

MINUTES
September 30, 2009

- I. *Call to Order*** – Vice-Chairperson Calder Smoot called the regular meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were members Fred Barth, Candi Catoe, and Rick Miller. Also present were Chamber President Jim Brooks, Councilman Pete Chamberlin, and Woody Stoudemier with Gotham Marketing Relations. Town Manager Randy Feierabend arrived at 10:05 a.m. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.
- II. *Consideration of the Minutes*** – Mr. Miller moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2009 Regular Meeting as submitted. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- III. *Financial Report*** – Vice-Chair Smoot noted that the Occupancy Tax was off 41% from a 5 year average. Mr. Brooks indicated that his September income was even with last year. Vice-Chair Smoot presented a bill from Distl Public Relations in the amount of \$1,450. Mr. Miller moved to approve the bill from Distl Public Relations. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Vice-Chair Smoot noted that Tombras had been paid off. Mr. Miller asked if the Authority had received a credit from Tombras to which Vice Chair Smoot noted that he did not know and would follow.
- IV. *Avery County Chamber*** – Ms. Susan Freeman of the Avery County Chamber of Commerce addressed the Authority with a request for financial assistance. The Avery Chamber presented a request for a \$4,000 grant to upgrade the website program, assist with additional staff to maintain and update the website and assistance with the purchase of a lap top computer. The Authority indicated that consideration would be given to the request.
- V. *Gotham – Woody Stoudemier*** – Mr. Stoudemier presented the Authority with a Strategic Marketing Plan. Mr. Stoudemier also presented an Internet Marketing Strategy with an analysis showing that Sugar Mountain, Blowing Rock and Snowshoe Mountain were the three top competitors. Mr. Stoudemier suggested that the name Beech be attached to all the advertising and indicated that the sharing of budgets by Beech Mountain Resort, the Beech Mountain Club and the Authority would be of benefit to all entities. The Marketing Plan had 11 viral concepts; discounted lodging and or dining with partner tickets, fall first, mile high wedding chapel, Beech loyalty card, discount in off peak months, tie into NC wine country, event tickets with rental, embrace Genesis, gas cards, culinary camp and a mile high beer festival. Mr. Stoudemier also felt joining the chamber of commerce for Charlotte and Raleigh would be advantageous. Mr. Brooks asked about the back page of the Winter Times, noting that the Authority had this advertising for a number of years. After a brief discussion, Mr. Miller moved to approve the full back page, in color ad, in the Winter Times. Placement and design will be handled by Mr. Stoudemier who will bill the Authority; the Chamber will reimburse the Authority. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Stoudemier noted that the brochure would be printed in a three-fold design; Mr. Brooks indicated that it was important to have them available at the various welcome centers. Mr. Stoudemier indicated that the press information needed to be available in a digital format for easy access. The Authority indicated that the web changes

were considered the most important advertising issue for Mr. Stoudemier. The Authority discussed Beech Mountain Resort web advertising. Mrs. Catoe moved to approve participation in the beechmtn.com web site. Mr. Barth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VI. Chamber Report – Mr. Brooks reported that Mr. John Troxler had been selected to replace Mike Shaw’s position at the Chamber Office. The position is a part-time, 32 hour per week. The Authority discussed the possibility of having Chamber’s bookkeeping farmed out to an accountant service as well as having a TDA employee. The Authority agreed that the issue required further discussion. Mr. Brooks reported that the Chamber had paid for Peggy Coscia to be a notary.

