

BANNER ELK TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Thursday, December 15, 2011 – 4:00PM
MINUTES

Members Present: Steve Chandler, Mike Dunn and Kacy Crabtree

Staff Present: Nancy Owen, Steve Smith and Rick Owen

Chairman Chandler called the meeting to order at 4:00pm. A quorum was present for the meeting. Mike Dunn made a motion to approve the agenda. Kacy Crabtree seconded. The vote was unanimous and the agenda was accepted.

Consideration of the September 2011 Minutes

With no changes noted, Kacy Crabtree made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Mike Dunn seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Financial Report

Steve Smith, Finance Officer, gave a financial report update. He reminded the board they had agreed to pay ½ of the paving cost of the new part of the Greenway Trail. The amount would be around \$5000 and come out of the 1/3 portion.

Town Update

Town Manager Rick Owen gave the board an update on the old Banner Elk School. As of now, there is no formal plan from the County for the school. Mr. Owen reported the economic director of Avery County still has hopes of turning the old school into a business incubator. Manager Owen also reported to the board about the weather station that was going to be installed at Town Hall. This station would give the current Banner Elk weather to Ray's Weather Center. Mr. Owen asked the board if they would be willing to help with repair cost, if needed. Mike Dunn made a motion to authorize up to \$1000 for weather station repairs. Kacy Crabtree seconded them motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

New Business

Chairman Chandler had talked at a previous meeting about getting LMC students to help with the TDA's marketing strategies. Kacy Crabtree introduced Amy Taylor, a Marketing Professor from LMC, who is going to incorporate the TDA's marketing into one of her classes. She explained to the board how the students can help with "in-house" marketing of the TDA, which would include social media, websites, advertising, etc. Ms.

Taylor would like to make this an omega project for seniors. Kacy Crabtree will be in touch with Ms. Taylor and will head up this project for the TDA.

Jim Swinkola, representing Edgar Tufts Memorial Association, gave the board an update on Wildcat Lake. He told the board he would be looking for funding for Wildcat Lake in the spring. He also reported on updates happening at the lake.

Funding Request

Caroline Hart and Ginger Hansen representing LMC came before the board with a request of \$25,200. Mrs. Hansen is the Vice President for Enrollment Management and is requesting the monies to help with billboards advertising LMC. The college would like to do a billboard media blitz to help drive up enrollment. The billboards would be basically located outside of Boone, Blowing Rock and Banner Elk. It would let people know about LMC and how close it is to Boone and Blowing Rock. The board agreed that this was a good idea and would like to help in any way possible. The board recognized that the request of \$25,200 was the most ever requested and it could not grant a funding request of that nature. However, they encouraged Mrs. Hansen to get the billboards and come back to the board in the spring to possibly secure more funding. Mike Dunn made a motion to fund \$6300 for the first 3 months rent on 3 billboards. Kacy Crabtree seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Sue Freeman, representing the Avery County Chamber, came before the board with a request of \$5000. This money would help with the Chamber's advertising budget. Kacy Crabtree made a motion to grant the \$5000. Mike Dunn seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Dr. Janet Speer, representing LMC Summer Theatre, came before the board requesting \$15,155 for Summer Theatre. The money would be used for advertising and public relations. Summer Theatre is a large draw for Banner Elk and is privately funded. Any money donated would help offset cost of the productions. Chairman Chandler stated he would like to comment a \$10,000 pledge to LMC Summer Theatre. The money isn't need upfront in one payment; it can be split into 2 payments. Kacy Crabtree made a motion to fund \$10,000, with \$5000 to be paid in March and \$5000 to be paid in June. Mike Dunn seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

With no further business, Kacy Crabtree made a motion to adjourn. Mike Dunn seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Owen