

Beech Mountain Tourism Development Authority
Minutes

November 25, 2009

Call to Order: Chairperson Charlie Bureson called the regular meeting to order at 9:30AM in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were Candi Catoe, Rick Miller, Calder Smoot and Fred Barth. Also present were Councilman Pete Chamberlin, Chamber President Jim Brooks, Chamber Office Manager Peggy Coscia, Chamber Assistant Office Manager John Troxler, Town Manager Randy Feierabend, Scott Ferwerda with High Country Computer Consulting and Woody Studemier with Gotham Marketing Relations. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.

Consideration of Minutes: Mr. Miller moved to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2009 Regular Meeting as submitted. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Gotham Marketing Relations Report: Mr. Stoudemier provided an update on the BeechMtn.com Malware issue. Mr. Stoudemier reported that he is making a registration change to the website to increase security and unauthorized use. There are too many people who have access. Wants to have the website moved. He suggested that the website be cleaned up, Saul Corwine changed to a private registration to increase security. Scott recommends that websites be designed in the future to better work together and to increase security. Possibly share in the cost. Further discussion on the written report from Mr. Stoudemier and the Malware issue followed and included the issue at hand, the opinion as to what they think happened, what has been done to correct the issue and what remains to be done. Mr. Bureson stated that Tombras has six names registered and he is working to getting them changed. The registration runs out in December. A motion was made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Smoot to Have Mr. Stoudemier move the BeechMtn.com to new host CrystalTech.com at an expense of \$240. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Bureson requested that a letter be drafted to Chicago Webs to terminate their services. Mr. Stoudemier stated that the site optimization has been rewritten and ready to be added to BeechMtn.com as soon as the Malware issue is resolved. Once resolved Gotham can begin changes to the site such as group pages, remove portal landing page, add winter page, create digital media kit, etc. The target date for relaunching the site is December 4, 2009. Mr. Stoudemier stated that Ski Beech had 15,000 opt in email addresses and has discussed with Gil Adams the possibility of their use. Work is underway to get approval from the Costin's. Could all businesses on Beech Mountain that have the capability contribute their email contacts as well? Mr. Stoudemier reported that Gotham had just received working files from Tombras and that they should have a proof of the revised brochure by December 15, 2009. Mr. Brooks discussed High Country Host advertising. He recommended that the TDA pay for a banner ad for the home page of the High Country Host website, a banner ad for the Ski page of the High Country Host website, a banner ad for the home page of the Ski Beech website and to design an ad for the Avery Chamber Vacation Guide Directory. A motion was made by

Mr. Barth and seconded by Mr. Smoot to pay the sum of \$1000 to Gotham to design three banner ads and the one Avery Chamber ad. The motion passed unanimously. A general discussion on the best way to change things on the website (content management), the easiest and cheapest way to give immediate information would be using a blog site. Scott Ferwerda suggested if you use a blog site it should be updated each week. Need someone dedicated to change once a week, possibly an intern from Appalachian State. Mr. Smoot thanked Mr. Stoudemier for his report and all the work on the website.

Beech Mountain Weekly Calendar: Cindy Keller brought to the TDA a request for a weekly calendar that would incorporate all of Beech Mountain's events that could be distributed to all interested parties. Peggy Coscia stated that the Beech Mountain Chamber was currently working on a weekly calendar for that purpose. Mr. Burluson suggested that this is another job that could be coordinated by a TDA Director.

