

MINUTES
July 26, 2006

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Smoot called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m. in the Four Seasons Inn. Present were members Charlie Burleson, Rick Miller, Candi Catoe, and Alan Holcombe. The audience included Town Manager Michael Boaz, Mayor Rick Owen, Councilman Randy Corn, Finance Officer Sally Rominger, Melissa Scism of The Tombras Group, Chamber Office Manager Peggy Coscia, Intern Bobby Dziewulski, and Chamber of Commerce President Jim Brooks.

II. Consideration of the Minutes from June 28, 2006 Regular Meeting – Mr. Miller moved to approve the minutes from June 28, 2006 as submitted. Mr. Burleson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. Financial Report – After looking at the budget for year ending January 2006, Mrs. Rominger reported that \$9,701.00 would be added to the fund balance carried over from the previous year.

IV. Chamber of Commerce Report – Ms. Coscia explained that she does not feel comfortable allocating \$3,000 to the AARP mailing if a method to track response is not in place. Mr. Burleson voiced his desire to track the response to the mailing. Mr. Boaz explained that tracking response will be difficult since the Authority does not have any staff. Mr. Burleson recommended that the Authority should consider staff. Mr. Smoot asked if tracking in the hotels would be possible. Ms. Coscia indicated that she would like some assistance paying for the ad from area hotels. Mr. Burleson voiced his support of a co-op mailing. Mr. Holcombe suggested the Authority allow hotels to track the response. Ms. Coscia wanted to know what the time frame would be for tracking. Ms. Scism replied that the AARP adds are targeting people that put more time into planning so they will be traveling next spring or summer. Mr. Burleson and Mr. Holcombe agreed to create a sheet to give to hotel receptionists to poll responses. Ms. Coscia then explained that the maps are currently being sold for 20¢ to area shops but they could be sold for 25¢. Mr. Smoot said the maps should be sold for 25¢ because the cost of getting the maps printed is always on the rise. Ms. Coscia then informed the Authority that another mailbox decorating contest will be held during the fall season. Mr. Brooks presented the bicycle maps that have been designed by members of the community. Mr. Brooks had printed a map for each member of the TDA. Mr. Smoot shared his enthusiasm for producing the maps. Mr. Brooks explained that the maps would have to be printed by a professional company. Mr. Holcombe asked Mr. Brooks to find out how much it would cost to get the maps printed. Mr. Burleson asked about tickets for the Oz Festival. Ms. Coscia reported that tickets are \$12.50 if purchased in advance and \$15.00 if purchased at the door. Mr. Smoot asked if anyone from the Town had anything to add. Mr. Boaz reported that the Recreation Center is getting a lot of usage.

V. Other Business

A. Tombras Group – Mrs. Scism, Account Executive with The Tombras Group, presented the new visitor brochure to the Authority. The authority chose to make a

few minor changes like listing phone numbers. Mrs. Scism then presented a new contract to the Authority. The Authority chose to take time to review it individually. The new contract includes items such as mileage, faxing, and copying for Beech Mountain Projects. Mrs. Scism presented a winter visitor survey to the authority. The authority requested that Tombras change the possible answers for the question asking about the average night stay so survey participants can choose either one night stay or two night stay. Mr. Corn suggested that two questions be added to the survey. The first question should ask about the Town's recreation center. The second additional question request by Mr. Corn was a question asking how the participants experience visiting Beech Mountain could be improved. Ms. Catoe requested a question be added asking participants about specific entertainment options they would like to have while visiting Beech. These entertainment options included bluegrass bands, dancing, and crafts. Mrs. Schism will make the requested changes and send a final copy to the Authority for final approval. Mr. Burlson requested additional changes to the proposed contract that would keep The Tombras Group from working with other municipalities or competitors in tourism in the area. Mrs. Scism then enumerated the suggestions made by The Tombras Group to the Authority. All the suggestions were banner ads on various internet sights. She also informed the Authority that The Tombras Group was no longer using Spark Fly or AAA advertising. Mrs. Scism informed the Authority that all of the AARP ads being run were in magazines in circulation in FL, GA, SC, and NC. Mrs. Scism also informed the Authority that The Tombras Group has started advertising in New Family Circle Magazine and the Bristol Motor Speedway Newsletter. Ms. Coscia inquired about the cost of postage and was told each brochure cost 63¢ per brochure. Ms. Coscia requested a method of monitoring the effectiveness of sending brochures but no resolute method was developed by the Authority or Mrs. Scism.

B. *Akins and Crisp Public Strategies* – Jennifer Wiggins of Adkins Crisp Public Strategies presented the Authority with the press releases that had been prepared. Chairperson Smoot said that the Authority would look them over and report back the August 30th meeting. Mrs. Wiggins introduced Ms. Brook Welch who will be taking her place while she is on maternity leave.

IV. *Adjournment* – Upon a motion by Mr. Holcombe, seconded by Mr. Burlson, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobby Dziewulski
