

MINUTES
May 31, 2006

I. *Call to Order*

Chairperson Smoot called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Present were members Charlie Burleson and Alan Holcombe. Candi Catoe arrived at 9:45. The audience included Town Manager Michael Boaz, Mayor Rick Owen, Councilman Gil Adams, Intern John Kanipe, Melissa Scism of The Tombras Group, Chamber Office Manager Peggy Coscia and Parks Committee member Jim Brooks.

II. *Public Hearing – 2006-2007 Budget*

Chairperson Smoot opened the Public Hearing on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2006-2007 at 9:37 a.m. Mr. Burleson indicated that he did not wish to pursue the recommendation regarding a free transportation system on Beech Mountain and noted that he was not opposed to the contribution for sledding hill operations. Mr. Burleson questioned the proposed increase in rent paid by the Chamber of Commerce and after a brief discussion it was noted that there would not be an increase in the amount paid. Mr. Burleson asked what contribution the Town made towards the operation of the sledding hill. Mayor Owen responded that the Town covers the cost of the part time employees required to act as safety officers, fencing, mats, hay bails and the workers comp insurance. Hearing no further comments from the public, Mr. Holcombe moved to close the public hearing at 9:45 a.m. Mr. Burleson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. *Consideration of the Minutes from April 26, 2006 Regular Meeting* – Mr. Burleson asked that item D, Fireworks be amended to indicate New Year's Eve and Mr. Holcombe indicated that he was not in attendance. Mrs. Catoe moved to approve the minutes as amended. Chairperson Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. *Financial Report* – Mrs. Rominger noted that the Occupancy Tax was down. Mrs. Rominger further indicated that \$6,300 had been taken in for the Visitors Guide ads; the cost for the brochure was estimated at \$8,000. After a brief discussion Mrs. Schism was directed to bill the balance of the Visitors Guide in the current years advertising budget. The Authority agreed not to participate in the 'choose and cut' program. The financial report was accepted as presented.

V. *Consider Contract for Annual Audit – Bryce Holder, CPA, PA* – Mr. Burleson moved to approve the audit contract for the period of July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. Mr. Holcombe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VI. *Chamber of Commerce Report* – Mrs. Coscia reported that the Chamber of Commerce needed to print maps of the Town. Mr. Holcombe asked that the overall area be printed on the back side of the Town map; Mr. Brooks indicated that it would add to the cost of the printing. After a brief discussion Mr. Burleson moved to approve spending \$600 for the printing of Town maps. Mr. Holcombe seconded the motion. For further discussion, Mr. Holcombe asked that the Authority be notified as to the additional cost for adding the area mapping to the back of the map. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Holcombe reminded

the group that a Training Seminar was scheduled for June 7th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Recreation Center.

VII. Other Business

A. Tombras Group – Mrs. Scism, Account Executive with The Tombras Group, presented the yearly budget for advertising, noting that it was \$74,979. The overall budget was approved. Mrs. Scism presented the Authority with the revised Visitors Guide Brochure design. The balance of the cost of the brochure will be paid for from the current fiscal budget. Mr. Burlson indicated that he did feel his business had benefited from the last 4 years of advertising and noted that he was already booking for Christmas. It was agreed that the ads should be placed earlier in the year. Mr. Burlson also noted that his business did not benefit from the Autumn at Oz and Kite Festival events. Mrs. Catoe noted that Archer’s Inn did not receive bookings from the events, but felt it was good P.R. for the Town. After further discussion, Mrs. Schism indicated that a survey using Ski Beech’s database would be helpful in determining who was visiting and who was staying on the mountain. Mr. Holcombe suggested using the ‘Eastern America’s Highest Town’ in the advertising.

B. Recreation Center Update – Mr. Boaz reported that the Recreation Center received over 500 visitors for the month of May and sold approximately 50 passes. Mayor Owen noted that regular hours would start on June 5th and the calendar of events was posted on the Town’s web site.

C. Flowers – Chairperson Smoot reported that the flowers had been picked up and Susie Knepka had been contracted for the maintenance. Mrs. Rominger indicated that there was \$350 remaining in the line item.

D. Funding Request – Chairperson Smoot reported that the Avery Banner Elk Chamber of Commerce had requested a funding contribution from the Town. After a brief discussion, the Authority agreed not to grant the request.

E. Flags – Chairperson Smoot asked that Mr. Hatch inventory the decorative flags and report back to the Authority.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Reba Greene
