

## HCTDA Board Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2025

HCC Hemlock Building #1509

**Members Present:** Jim Owens, Dr. Shelley White, Mike Huber, Gail Mull, Bridget Shaughnessy, Chad King, Kristian Owen, Chuck Dickson, Jeremy Boone, Angie Frisbee, Scot Blair, Jennifer Best, Corrina Ruffieux, Hayley Printz, Alycin Ray, Amie Newsome

**Members Absent:** Hannah White, Jeff Hillis, Ashley Rice

**Guests Present:** Katy Gould, Jane Mauer, Andrew Marshall

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Jim Owens called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.
2. **Introductions** The HCTDA Board members introduced themselves
3. **Adjustment of Agenda**
4. **Public Comment Session (12 minutes total, limit 3 minutes per person)**
  - Jane Mauer announced that the new Smokies Life Journal is out. Out of 26 advertisers, there are 7 from Haywood County. She also announced that the fall copy of Smokies Guide is out as well, and will be re-printed to update the 441 road closure. Park traffic has been down, especially at Oconaluftee at 5% from last year. Cataloochee Valley is also down from last year, but has been increasing.
  - Katy Gould introduced herself as the Haywood Community College Tourism & Marketing Instructor and stated she looks forward to working with everyone.
5. **Board Comments - None**
6. **Consent Agenda | VOTE**
  - Request approval of minutes – [August 27, 2025](#)

Angie Frisbee made a motion to approve the minutes, as presented. Chuck Dickson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

## 7. Finance Reports

- [August Financial Report](#) – Kristian Owen reviewed the financials as follows:
  - Total Checking/Savings - \$4,618,064.18
  - Total Assets - \$4,667,098.01
  - Total Liabilities - \$311,607.86
  - Change in Net Position – (\$378,887.38)
  - Total Occupancy Tax Revenue – August - \$0
  - Total Occupancy Tax Revenue – YTD - \$0
  - Total Income – August - \$17,653.43
  - Total Income – YTD - \$38,926.67
  - Total Expenses – August - \$219,081.22
  - Total Expenses – YTD - \$417,814.05
  - Change in Net Position – August – (\$201,427.79)
  - Change in Net Position – YTD – (\$378,887.38)

Kristian Owen reminded the TDA Board members that having a negative net position and \$0 revenue is normal at this time of year due to the standard two-month delay in occupancy tax collections.

- [Occupancy Tax & Lodging Data](#) – *Corrina Ruffieux*

Corrina Ruffieux presented the occupancy tax comparison, showing that July is down 11.2% from last year.

## **8. Old Business**

- [Church St. Festival Grant Rollover Request](#) | **VOTE**

Corrina Ruffieux presented that Church Street Festival was approved for \$13,450 on May 29, 2025 and the applicant is requesting to rollover the grant to use for the 2026 festival.

Mike Huber made a motion to approve the request. Bridget Shaughnessy seconded the motion. Chuck Dickson recused himself from the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

## **9. New Business**

- Website Contracts – Corrina Ruffieux reminded the TDA Board that a RFP was published on May 28 and we received 49 proposals. Marketing Committee selected 3 finalists for in-person interviews and there was a unanimous recommendation from Marketing Committee to move forward with One Net. Chad King added that through the interview process, it was clear that One Net was deeply engaged and experienced and could help move the HCTDA forward.
- Corrina Ruffieux explained that the Master Services Agreement includes overall terms and conditions, Schedule A includes a specific plan of work to complete the website strategy at a fixed rate of \$15,000, and Schedule B will be finalized using the findings of the website strategy. The estimated costs are \$139,516 - \$160,436.
  - [Master Services Agreement](#) | **VOTE**
  - [Schedule A](#) | **VOTE**
  - [Schedule B Authorization](#) | **VOTE**

Chuck Dickson made a motion to approve the Master Services Agreement and Schedule A as presented, and to approve Corrina Ruffieux to negotiate and sign Schedule B, not to exceed \$175,000. Dr. Shelley White seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- [Resolution for Phase 2 Photography & Videography](#) | **VOTE**

Corrina Ruffieux explained that the piggy backing exception allows the reuse of a previously awarded bid without issuing a new RFP. The resolution approves contracting with the same vendors for winter videography and photography for no more than the FY budgeted amount of \$100,000.

Chad King made a motion to approve the resolution. Mike Huber seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- Capital Grants
  - [Grant Applications and Details](#)

▪ [Committee Recommendations](#) | **VOTE**

Corrina Ruffieux reminded the HCTDA Board that this is the first round of capital grants since the newly adopted Capital Grant Guidelines, and reminded Board members to recuse themselves in line with the newly adopted Conflict of Interest Policy. Jim Owens added that the Executive Committee was in agreement with the Product Development Committee recommendations.

Chuck Dickson made a motion to approve the Raccoon Creek Bike Park grant out of the budgeted 3% County fund. Jeremy Boone seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Shelley White made a motion to approve the Waynesville Dog Park grant application. Chad King seconded the motion. Chuck Dickson recused himself from the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Corrina Ruffieux explained that the Product Development Committee and Executive Committee both discussed whether or not the art projects would drive new overnight visitation, to align with the state law. There was discussion that, if there was a Town of Waynesville Art Master Plan, it could help show alignment with the requirements for spending tourism dollars. Jim Owens added that we want to support the arts, but it can't be in a one-off manner. Scot Blair added that you can make the argument that beautification of an area encourages people to stay and explore.

Angie Frisbee made a motion not to approve funding for the Waynesville Art Mural and Roots to Sky Sculpture grant applications. Jeremy Boone seconded the motion. Chuck Dickson recused himself from the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Corrina Ruffieux explained that the Stuart Auditorium Infrastructure grant application is to repair/replace the HVAC system, which is not allowable under the current grant guidelines, and that Product Development Committee and Executive Committee agreed that it doesn't meet the guidelines and recommend encouraging the applicant to reapply with a closer adherence to the guidelines.

Chad King made a motion not to approve funding for the Stuart Auditorium Infrastructure grant application. Angie Frisbee seconded the motion. Mike Huber recused himself from the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

## **10. Staff Reports/Announcements**

- STS Marketing College Graduation – *Amie Newsome*
- Visitor Guide Ad Sales
- 2026 Anniversaries and Milestones Needed
- Marketing Committee Openings – deadline 09.30.2025
- Gift of Haywood Seasonal Campaign
- SATW 2026 Annual Convention
- Next TDA Board meeting is November 5, 2025 at 9 AM – Gaines Auditorium
- Adjournment

## **11. Ten Minute Media Communication Session**

Mike Huber made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chad King seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 9:54 AM.