Franklin Tourism Development Authority
Agenda
November 9, 2026
5:30 p.m.

1.) **Call to Order – Tim Crabtree, Chairman**

2.) **Approval of the October 12, 2026 regular meeting minutes** **Pages 2 - 8**

3.) **Financial Reports – ending September 30, 2026** **Pages 9 - 12**

4.) **New Business**

A.) Follow up Report from Come Together Festival **Page 13**

B.) Vote on Application – Macon County Transit
Hiker Route – March through May 2027
Requested Amount - $6,000 **Pages 14 - 18**

C.) Vote on Application – Crabtree Family Enterprises
13th Annual Ruby Drop – December 31, 2026
Requested Amount - $6,500 **Pages 19 - 23**

D.) Vote on new TDA Grant Funds Request application **Pages 24 - 28**

5.) **Items from the Board**

A.) Marketing Report – Stewart Communications (Emailed Report)

B.) Subcommittee Update

- Review priorities
- Priority assignments
- Next steps and project plans **Pages 29 - 33**

6.) **Announcements**

A.) The next regularly scheduled TDA meeting is Monday, December 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

7.) **Adjourn**



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 2

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Minutes from October 12, 2026 regular meeting

Suggested Motion: If favorable – accept the minutes from the October 12, 2026 regular meeting as presented.

Attachments: Yes __X__ No __

Action Taken: _____

TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOURISM DEVELOPEMNT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 12, 2026

Present: Members: Chair Tim Crabtree, Steve Crabtree, Heather Dombroskie, Hannah Edwards, Guy Gooder, Daniel Lawton, Colin McGinnis, and Rob Reale.

Absent: Heather Childress

Others present: Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk
Robbie Tompa, Councilman
Mia Overton, The Franklin Press
Darlene Asher – Macon Transit

1. **Call to Order- Chair Tim Crabtree**
The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. **Approval of the September 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Member Hannah Edwards made a motion, seconded by Member Rob Reale to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2026 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8 -0.

3. **Financial Reports- ending August 31, 2026**
Chair Tim Crabtree presented the Financial Report through the end of August 2026. The total collections for August were $18,723.14 (2nd highest July on record and above the 10-year average). Total expenses, thus far, for current FY 2026/2027 are $36,694.64 leaving a balance of (-$38.53) and $183,405.65 remains in fund balance. The report is incorporated into these minutes as Exhibit A.

Member Hannah Edwards made a motion, seconded by Member Heather Dombroskie to approve the financial reports ending August 31 2026, as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

4. **New Business**
A.) New Application for Consideration – Macon County Transit – Hiker Route – March through May 2027 – Request amount $6,000
Darlene Asher, Macon County Transit Director, submitted an application for funding for their Hiker Route. She stated that they advertise in the Hiker guide, print flyers, social media and on the side of the bus. She also noted that the cost of gas, tires and salaries have increased. In 2025, they transported 940 hikers to Franklin and in 2026 they transported 1,729. Last year there was no cost to hikers to ride the bus (the fare was paid by donors). This item will be voted on at the November meeting.

There was additional discussion on the $8, 000 "other advertising line" and the need for additional clarification.

B.) New Application for Consideration – Crabtree Family Enterprises – 13th Annual Ruby Drop – December 31, 2026 – Requested amount $6,500

Tim Crabtree, Crabtree Family Enterprises, submitted an application for funding of the 13th Annual Ruby Drop. They will once again hold two (2) drops – 9 p.m. and 12 a.m. Mr. Crabtree noted that this year they plan to rent a large tent to be placed on Iotla Street and plan to get tables and heaters. This item will be voted on at the November meeting.

5. **Items from the Board**

A.) Monthly Marketing Report- Stewart Communications

- Social Media Post and Ads
  - 12 Social Media post and 5 Paid Ads
  - Facebook – 169 new followers
  - Instagram – 280 new followers
- Website
  - More than 19,000 users
  - Top Pages for views
    - Home Page & Event/PumpkinFest
  - Top Pages for engagement
    - Fall in Franklin blog & Places to Stay
- Google Searches (2.71K Clicks & 220K Impressions)
- Email/Newsletter Performance
  - 14.4 % Open rate & 5.7% Click rate
- Media Relations
  - Active Pitches – PumpkinFest, Fall, The Naturalist & 828 Treasure Quest
- Next Steps
  - Fall
  - My 10 Reasons to Visit Franklin, NC – photographer campaign
  - Nov – Winter Promotions (Veterans Day, Winder Wonderland & Ruby Drop)
  - Travel guide is out – will look into a reprint

Mr. Stewart also gave a summary of the recent Travel Writers Conference he attended. He also discussed the Familiarization Tour for influencers; noting the TDA could partner with the TDC to cover this cost to bring influencers to Franklin.

