

Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA)
Board Meeting Agenda Minutes

Advance notice of all meetings has been provided and all TCTDA are open to the public.

A schedule of meetings and minutes can be found at

<https://explorebrevard.com/tct/meeting-schedule-and-minutes/>

September 28th, 2023

8:30 am

Call to Order

I. Welcome

A quorum was established with the following members present at the meeting:

Dee Dee Perkins, Aaron Baker, Ali Lien (left the meeting after New Business Item A), Madeline Magin, Jessica Whitmire, Isaac Allen (joined meeting during Financial Presentation), Layton Parker, Larry Chapman, Dana Antonuccio

The following TDA Staff members were present at the meeting:

Clark Lovelace, Virginia Watkins, Mollie Gordon

The following people were also present at the meeting:

Jason Cox, Mark Johnson, Lindsay Underwood, Kate Hayes, Liam McKissock

Chairman Layton Parker called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

II. Public Comment

- a. Chairman Layton Parker then opened the floor for members of the public to participate in the regularly scheduled section of the meeting open for public comment, however there was none.

III. Agenda Modifications

- a. Chairman Layton Parker presented the agenda to the Board and gave an overview of the agenda items. Chairman Parker then requested any questions or other modifications to be made to the agenda.
- b. Jessica Whitmire made a motion to add the potential National Wild and Scenic designation of the North Fork of the French Broad River as an Item of new business.

- i. Aaron Baker moved to approve the agenda with one modification, seconded by Jessica Whitmire. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. Chairman Layton Parker presented the consent agenda, which included the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting on August 24th, the approval of contracts, and the approval of the FY23/24 Partner Funding List. Vice-Chair Dee Dee Perkins moved to approve the consent agenda and Ali Lien seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

V. Presentations

- a. Financial Report – Kate Hayes gave a brief presentation on the financial activities of the TDA as of 8/31/2023. The data she presented contained information on one month of revenue and two months of expenses. July sales were up 2% over the last year. Total revenue is up 8% of targeted revenue to 11% of budget. Cash expenditure through August 8% of 17% budgeted. Of what has been spent so far, 95% has been on advertisements and marketing while 5% has been on tourism-related expenditures. There is an estimated fund balance of 1.7 million. Vice-Chair Dee Dee Perkins moved to accept the financial report as given and Jessica Whitmire seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- b. Office / Staff Report – Clark Lovelace gave a report on the activities of his office and staff, which included the annual report being completed and presented to the Board of Commissioners, the Bracken Mountain Expansion contract being completed, the upcoming Tourism Partner 2024 Kickoff Social, attendance at the 2024 Outdoor Economy Conference, the RFP process for the new website, activities of TCTDA committees, a highlight of upcoming events with many having received TCTDA grants, the Brevard Collective, the new Finance Director, Meagan O’Neal, the potential government shutdown, and our nation’s 250th anniversary celebration in 2026.

A few questions and comments were shared by Board members. Jessica Whitmire noted the importance of the Forks of the River Flyfishing event with funds collected supporting important streambank work by Conserving Carolina. Larry Chapman shared that the Veteran’s History Conference will be great and bring in many outside visitors. He also noted challenges the museum faces with limited promotion. Mr. Lovelace indicated that he would compile a list of TCTDA efforts to promote the museum. Ms. Whitmire gave a massive thanks to Mandi

Bentley and Chad Owenby for all the hard work they have been doing for Transylvania County Parks and Recreation in Jared Mull's absence. Mr. Chapman said the Board of Commissioners are looking for an organization to lead the marketing and advertising efforts for this and the TCTDA was mentioned.

VI. Old Business

- a. There was no old business to discuss at this meeting.

VII. New Business

- a. Changes to Transylvania County Resolution #35 – 2021 – Clark Lovelace shared that this resolution was passed in 2021 by the Board of Commissioners and it establishes all the foundational elements of the TCTDA. This includes the board makeup, protocols, staff, and other requirements. As the TCTDA has been carrying out regular duties and operations since the resolution was passed, both staff and TCTDA Board Members have learned that some protocols established under this resolution are not practical or ideal. With this in mind the TCTDA Board recommended and the Board of Commissioners passed a change to contract requirements. A few additional items have come up recently and Mr. Lovelace was asked to connect with County attorney Lindsay Underwood to create recommended updates. Updated language was included in the meeting packet and reviewed by Mr. Lovelace. Chairman Layton Parker reminded the TCTDA Board that was just a list of recommended changes that would need to go before the Board of commissioners for final approval. Aaron Baker made a motion to approve the recommendations for revising Resolution #35 to the Board of Commissioners, and Madeline Magin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- b. 2024 Board Positions – Clark Lovelace provided an update on upcoming openings and applications on file, which were included in the meeting packet. Mr. Lovelace covered the timing and process for recommendations to the Board of Commissioners and indicated that a selection should be made at the October meeting. The Board held a brief discussion. No action was taken.
- c. Transylvania County Holiday Season Christmas Tree Funding Request – Chairman Layton Parker explained the details of this funding request. Mr. Lovelace said this request came in very recently, which is why it is being reviewed directly by the Board rather than the Destination Infrastructure Committee. Following discussion, Jessica Whitmire made a motion to grant the \$4,900 request from Transylvania County for ornaments, ribbon, a rental crane and staff time and Dee Dee Perkins seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