Proposed Winter Shuttle Service: Several meetings have been held to discuss the proposed Winter Shuttle Service on Beech Mountain. A small steering committee made up of Fred Barth, Fred Pfohl, Charlie Burluson and Randy Feierabend was established to make recommendations on the service. The committee asked if the TDA Board was interested and go before the Town Council to find \$20,000 to finance the proposal. Discussion followed concerning the use of Ski Beech vans or the use of Mr. Elders buses. A discussion also followed on the schedule of the shuttle and the route. Mr. Feierabend presented a proposed route and discussed associated cost of the proposal. Cost could be brought down by using Ski Beech vans and reducing the hours of operation. Cost could be shared by the TDA and local businesses. Ryan Costin was asked about their plans to offer transportation and he stated that they would be running their shuttle to Banner Elk and on call to pick up groups as they did last year. Three proposals were presented by Mr. Feierabend as follows: Proposal C using Mr. Elder's buses at a cost of \$24,336 to operate 507 hours based on the winter schedule presented. Proposal D using Ski Beech vans at a cost of \$17,745 to operate 507 hours based on the winter schedule proposed. Proposal E using a combination of buses (80 hours) and vans (507 hours) at a cost of \$21,585. General comments followed including Mr. Burluson indicating that he had received a telephone call from an individual who felt more money should be spent on the advertising of Beech Mountain not on a shuttle service. Another caller to Mr. Burluson felt Ski Beech should be subsidized to provide the service. Mrs. Catoe asked the question why can't there be a charge for the service. Committee felt that it was too much trouble for the driver to work with fee's or tokens. Peggy Coscia asked the question has the committee looked at how other resort areas provide shuttle services. Response seemed to be in a variety of ways based on comments from those who had used such services at different resorts. Councilman Pete Chamberlin asked the question where would the financing come from. Mr. Miller expressed his concern over using tax payers money to fund the project. Discussion followed. Discussion followed on letting Ski Beech provide the service with financial support from the TDA. Judy Decker raised the question would it be better to wait till next year so local businesses could have funds in their budget to offer financial support along with the TDA. Would extra time give more to planning and have the service done right. Jim Brooks recommended that a motion be entertained to ask the

Town Council for an amount of \$25,000 to be used for the project in two parts. The amount of \$12,500 to be used to contract with Ski Beech shuttle service for this winter's schedule and the amount of \$12,500 to Gotham Marketing Relations for the development of a marketing plan for next season's winter schedule. Mr. Barth moved to approve the recommendation by Mr. Brooks. Mr. Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Chairperson Burleson made a motion to request that the Beech Mountain Town Council meet in a call session at their earliest legal date and time to consider the shuttle service proposal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smoot and it passed unanimously. Mr. Barth made a motion that the TDA not take funds out of their budget to pay for the shuttle service proposal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smoot and it passed unanimously.

Chamber Report: Peggy Coscia reported that Craig Distl is requesting dinner for approximately fifteen media people on January 9, 2010. The Beech Mountain Resort is hosting them for breakfast and lunch at Ski Beech that day. Craig would also like to have some music provided for the group at dinner. Peggy said that she has checked with Jackalope's View Restaurant and the date was open. Mr. Barth suggested that the Alpen Restaurant also be given an opportunity to host the dinner. Mr. Miller made a motion that Jackalope's View Restaurant and the Alpen Restaurant submit a bid for the dinner and that the Beech Mountain Chamber of Commerce would pay for the music. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smoot and it passed unanimously. Chairperson Burleson asked the Chamber to look at the issue of membership. Mrs. Catoe said that it was her civic responsibility to be a member. Jim Brooks commented that Chamber funds from events were used to support members of the Chamber.

Financial Report: In previous action by the TDA Board, Gotham Marketing Relations has been committed the sum of \$41,575 for advertising. Mr. Stoudemier indicated that the amount of \$500 to \$900 would be needed to clean up the website. Mr. Miller made a motion that up to \$900 be spent to remove Malware and clean up the website. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smoot and the motion passed unanimously. Members expressed concern over the decrease in the amount of revenue that is coming in on the occupancy tax. The board discussed the services of Craig Distl and continuing his contract. Mrs. Catoe made a motion to continue the services with Craig Distl. The motion was seconded by Mr. Miller. After discussion the motion was amended to keep the services of Craig Distl if Calder could rain in his boy. Motion by Mrs. Catoe and seconded by Mr. Miller as amended passed unanimously.

Other: Chairperson Burleson called for a special meeting of the TDA for the purpose of continuing the discussion of the winter shuttle service on Wednesday, December 2, 2009 at 9:30 AM.

Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the TDA will be held on December 23, 2009 at 9:30 AM.