

**MINUTES**  
**January 27, 2010**

- I. *Call to Order*** – Chairperson Charlie Burleson called the regular meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were members Candi Catoe, Fred Barth and Calder Smoot. Also present were Town Manager Randy Feierabend, Councilpersons Cindy Keller and Rick Miller, Chamber President Jim Brooks, Chamber Assistant Office Manager John Troxler and Woody Stoudemier with Gotham Marketing Relations. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.
- II. *Consideration of the Minutes*** – Mr. Barth moved to approve the minutes of the December 23, 2009 Regular Meeting as submitted. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- III. *Approval of Agenda*** – Chairperson Burleson asked that the Financial Report be moved to the end of the agenda. Chairperson Burleson reported that the Town Council had appointed Gil Adams to fill Rick Millers position. Mr. Adams has declined the appointment.
- IV. *Regional Health Care Bike Presentation*** - Megan Lynch Ellis, Director of special Events for the Appalachian Regional Healthcare Foundation, addressed the Authority with regards to a cycling event on May 14, 15 and 16<sup>th</sup>. The event will start at the Buckeye Recreation Center and end at top of the mountain. Ms. Ellis stated that the event would bring visitors to the Town, and she felt for a 3 day event, 25% would spend the night in the Town. Mr. Andrew Stackhouse, working with the organization of the event, indicated that Life Store Bank was the sponsor. Ms. Ellis asked that the Authority to consider making a donation for \$2,500. Chairperson Burleson indicated that the Authority would consider the request.
- V. *Avery County Chamber of Commerce Marketing Proposal*** – Susan Friedman, Director of the Avery County Chamber of Commerce, addressed the Authority with a request for funds to be used for their web site update, postage and directory. Ms. Friedman asked that the Authority consider a \$5,000 donation. Chairperson Burleson indicated that the Authority would consider the request.
- VI. *Gotham Marketing Relations – Woody Stoudemier*** – Chairperson Burleson reported that the Town had been mentioned in the Our State magazine. Mr. Stoudemier presented the revised Town brochure. Chairperson Burleson moved to approve and proceed with the brochure as presented. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Stoudemier asked the Authority to consider a joint newsletter with the Beech Mountain Resort. Mr. Stoudemier had prepared a mock newsletter for consideration. Mr. Stoudemier noted that the TDA had originally agreed to the release of 9 press release prepared by Craig Distl. Mr. Distl has not consented to Gotham using the press releases. Mr. Smoot indicated that he had not had the opportunity to contact Mr. Distl with regards to the press releases, he would follow up. Mr. Stoudemier then presented recommendations for the lodging page portal design and layout. Chairperson Burleson proposed a redesign of the web site with the portal page with paid ads on the left side as rotating banners, not a new web site. Councilperson Miller suggested contractors be included on the page. Mr. Barth felt the contractors should be on the Chamber web site and Mr. Smoot asked to what extend the advertising for businesses would be. Chairperson Burleson indicated that

the menu on the side of the page would have paid links and the bottom would have TDA participants with their name and number, not a link. The company paying for the ad link would be responsible for their updates. Chairperson Burleson reported that he had addressed the Town Council at their January 12, 2010 meeting requesting funds, the Council had agreed to a \$5,000 donation and a \$5,000 loan to be paid back in 3 years, sale of the display ads would help with the paying of the loan. Mr. Brooks indicated that the TDA sale of ads would cause businesses not to pay the \$125 for being a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Chairperson Burleson asked about an RSS feed for the weather. Mr. Stoudemier thought that Ray's Weather would have an RSS feed on the weather com site for radar maps. Mr. Stoudemier indicated that he would look into the idea. After much discussion, the Authority agreed to table the discussion and asked that Mr. Stoudemier present a proposal for the portal page with 10 banners and a directory at the bottom. Chairperson Burleson indicated that the lodging link was 5 years old and needed to be updated. Mr. Barth was in favor of the Authority taking the funds to start the project as soon as possible. Mr. Barth indicated that he would like to see a proposal for the web site. Chairperson Burleson reviewed the invoices; Mr. Barth moved to approve #7187, stock photography for ads, brochures, direct mail and website, \$1,500. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously; Mr. Barth moved to approve #7319, design and layout of the banner ad for visitnc.com. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously;

- VII. Finance** – Chairperson Burleson indicated that the gross receipts report for Occupancy Tax indicated that there had been a million dollar drop from December 06/07 to date. The report showed a \$400,000 drop from last year. Chairperson Burleson noted that he would be reviewing the budget. Chairperson Burleson reported that the rotating billboard on Highway 105's contract was up for renewal. After a brief discussion, the Authority unanimously agreed to not renew the contract. Chairperson Burleson indicated that he had been contracted by the resort and he had indicated it was ok for them to use half of the fireworks on February 20, 2010. Mr. Brooks suggested that the Club be approached to do golf packages in with a rental special.
- VIII. Chamber Report**– Mr. Troxler reported that a meeting was scheduled at the Best Western in Banner Elk on February 17, 2010 to discuss the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Avery County. The Chamber office had approximately 750 visitors in December 2009. There have been a lot of calls for sledding hill information.
- VII. Adjourn** – Mr. Barth moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Reba Greene  
Town Clerk