- d. National Wild & Scenic designation of the North Fork of the French Broad River - Jessica Whitmire shared details on the North Fork and its history. There is concern that this river could be dammed in the future, as there have been multiple attempts to dam the river in the past that were only stopped due to organized public outcry. The Transylvania Natural Resource Council has done a lot of research into this situation and is spearheading the push to prevent future damming of this river. The TNRC held a meeting at the Transylvania County Public library about the river last spring, and a meeting was held in the Balsam Grove community. The TNRC wants to get this river the federal designation of a Wild and Scenic River. This would not impose land restrictions on the parcels adjacent to the river but would solely prevent the river from being dammed along the 3.2 miles of river located in the Pisgah National Forest. This has been a contentious issue, as some parties are concerned about more federal regulation and see the possible damming of the river as having a positive impact on flooding in the area. One concern with this designation is that it will draw more members of the public to this river, as it did with the Horseshoe River, however the Horseshoe River is easily accessible, and the North Fork is not easily accessible. The Forest Service has labeled the river as a candidate for this designation but has not followed through with pursuing it in the past because the river was polluted. The river has since been cleaned up and the Forest Service has once again labeled it as a candidate for designation. American Whitewater, the Balsam Grove Community, the Mayor of Rosman and Headwaters Outfitters are all behind getting this river designated. To fully apply for this designation, the Board of Commissioners would need to vote on the designation in one of their regularly scheduled meetings, therefore a vote from the TCTDA would be a recommendation to approve this designation and add this as item of business to the Board of Commissioners next meeting agenda. Larry Chapman made a motion to recommend the Board of Commissioners adopt the resolution put forward by the TNRC at the next regularly scheduled meeting, and Aaron Baker seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VIII. Public Comment

- a. Chairman Layton Parker opened the floor again for any members of the public that wished to comment on the business of the board, however there was no member of the public present and no request for public comment.

IX. Board Member Comments

- a. Larry Chapman made a couple of comments during this time. He first let the Board know that the Board of Commissioners are looking to discuss repurposing the old county courthouse once the new courthouse is constructed near the public safety facility. The Board of Commissioners are likely going to form a new committee to decide what to do with the building and he wanted to keep the TCTDA informed if they want to pursue moving into that building. The move-out of this building will likely happen somewhere between two to three and a half years from now. He also noted important upcoming events:
 - November 10, event for the Marine Corp at Ecusta Brewing
 - November 11 at 11:00am, Veteran's Day Program at the Courthouse.
 - October 14, Honor Air Flight out of Asheville airport
 - November 7-13, the City and County will be participating in Green Light for Veterans to show support for our veterans
- b. Issac Allen shared from experience that website developers will often come down on price if you push and suggested that we do so with our website.
- c. Jessica Whitmire noted the challenges small businesses face these days, mentioning a few local business that had recently closed and pushing for all to shop locally and support local business whenever you can.
- d. Aaron Baker gave a few updates on behalf of the City of Brevard.
 - TYSA field has been finished and Mr. Baker encourages everyone to go and check it out. They have changed their names to Ecusta Football Club.
 - Creek restoration has occurred near Silverstein Playground, which looks great.
 - An early completion date has been estimated for the Ecusta Trail as being in 2026, but there are many caveats and unknowns, so this is subject to change.
 - The Tanner Section of the Bike Path between the Estate Trail and the Mary C. Jenkins center is coming along.
- e. Mr. Lovelace and the Board discussed signage at Pisgah Forest, stating that the Trashesquatch billboard would be coming down soon and that the Heart of Brevard or the City of Brevard may be taking that ad space.
- f. Aaron Baker began discussing the upcoming race for Brevard City Council and said that candidates will be at 185 King St. on October 17th to talk with the Brevard Bike Alliance and on October 7th to talk with the NAACP at the Mary C. Jenkins Center.
- g. Virginia Watkins said that there was an update to how vendors are going to be selected to advertise in upcoming adventure guides. This will change from a right of first refusal to a random selection to not give certain vendors undue preference in this guide. Ms. Watkins also said that businesses can fill out a partner profile form online as well as an online request form.

Adjournment

Larry Chapman moved to adjourn the meeting and Aaron Baker seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board and the meeting adjourned at 10:31am.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Liam McKissock

TCTDA Mission Statement – *To generate and enhance tourism opportunities in Transylvania County through strategic promotion coordinated with tourism-related businesses and local government, and to contribute to a vibrant, sustainable economy.*