

MINUTES
July 27, 2005

I. Call to Order

Charlie Burleson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were members Jim Brooks, Candi Catoe and Rick Miller. The audience included Interim Town Manager Joe Perry, Mayor Rick Owen, Finance Officer Sally Rominger and Chamber Director Barry Schorr. Lori Cogan and Melissa Scism of The Tombras Group were also in attendance.

II. Consideration of Minutes

Mr. Brooks moved to accept the minutes of June 29th as submitted. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. Financial Report

Sally Rominger reported that the revenue totals from the occupancy tax collected through July, 2005 was \$234,986.64. The Authority had no unusual expenses for the month. Mrs. Rominger did note that the Authority paid ½ of the Summer Times ad, noting that Mr. Smoot had signed the bill and the payment had posted in June. After a brief discussion, the Authority noting that the January and February weather conditions would also be reflected in the 05/06 ski season, as visitors to the mountain tend to remember bad weather. Mr. Brooks moved to accept the Financial Report as submitted. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. Chamber of Commerce Report

Mr. Schorr reported that the federal government had set aside grant monies to help counties promote and develop tourism through a Heritage Plan. The National Blue Ridge Heritage group had 1 million dollars to cover 26 counties. Mr. Schorr indicated that he would e-mail the information to the Authority Members. Mr. Schorr reported that Channel 11, out of Johnson City had done a segment about Beech Mountain; the Authority discussed promotional dinners and over night accommodations noting that previous offers had not been accepted by any members of the media. Mrs. Catoe indicated that Jackalopes would donate and Mr. Burleson made note that he would participate with accommodations.

Mr. Schorr reported that the cost of the fishing derby had not been calculated. Mr. Schorr noted that the yard sale had grossed the Chamber \$235.00. Mr. Schorr also reported that the cost for annual Pig Roast was up from previous years and also that the pork that was ordered was packed differently, resulting in too much being ordered. Mr. Schorr noted that the tickets for Autumn at Oz were going well; to date the Chamber had sold \$1,638 worth of tickets.

Mayor Owen asked about the contribution to the Sunday Sunset Concerts at Fred's Gazebo and Mr. Schorr reported that each business took a turn paying for the event.

Mr. Brooks asked about the supply of tapes and CD that the Chamber gave out to visitors.

Mr. Schorr noted that all the tapes had been given out and approximately 100 to 150 CD's remained. Mrs. Cogan indicated that she had checked into getting more copies made and found that the cost was \$4,500 for 500 VHS and 500 CD's; substantially more expensive than the original company had charged. Mrs. Catoe indicated that she had tried to contact the company that made the original copies, however the contact person would not return her calls. Mrs. Catoe recalled that there had been a mix up in pricing and the salesperson had honored the \$1.00 per VHS/CD that had been quoted; the company had obviously lost money on the sale. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Burleson asked that the issue be placed on the agenda for the next meeting, noting that it was a good advertising tool and too much money had been spent on producing the video to no longer have them available. Mrs. Catoe suggested that the Chamber take orders from the various businesses and then place the order. Mrs. Cogan recommended that the Authority look into the distribution of the video. Mr. Brooks asked Mayor Owen to find out who Ski Beech used for making their video. The Authority agreed to continue the discussion at the August 31st meeting.

V. Other Business

- A. Follow up- Director/Chamber of Commerce** – Mr. Brooks reported that Peggy Coscia was now the head of the Chamber of Commerce, Office Manager. The Directors were planning to hire an assistant. Mayor Owen discussed the possibility of a TDA employee. Mr. Brooks noted that Mr. Schorr had agreed to do the bookkeeping until other arrangements could be made. Mr. Burleson asked if the Chamber had any information with regards to a plaque honoring Lance Armstrong to be placed on Beech Mountain Parkway. Mr. Brooks noted that Mr. Pfohl was still looking into the matter. Mr. Burleson then noted that the Chamber had a web site and biking trail maps, however, none of the businesses on the mountain rented mountain bikes. After a brief discussion, the idea of purchasing some used bikes for the Chamber would be given further consideration.

- B. Tombras Group** – The Tombras Group requested print publication inquiries be forwarded from the Chamber to Melissa Scism at mscism@tombras.com. They also requested access to the Beech Mountain Chamber web traffic report. Mr. Schorr indicated that he would make arrangements to meet both requests.

Mrs. Cogan asked for discussion of the 2005-06 Proposed Media Plan presented at the June TDA meeting, which totaled \$70,000. The Tombras Group also presented a 2005-06 PR/Marketing Services Retainer to be billed at \$1,250 a month, which totaled \$15,000. After discussion, Mr. Brooks moved to direct The Tombras Group to revise both proposals to reflect a total media/marketing budget of \$74,850. Mr. Miller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. They also requested a contingency advertising fund amount be included in that total. The Tombras Group will distribute the revised plan to the Authority and seek the Chair's signature and/or approval within 14 days so that fall placement deadlines will not be missed.

Due to the current heat wave, which is expected to remain a factor for the remainder of the summer, the Authority also directed The Tombras Group to recommend additional promotional efforts be undertaken in August to promote Beech Mountain as a cool summer destination. The thinking is that advertising for this promotion would be funded out of the contingency advertising line item to be built into the 2005-06

Media Plan that The Tombras Group is revising.

Outside of the agency's budget, the TDA set aside the remaining \$8,000 of the \$82,850 media/marketing budget line item for the TDA board to disperse as needed throughout the fiscal year.

The Tombras Group reported that press kits went out in June and follow-up phone calls were made to all reporters on the Beech Mtn media list, inviting them to visit or seeing if they were interested in more information. These PR efforts resulted in WJHL (Channel 11 Johnson City, TN) sending Tim Cable to do a special feature on his show "Cable Country," which runs as a feature story during news shows throughout the day.

- C. Follow up – Flower Maintenance Contract* – Mr. Burluson noted that the flower maintenance was contracted to The Landsman on an as needed basis.

VI. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. Brooks, seconded by Mr. Miller, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reba Greene