

MINUTES
March 25, 2009

- I. Call to Order** – Chairperson Charlie Burlson called the regular meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were members Fred Barth, Rick Miller and Calder Smoot. Candi Catoe arrived at 9:45 a.m. Also present were Finance Officer Tabitha Estep, Chamber President Jim Brooks, Chamber Office Manager Peggy Coscia, Mayor Rick Owen, Councilmen Pete Chamberlin and Alan Holcombe, Melissa Scism of the Tombras Group and Craig Distl of Distl Public Relations. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.
- II. Consideration of the Minutes** – Mr. Miller moved to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2009 Regular Meeting and March 19, 2009 Special Meeting as submitted. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- III. Financial Report** –
- a) Tabitha Estep** – Mrs. Estep reported that the Authority did not have any funds. Chairperson Burlson noted that the year to date revenues were \$202,213.81, the Authority had set the budget at \$256,580. Mrs. Estep presented the regular monthly bills for approval. Mr. Miller moved to approve the bills as presented. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Chairperson Burlson reported that Mr. Pfohl had submitted a bill for the Hike Beech Mountain and the Bike Beech Mountain web domains. Mr. Smoot moved to approve the payment of the bill in the amount of \$214.80. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The Chamber had presented a bill for Mrs. Coscia’s attendance at the Governor’s Conference in Raleigh. Mr. Miller moved to approve payment in the amount of \$730.99. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Miller moved to approve payment to Jackalope’s Restaurant for reimbursement of the radio prize. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- IV. Tombras Group** – Mrs. Scism presented the Authority with the 2008-2009 Budget Summaries. Mr. Scism noted that the only items the Authority could cut to save funds would be the 24-7Vacations.com and Travelinformation.com. After a brief discussion, the Authority agreed to continue with the advertising through the month of April. Mrs. Scism presented the Authority with advertising opportunities in Florida doing insertions in community newspapers. After a brief discussion, Mr. Miller moved to place 2 weeks of insertions into the proposed state wide community newspaper forum, with the stipulation that the Chamber of Commerce place ads for 1 week, as indicated by Mr. Brooks. Mr. Barth seconded the motion. Mrs. Scism indicated that she would contact Chairperson Burlson with the cost of the advertising and wording of the ad. The motion passed unanimously. After review the advertising budget for the year the TDA decided to continue with advertising on travelinformation.com and freetravelguides.com for another month. The Authority will review the advertising next meeting.
- V. Britney Herndon-Swain** – Ms. Herndon-Swain, sales representative for the local Visitors Cable Channel 6, addressed the Authority with a proposal to create a 30 second ad for the Town. The ad could run outside Avery and Watauga Counties, with the opportunity to be viewed in venues such as North Georgia, Knoxville or Maggie Valley. The ad could be

ready to air in 3 to 4 weeks. Ms. Herndon-Swain also mentioned the possibility of a delayed payment plan until the upcoming fiscal year. The Authority indicated they would review the proposal.

- V. **Website Changes** – Mrs. Scism reported that the deadline had passed for the rental companies to submit their lodging information for the web site. However, changes and additions could be made.

Mr. Miller moved to excuse Mrs. Catoe from the meeting at 10:50 a.m. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- VI. **Chamber Report** – Mrs. Coscia reported that Karen Alley, Piedmont Parent Magazine, will have an article in the May issue. Mrs. Coscia reported that the Governor’s Conference covered issues with regards to tourism being the second largest employer in NC and that NC is the 6th most visited state. Ideas on vacation planning were also discussed.

- VII. **Other** –

a. **Cycle Event** – Chairperson Burleson indicated that the Authority and Mr. David Klein, Charlotte Health & Fitness, had a contract for a cycling event taking place on May 23, 2009. The event would take place on the Banner Elk side of the Town. Mrs. Catoe was asked for some type of menu to present to Mr. Klein. Businesses would be asked to contribute \$100 each for the event.

Mr. Barth moved to excuse Mr. Miller from the meeting at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

b. **TDA’s Meeting** – Chairperson Burleson notified the Authority that the High Country Tourism Development Authorities and the North Carolina Division of Tourism would be meeting again on Monday, April 6, 2009 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Broyhill Inn. Chairperson Burleson noted that most of the TDA’s had committed to making the 10% that the NC Division of Tourism was asking for to participate in their advertising. The Authority agreed that it was a good deal and further discussion would take place on April 6th.

c. **Battle of the Smokies** – Mr. Distal reported that the Beech Mountain Club had approved participation in the ‘Battle of the Smokies’. Mr. Distal indicated that invitations will be send out to the media representatives, 12 from NC and 12 from TN. Mr. Distal will also prepare a media package.

- VIII. **Recessed** – Mr. Smoot moved to recess the meeting March 25, 2009 meeting at 11:15 a.m. until Wednesday, April 1, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- IX. **Reconvened** – Chairperson Burleson called the recessed meeting of March 25, 2009 to order on April 1, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. Present were members Fred Barth, Rick Miller, and Calder Smoot.

- X. Advertising** – Chairperson Burleson reported that he had confirmed the contract price with Iverson Outdoor Advertising in the amount of \$6,600. The billboard is located on Hwy. 105; inbound to Banner Elk 500’ south of Norwood Appliance.
- XI. Public Relations** – After a review of the advertising monies available, the contract with Craig E. Distl, Distl Public Relations, was decreased 1 month. The contract will only continue for 2 more months. Mr. Miller moved to approve the proposed change in the contract. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Smoot indicated that he would contact Mr. Distl with the change.
- VIII. Adjourn** – Mr. Smoot moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 a.m. Mr. Miller seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Reba Greene
Town Clerk
