

**HCTDA Board Meeting Minutes**  
**June 26, 2024**  
**Lake Junaluska Bethea Welcome Center**

**Members Present:** Dr. Shelley White, Jim Owens, Mike Huber, Angie Frisbee, Jeff Hillis, Scot Blair, Kelsie Baker, Chad King, Kristian Owen, Natalie Hawkins, Gail Mull, Jeremy Boone, David Francis, Chuck Dickson, Alycin Ray, Hayley Printz, Corrina Ruffieux, Amie Newsome, Ashley Rock-Rice

**Members Absent:** Jennifer Best

**Guests Present:** Jane Mauer, Hannah White, Brionna Dallara

- **Call to Order** – Chair Jim Owens called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM
- **Introductions**
- **Adjustment of Agenda**
- **Public Comment Session (12 minutes total, limit 3 minutes per person)**
  - Jane Mauer, from Smokies Life, announced that the summer version of Smokies Life magazine is out. Rangers will be giving a 1 hour talk about elk.
- **Board Comments**
  - Mike Huber announced that they had a great first event at the Warren Center, and thanked the HCTDA for their support for the connector trail.
  - Jeff Hillis announced that Buffalo Creek will have their anniversary event this week on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> from 4-6PM. Please RSVP with Cheryl Hillis so they can prepare enough food.
- **Public Hearing on FY 2024-2025 [Budget Ordinance](#) | VOTE**
  - Chair Jim Owens opened the public hearing. With no comments, he closed the public hearing. Dr. Shelley White made a motion to approve the budget amendment, as presented. Chuck Dickson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Consent Agenda | VOTE**
  - Request approval of minutes – [May 22, 2024](#) & [June 5, 2024](#)  
Chuck Dickson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Angie Frisbee seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Finance Reports**
  - [May Financial Reports](#)– Kristian Owen
    - Total Checking/Savings - \$3,747,375.30
    - Total Assets - \$3,785,319.11
    - Total Liabilities - \$267,205.38
    - Occupancy Tax Revenue May - \$207,509.76
    - Occupancy Tax Revenue YTD - \$2,387,258.67
    - Total Income May - \$232,305.27
    - Total Income YTD - \$2,642,766.38
    - Total Expenses May - \$191,457.27
    - Total Expenses YTD - \$2,015,804.33
    - Change in Net Position May - \$40,848.00
    - Change in Net Position YTD - \$626,962.05

- [Occupancy Tax and Lodging Data](#) – *Corrina Ruffieux*
  - Corrina Ruffieux presented that in addition to March increases, April was up 15.6%. Occupancy tax shows that we are slightly up this year over last year. In May, available short-term rentals are still increasing, while bookings are increasing. AirDNA data shows that short-term rentals are pacing the same, while bookings are low in November. Data shows that visitors book short-term rentals 50-75 days in advance, while hotels book about 12 days out.
- **Old Business**
  - FY 2023-2024 Budget Amendments [#1](#) and [#2](#) | **VOTE**
    - Mike Huber made a motion to approve budget amendment #1, as presented. Chad King seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
    - Chad King made a motion to approve budget amendment #2, as presented. Natalie Hawkins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- **New Business**
  - [TDA Board Meeting dates](#) | **VOTE**  
Mike Huber made a motion to approve the Board meeting dates, as presented. Angie Frisbee seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
  - [Committee Meeting dates](#) - Finance, Product Development, Marketing | **VOTE**  
Jeff Hillis made a motion to approve the committee meeting dates, as presented. Dr. Shelley White seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
  - [Elect officers for FY 2024-2026](#) | **VOTE**  
Natalie Hawkins made a motion to approve the officer positions for FY 24-26. Chuck Dickson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
  - [Lure contract for Visitor Guide](#) | **VOTE**  
Chad King made a motion to approve the Lure contract and authorize Corrina to sign the contract. Jeff Hillis seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
  - Greenway Grant discussion - \$50,000 cash match + [letter of support](#) | **VOTE**  
Natalie Hawkins made a motion to adopt the letter of support and provide the cash match. Kelsie Baker seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
  - [Finance policies](#) | **VOTE**  
Mike Huber made a motion to approve the finance policies, as presented. Chuck Dickson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
  - [FY 2024-2025 Tourism Promotion & Legacy Grants](#) | **VOTE**
    - [Clyde](#)
      - Drone camping – Natalie Hawkins made a motion to decline the grant. Angie Frisbee seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
    - [Haywood County](#)
      - IDEA Passport- Approve the grant in the amount of \$10,000, with the stipulation that they reach out to lodging partners to include the hospitality sector.
      - HCAC Studio Tour- Approve the grant in the amount of \$4,000. Natalie Hawkins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mike Huber made a motion to approve the Haywood County grants, as presented. Natalie Hawkins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- Lake Junaluska
  - Seasonal Advertising –Approve funding in the amount of \$31,666.
  - Independence Day Celebration 2025- Approve funding in the amount of \$8,334.

