

MINUTES
February 24, 2010

- I. **Call to Order** – Chairperson Charlie Bureson called the regular meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were members Gil Adams, Fred Barth, Candi Catoe and Calder Smoot. Councilpersons Rick Miller, Chamber Assistant Office Manager John Troxler and Woody Stoudemier with Gotham Marketing Relations. Councilperson Cindy Keller arrived at 10:05. Craig Distl, Distl Public Relations, arrived at 10:30. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.

- II. **Consideration of the Minutes** – Mr. Smoot moved to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2010 Regular Meeting as amended. Mr. Barth seconded the motion. Gil Adams had been appointed to replace Rick Miller as a member of the Authority. The motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Financial Report** – Chairperson Bureson noted that he would meet with Mrs. Johnson to discuss the disbursements. The Gotham bill for the brochure revision for \$3,665.40 could be paid in quarterly installments. Chairperson Bureson noted that there were some discrepancies in the Financial Report and the Occupancy Tax Report. Chairperson Bureson also noted that the correction had been made to the December 2009 report showing the income as \$782,347. December 2009 was up over the previous year. Chairperson Bureson indicated that the High Country Municipal Association had requested that representatives from the various TDA's attend a meeting to discuss the owners who rent their properties and not pay occupancy tax. Chairperson Bureson noted that the Village of Sugar Mountain had indicated that they had some success in collecting the taxes.

- IV. **Gotham Marketing Relations – Woody Stoudemier** – Chairperson Bureson indicated that 10,000 copies of the revised brochure with the mailing space on the back had been delivered. Mr. Stoudemier reported that from 11-2-09 until 2-12-10 that the web site had reported 12,206 visitors. The majority of visitors had not gone past the first 2 pages on the site; the current site has 30 pages. Mr. Stoudemier noted that the revisions to the portal page would improve search ability. The majority of these visits were from Charlotte with 914; Boone 873, Atlanta 498, Raleigh 496 and New York with 282. Visitors stayed on the site for an average of 1 minute, 31 seconds. Chairperson Bureson noted that the Chamber of Commerce would be keeping their web site and that the revisions to the Authorities would show places to eat, shop and play along with rental information, the look of the site would be similar to the design used by Boone. Advertising possibilities were still being discussed. Councilperson Keller indicated that the biggest word search was Beech Mountain and recommended that the Authority approach the company using the Town's name asking that they agreed to turn it over to the Authority. Chairperson Bureson indicated that there had been discussion with regards to the domain name. Councilperson Miller asked that notation be made that the \$10,000 from the Town was for the Authority to use, not the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Adams motioned to have Mr. Stoudemier move forward with the proposed design site. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- V. **Chamber Report** – Mr. Troxler reported that the Chamber had a supply of the new brochures and copies would be sent to the various visitor centers for distribution. Chairperson Bureson felt that the individuals traveling the 195 corridor were not on a route to visit Beech Mountain and asked that the Chamber consider not sending brochures' to their visitors' center. Mr. Troxler indicated that Town maps needed to be reordered. The last order was placed in September 2009 costing

\$735. Mr. Smoot, noting that the Authority paid for the maps, asked that the Chamber contact the local businesses to find out how many they wanted to purchase to help determine how many should be ordered. Mr. Troxler noted that the sledding hill had a large number of visitors; 525 had visited the Chamber office.

VI. Other –

a. Avery County Chamber of Commerce Request – Chairperson Burleson asked the Authorities opinion on the request for \$5,000 by the Avery County Chamber of Commerce. After a brief discussion, the Authority agreed that Chairperson Burleson write a letter indicating that the Authority did not have funds available for a donation. Mr. Barth indicated that a number of businesses in Town supported the Avery Chamber by way of membership.

b. Regional Health Care Bike Race – Chairperson Burleson asked if the Authority felt a donation should be made to the bike race. Councilperson Miller asked if a financial contribution was necessary for the event to be held on the mountain to which Chairperson Burleson indicated that it was not. The Authority requested that Chairperson Burleson write a letter indicating support for the event, however the TDA did not have funds available for a donation.

c. Advertising – Mr. Smoot noted that Craig Distl was present to discuss the use of press releases by the Gotham Group, a brief discussion would be held after the meetings adjournment. Mr. Distl reported that the media tour ended in January and indicated that there were two freelance writers who were going to do a story on skiing for next winter.

VII. Adjourn – Mr. Adams moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Chairperson Burleson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Reba Greene
Town Clerk