B.) Report from TDA Subcommittee

Colin McGinnis discussed splitting up the projects that the subcommittee had developed. He will send out an email to all TDA members with the list of projects. He would like TDA members to sign up for projects they would like to support and assist with. The subcommittee will meet again the last week of October.

There was discussion on downtown banner replacements.

C.) Other items from the TDA Board

Chair Tim Crabtree read the TDA by-laws (Article 2) and the NC General Statue regarding TDA funding. He said that tourism encompasses more than "heads in beds" and that the Franklin TDA satisfies the two thirds rule for marketing with the funds that are paid to Stewart Communication.

Member Rob Reale inquired about when the new application would start. Chair Crabtree said possibly in January; there needs to be a vote on the new application next month.

6. Announcements

A.) The next regular scheduled TDA meeting will be held on Monday, November 9, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

7. Adjourn

Member Heather Dombroskie made a motion, seconded by Member Hannah Edwards to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

_____

Tim Crabtree, Chair

_____

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk

TDA BUDGET ORDINANCE FY 2026 - 2027

	Total Budgeted	Expenditures	Encumberances	Balance
Advertising & Marketing	**$ 148,500.00**	**$ 20,694.64**	**$127,805.36**	**$ 127,805.36**
Allison Outdoor Advertising	$ 5,356.00	$ 1,648.00	$ 3,708.00	
Stewart Communications	$ 143,144.00	$19,046.64	$124,097.36	
Audit & Bond	**$ 3,950.00**	**$ 900.00**		**$ 3,050.00**
Martin Starnes - audit Quarterly payment	$ 3,600.00	$ 900.00		
Bond for Finance Officer - annual payment	$ 350.00			
Festivals & Events	**$ 30,000.00**	**$15,100.00**		**$14,900.00**
80's Flashback Weekend		$ 7,500.00		
Come Together Festival - Tribal Vibe Promotions		$ 1,000.00		
Outdoor 76 - Naturalist 25/50K		$ 1,600.00		
Macon County Farmers Market		$ 5,000.00		
Undesignated/Miscellaneous	**$42,550.00**	**$0.00**		**$42,550.00**
Totals:	**$ 225,000.00**	**$36,694.64**	**$127,805.36**	**$188,305.36**

Timothy Crabtree, Chair _____

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk _____

Exhibit A

Room Occupancy Tax Report		
8/31/2026		
FY 2027/2027 Budget		**$225,000.00**
7/31/2026		$17,932.97
8/31/2026		$18,723.14
9/30/2026		
10/31/2026		
11/30/2026		
12/31/2026		
1/31/2027		
2/28/2027		
3/31/2027		
4/30/2027		
5/31/2027		
6/30/2027		
Net Collections:		**$36,656.11**
Budgeted Expenses:		
Tribal Vibes - Come Together Festival	$	1,000.00
80's Flashback Weekend	$	7,500.00
Martin Starnes & Associates CPA (1/4 audit expense)	$	900.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	$	1,236.00
Stewart Communications (July)	$	9,488.88
Allison Outdoor Advertising	$	412.00
Stewart Communications (August)	$	9,557.76
Outdoor 76/Naturalist 25/50K	$	1,600.00
Macon County Farmers Market	$	5,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES:	$	36,694.64
Collections (minus) - Expenses		(38.53)
TDA FUND BALANCE:		$183,405.65

