of the Town Council members would like to see us pursue promotional items. It might be necessary to get the logo trade-marked so that we could look into getting stickers, patches, and t-shirts. I might need to talk to the Town Lawyer about this, it does cost about \$300 to trade mark a logo.
- TRAC Meeting
  - Attended the Tourism Resource Assistance Center put on by the NC Division of Tourism last Thursday. I helped Mille Barbie with a High Country Host table, and also found out that we can get stories in the Division's international newsletter, and also got on Christy Driver's list of group leads.
- AAA Fam Tour
  - The Blue Ridge Parkway AAA Media Tour was in Boone last Tuesday. Amy went to dinner with the group at the new Courtyard, and was able to get up and speak about all that Beech Mountain has to offer in front of 27 AAA Travel Agents from all over the country and even from Canada. Christy Driver from the Division was there, and

told me at the TRAC meeting that even she didn't know about some of the things I mentioned.

- Lees McRae Playbill Ad
  - Amy designed the playbill ad. It will start running in late June.
- Banner Elk Winery
  - Amy would like permission to purchase 20 tasting cards from Banner Elk Winery with the new credit card. They cost \$5 a piece. Calder made a motion to approve the purchase. Judy Decker seconded. All were in favor.
- Banner Ads
  - We have had 3 people pay to place banner ads on the beechmtn.com site. Those have had between 18-34 clicks to date (3 weeks), which is pretty high considering April is a slow month. All of the ads have a relatively good click through rate as well.

#### VIII. Other

- Gnarnia Music Festival Lodging Request
  - Bowie and Myles of the Gnarnia Executive Production Team gave a brief synopsis of where they are terms of ticket sales, and advertising.
  - They would like the TDA to set aside some rooms and houses for the Gnarnia staff. They have offered some accommodations to the Artists for free, as well as core staff, but other rooms just need to be blocked off and will be paid for. Calder asked them to create a grid of their requests, indicated how many people, and the privacy level that those people need (can they have two people in a room with two beds, or do they need one room, one person?). Amy also asked them to specify how many beds they needed comped vs. just blocked off. After the TDA receives this, they will look into reserving some spaces.

#### IX. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 by Chair Calder Smoot.



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Calder Smoot, Chair