

Minutes of
Cherokee County
Tourism Development Authority

February 10, 2020

The Cherokee County Tourism Development Authority met at 1 p.m. on Feb. 10, 2020 at the Murphy Visitor Center.

Members present were Sandra Daley, Joan Posey-Neumann, Cal Stiles, Steve Dickey, Mike Sheidy and Aurelia Stone. Board member Phylis Blackmon was absent as she was in the hospital. A message from Phylis was read explaining her absence. She noted this was the first time she missed a board meeting since her appointment in May, 2017.

Also in attendance were Sherry Raines (Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce), Jan Olsen (Andrews Chamber of Commerce), Tim Ford, Valley River Arts Guild, and Sande Kimball, interim manager, clerk to the board.

Chair Sandra Daley called the meeting to order followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Cal Stiles with one item under new business (payroll breakdown) moved to the executive session. Joan Posey-Neumann seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted.

Cal Stiles made a motion to approve the Board minutes from the Jan. 3, 2020 meeting, seconded by Aurelia Stone. The minutes were approved unanimously.

A financial report was submitted. Sande Kimball reported that the report was in order per Cherokee County Finance Officer Candy Anderson.

Accomplishments for October-December 2019 were submitted and noted. This report included a year-end report of visitor numbers at both visitor centers.

Tourism numbers for the Murphy and Andrews Visitor Centers, January 2020 were read and noted.

Under unfinished business the board discussed ongoing plumbing problems with the two restrooms at the Murphy Visitor Center. The last fix was done in January by Christian Plumbing. At that call, the plumber submitted a summary on what he thought would be the best fix in the future. He also suspects the water pressure into the building was high but he could not find a hose bib to do a test. After lengthy discussion, Cal Stiles asked the interim manager to contact the town manager to see where the water is coming in and to take steps to get this issue resolved now and not to wait for a future breakdown.

Aurelia Stone made a motion to have two more work quotes to be presented at the March 9, 2020 board meeting. Steve Dickey seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

Discussion continued to include the Visit NC 365 Conference March 22-24 at the Omni Grove Park Inn, Asheville. This is the state's tourism annual meeting and an important one for the new manager to attend. Cal Stiles made a motion to have the new manager sign up, seconded by Joan Posey-Neumann.

Tim Ford spoke during the public forum. He asked for the TDA to continue its support of Art Walk with a \$1,000 membership. Art-Walk is held the first Friday of every month May – December. This year the December date will be on the Saturday of the town's parade and tree lighting. Ford said he wants to target advertising outside of the Murphy area particularly North Georgia. Sandra Daley suggested more digital advertising. Aurelia Stone made the motion that half of the \$1,000 be applied to advertising outside of the county in an effort to bring more heads to beds. The motion was seconded by Cal Stiles after it was amended to make sure the \$1,000 had been budgeted and if not, to amend the budget to include this ongoing support. The motion was unanimously approved. Membership in Art Walk is included on the TDA's Strategic Plan 2019-2020, adopted April 8, 2019, under Mountain Culture.

Jan Olsen announced the Andrews Chamber was working on its Spring Fling set for April 25, 2020 downtown Andrews. Also discussed was the town's application to appear on a DIY program, HOME TOWN. The stars and producers of this program will come to a selected town and revamp it.

On that subject, Sherry Raines gave an update on the Town of Murphy's effort with Designation USA. A meeting was going to be held Feb. 12, 8:30 a.m. at the L&N Depot. Aurelia Stone pointed out that restoration of Waynesville, Hayesville and Sylva were through the Main Street USA initiative.

A motion was made to go into executive session at 1:40 p.m. to interview a candidate for the position of manager and to discuss any personnel issues.

Cal Stiles made the motion for the board to come back into open forum at 2:35 p.m., seconded by Joan Posey-Neumann. Motion was unanimously approved.

Sandra Daley announced that the opening for the manager position of the CCTDA garnered a lot of good applicants. Cabrina Scionti of Andrews was hired for the full-time position to begin immediately. Mary Ann Anderson, also of Andrews, was hired as part-time assistant manager (3 days a week) to start the end of April. Interim Manager Sande Kimball was asked to stay on to help in training the new hires and with the transition – May 1, 2020.

There being no further business, Steve Dickey made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Joan Posey-Neumann. Motion was unanimously approved.

S. M. Kimball

Clerk to the Board

S. B. Daly

Approved

March 9, 2020

Dated