VII. Other –

- a. Mr. Miller recommended that the Town be mentioned on the front of the brochure printed by the High Country Host. After a brief discussion, Vice-Chair Smoot stated that he would write a letter asking that the Town be named on the cover to be equally recognized.
- b. Vice-Chair Smoot reported that Distl Public Relations had recommended participation in the Atlanta Media Event visit to the Town. There would be transportation for the participants, as well as dinner expenses and the cost of a goodie bag for 12 people. Beech Mountain Resort had indicated they would host the breakfast. Mr. Miller moved to approve participation in the event. Vice Chair Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VIII. Recessed – Mr. Miller moved to recess the meeting at 11:25 a.m. Mrs. Catoe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IX. Reconvene – Vice Chairperson Calder Smoot reconvened the September 30, 2009 meeting at 10:15 am on October 19, 2009 in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Present were members Fred Barth and Rick Miller. Charlie Burlison arrived at 10:35 a.m. Also present was Mayor Rick Owen, Town Manager Randy Feierabend, Councilman Gil Adams, Councilman Pete Chamberlin, Chamber Office Manager Peggy Coscia, and President Chamber Jim Brooks. Councilman Alan Holcombe arrived at 10:30. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.

X. Old Business – Vice Chair Smoot reported that the Authority reviewed the advertising proposals from Gotham Marketing Relations. Vice Chair Smoot noted that the dead line for having brochures to the Beech Mtn. Resort for distribution at the Atlanta Ski Show was Wednesday, October 21st.

XI. New Business – Mr. Barth who owns two businesses in the Town, Beech Alpen Restaurant and Top of the Beech Inn, expressed his concerns with the website not adequately promoting the Towns lodging businesses. In addition, the BM Chamber of Commerce had eliminated his businesses from the Towns lodging page, which Mr. Barth felt was a breach of contract with the TDA. The contract spells out that the Chamber has to treat all businesses in the tax limits of the Town equally. Mr. Barth had dropped his membership into the Chamber of Commerce, but noted

that he did pay a large sum of money in Occupancy Tax. Mr. Barth made a motion to have the advertising fair to everyone in the town. Chairman Burleson seconded the motion. Vice Chair Smoot indicated that it would not be a problem to add or delete items from the web site portal page. Vice Chairperson Smoot noted that Tombras had recently been paid, the bill had been misplaced with the change in finance officers. Tombras has agreed to complete the web information they had been working on. Mr. Brooks indicated that the Chamber web site did not have a link to the Authorities page. Mr. Miller suggested that the decision be tabled for future discussion, giving time to review the various options. Further discussion included dropping dues for being in the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Brooks reported the John Troxler was the Chamber's choice for replacing the position vacated by Mike Shaw. Mr. Owen indicated that now would be a good time to discuss the option of an employee that would answer to the TDA. Vice Chairperson Smoot noted that the Authority would have to write a job description for a position. The original motion by Mr. Barth, seconded by Chairperson Burleson, was rescinded. Mr. Barth moved to have the portal page; dining and lodging, separate from Lodging, lodging and dining link would be created. Chairperson Burleson seconded the motion. The motion carried 3 to 2, Chairperson Burleson and Mr. Barth voted yea, and Mrs. Catoe's absentee vote is listed as a yea. Vice Chair Smoot and Mr. Miller voted nay. Chairperson Burleson moved to reinstate into Chamber advertising, Mr. Barth and Sherry Garris' businesses until more information could be discussed by the Authority. Vice Chairperson Smoot seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XII. Other Business –

- a. Meeting Room Availability*** – Vice Chairperson Smoot indicated that Mr. Stoudemier had requested information on the availability of conference space on the mountain. Mr. Barth reported that Top of the Beech could accommodate approximately 100 people. Mr. Brooks noted that he had given Mr. Stoudemier a list of 15 to 20 spaces that were available.

- b. TDA Position*** – Chairperson Burleson indicated that the Authority needed further discussion with regards to having an employee. A committee was appointed consisting of Chairperson Burleson, Vice Chairperson Smoot, Chamber President Jim Brooks, Town Manager Randy Feierabend, Mayor Rick Owen, Authority member Fred Barth and Woodie Stoudemier of the marketing firm. The committee members would be contacted to set up a meeting.

XIII. Adjourn – Mr. Miller moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m. Chairperson Burleson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Reba Greene
Town Clerk
