

BANNER ELK TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Tuesday, July 25, 2017 – 3:30pm

MINUTES

Members Present: Mike Dunn, Les Broussard, Tom McMurray, and Shannon Maness

Members Absent: Tanya Philyaw, Blaine Hansen

Staff Present: Rick Owen, Nancy Owen

Chairman Dunn called the meeting to order at 3:30pm

Tom McMurray made a motion to approve the agenda. Shannon Maness seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Tom McMurray made a motion to approve the April & June minutes as submitted. Shannon Maness seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Financial Report

Rick Owen, Town Manager, gave the board a financial update. Manager Owen reported that collections are up 7.7% without the month of June reporting.

Funding Requests

Doug Owen, representing Avery County Cycling Club came before the board with a request of \$2500 to help improve the bike track at the Banner Elk School. Mr. Owen started the bike club for Avery County Schools and is insured by the School district and uses their tax id. The money would be used to put up a sign on Hwy 184 under the current school sign and do improvements to the course. Tom McMurray made a motion to grant \$2500 but the sign has to be funded first before doing anything else. The check will be made out to the Avery County Schools. Les Broussard seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Meredith Olan, representing the Greater Banner Elk Heritage Foundation, came before the board with an amended grant request of \$4000. The first grant placed asked for \$2200. The money would be used for advertising, specifically to place ads in Carolina Mountain Life and other local spot ads. A full page color ad in CML is \$1575. Tom McMurray made a motion to grant \$4000 with the stipulation that the full page ad in CML be purchased in the June issue and the smaller ad in the fall of 2017 issue. Les Broussard seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Allen Bolick, representing the Banner Elk Book Exchange, came before the board with a request of \$1900 to help cover the cost of printing brochures, posters and placing ads in the newspaper. Tom McMurray made a motion to grant \$2000 with the provision that the Town of Banner Elk be paid the current balance associated with printing expenses. The money is to be used for

printing and advertising only. Shannon Maness seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Woolly Worm Festival submitted a grant request in the amount of \$4000 to help with advertising the festival. After discussion, it was determined that it would be of more benefit for the TDA to spend the money advertising the festival for them. Les Broussard made a motion to contribute \$4000 for digital billboards in Raleigh and Charlotte. This will be Woolly Worm specific only advertising the festival. Tom McMurray seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

New Business

Craig Distl, from Distl PR, updated the board on what he's been working on. Website traffic is up 50% from this time last year. 8357 visitors to the website in the month of July alone. Our second media tour just ended and we hope to have several great articles generated from it. Craig is working on Theatre and Christmas tree lodging packages to run on the website. It will be up to the lodging/inn keepers if they want to participate. It was discussed how much Lee Rankin, of Apple Hill Farm does for the media groups we bring up. She always hosts groups and gives free tours. The board voted to send her a one-time thank you donation of \$100. The board also decided to keep the 800 number for one more year and see how traffic is on it.

With no further business, Tom McMurray made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Shannon Maness seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Owen