Chuck Dickson made a motion to approve the Lake Junaluska grants, as presented. Dr. Shelley White seconded the motion. Mike Huber abstained from the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

- Maggie Valley
  - HCAC Bluegrass Festival –Approve funding in the amount of \$9,000, with a request that HCAC consider moving the event to a slower month.
  - Maggie Valley Ice Festival –Approve funding in the amount of \$53,900.
  - Safari Adventure Package –Decline this project. Jeff Hillis abstained from the vote.
  - WNC Jeep Fest –Approve funding in the amount of \$3,730, with the stipulation that the applicant provide detailed plans on the use of grant funds, and ensure that event proceeds are donated within Haywood County and proof is provided to the HCTDA.
  - Backyard 4<sup>th</sup> –Approve funding in the amount of \$7,254.50.
  - Wheels Through Time Anniversary Raffle –Approve funding in the amount of \$6,423.05.

Chuck Dickson made a motion to approve the Maggie Valley grants, as presented. Chad King seconded the motion. Motion passed.

- Waynesville
  - Appalachian Heritage Weekend - Approve funding in the amount of \$30,000, with the stipulation that the applicant submits the requested marketing plan, markets the event months in advance, and utilizes one brand to market.
  - Chili Cook Off - Approve funding in the amount of \$1,389, and for the HCTDA to discuss with applicant about moving the event to coincide with Ice Fest Weekend next year.
  - DWC Ice Stroll - Approve funding in the amount of \$5,000.
  - DWC Marketing Campaign - Approve funding in the amount of \$28,500, with the stipulation that they submit the requested marketing plan and review proposed video content in advance of production with the HCTDA staff.
  - HART Holiday Harmony - Approve funding in the amount of \$3,500.
  - Haywood Historic Farmers Market - Approve funding in the amount of \$2,000,
  - HCAC Jazz Concert - Approve funding in the amount of \$6,000.
  - Apple Harvest Festival - Approve funding in the amount of \$5,333.

- Whole Bloomin Thing - Approve funding in the amount of \$1,000, with the stipulation that they submit the detailed marketing plan, as requested.
- DWC Appalachian True Christmas - Approve funding in the amount of \$4,500, with the stipulation that they submit the requested marketing plan.
- Lake Junaluska Independence Day - Approve funding in the amount of \$2,778.

Jeff Hillis made a motion to approve the Waynesville grants, as presented. Natalie Hawkins seconded the motion. Chuck Dickson abstained from the vote. Angie Frisbee opposed. Motion passed.

- **Staff Reports/Announcements**

- Advertising RFP Update
- Ice Fest Weekend – Sponsorship Package, Promotional Ideas
- Mountain Mornings Update – Amie Newsome
- Marketing College – Amie Newsome
- PRSA Conference – Ashley Rock-Rice
- Visit NC Smokies Press Trip – Amie & Ashley
- TMP Community Session & Brand Summit
- Next TDA Board meeting is August 28, 2024
- Adjournment

- **Ten Minute Media Communication Session**

Meeting adjourned at 10:18 AM