Exhibit A

Month	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
July	$13,523.75	$12,199.87	$12,074.19	$12,933.83	$14,781.99	$16,490.96	$16,483.17	$15,894.85	$17,886.04
August	$9,436.83	$10,574.60	$10,142.03	$11,288.22	$10,743.41	$12,801.13	$15,268.63	$12,353.78	$14,413.61
September	$8,981.30	$11,900.99	$9,362.51	$9,523.55	$10,624.11	$11,754.89	$14,815.74	$14,636.43	$12,866.27
October	$13,580.58	$13,809.73	$13,204.00	$13,826.66	$15,955.17	$19,377.43	$18,874.81	$18,173.60	$19,422.94
November	$5,767.06	$6,100.84	$6,611.03	$6,311.47	$7,439.21	$8,790.32	$9,873.21	$13,471.11	$10,692.08
December	$4,718.42	$4,746.80	$5,173.04	$5,500.33	$6,574.55	$6,879.39	$8,375.77	$7,878.56	$7,013.79
January	$3,884.80	$3,742.12	$4,299.16	$4,398.08	$5,152.86	$6,243.12	$5,137.19	$3,999.90	$6,966.05
February	$4,085.65	$4,746.80	$4,471.66	$4,919.27	$5,152.04	$4,546.77	$5,404.38	$6,630.27	$6,479.11
March	$5,424.68	$7,111.54	$7,875.74	$6,695.48	$7,336.92	$7,233.81	$8,649.55	$10,302.99	$4,085.98
April	$6,997.08	$7,814.07	$7,796.15	$9,098.44	$10,186.71	$11,146.26	$11,234.35	$10,830.29	$707.20
May	$9,306.44	$10,079.92	$9,554.36	$11,368.53	$11,844.69	$12,413.42	$12,024.60	$14,666.32	$4,265.21
June	$9,738.55	$9,166.06	$9,084.51	$11,097.29	$11,603.51	$12,131.45	$12,313.74	$14,915.56	$11,137.06
Totals:	**$95,445.14**	$101,993.34	$99,648.38	$106,961.15	$117,395.17	$129,808.95	$138,455.14	$143,753.66	**$115,935.34**

Month	FY2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY2025-2026	FY 2026-2027	Comments	10 yr avg
July	$10,041.66	$19,844.89	$19,505.33	$20,240.73	$16,996.76	$ 16,844.68	$ 17,932.97	4th Highest on Record; above 10 yr avg	$ 17,022.91
August	$12,113.26	$14,807.56	$19,036.53	$13,498.54	$14,874.97	$ 17,023.38	$ 18,723.14	2nd highest on record; above 10 yr avg.	$ 14,619.14
September	$11,026.88	$15,164.14	$17,939.80	$15,579.41	$15,903.02	$ 16,927.28			$ 14,661.39
October	$16,212.69	$18,302.14	$25,726.85	$18,956.17	$23,391.35	$ 19,631.27			$ 19,806.93
November	$9,202.11	$14,285.57	$14,836.36	$16,668.76	$15,022.50	$ 18,458.96			$ 13,130.10
December	$6,079.70	$11,423.43	$11,503.51	$12,879.95	$10,102.09	$ 12,027.75			$ 9,416.39
January	$6,514.55	$8,193.43	$10,562.53	$6,694.79	$11,129.64	$ 10,838.80			$ 7,628.00
February	$6,328.60	$8,862.11	$8,900.44	$7,764.10	$8,474.67	$ 10,042.76			$ 7,343.32
March	$9,189.78	$13,973.25	$13,903.25	$10,640.82	$15,940.74	$ 11,414.88			$ 10,533.51
April	$14,346.44	$16,311.64	$14,428.14	$14,456.82	$15,576.98	$ 19,107.03			$ 12,814.52
May	$16,649.89	$14,899.46	$19,148.76	$14,634.68	$14,698.74	$ 18,514.21			$ 14,191.53
June	$16,794.03	$19,839.83	$16,077.48	$19,806.29	$18,609.36	$ 18,025.91			$ 15,965.07
Totals:	**$134,499.59**	**$175,907.45**	**$191,568.98**	**$171,821.06**	**$180,720.82**	**$188,856.91**	**$36,656.11**		

Exhibit A

Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 3

Department/Agency: Financials

Subject Matter: September 2026 Financial Reports

- 16-year comparison month to month occupancy tax collections
- Budget spreadsheet with expenditures
- Monthly report with collections versus expenditures

Suggested Motion: If favorable – accept financial reports ending September 30, 2026, as presented.

Attachments: Yes __X__ No __

Action Taken: _____

TDA BUDGET ORDINANCE FY 2026 - 2027

	Total Budgeted	Expenditures	Encumberances	Balance
Advertising & Marketing	**$ 148,500.00**	**$ 35,378.12**	**$113,121.88**	**$ 113,121.88**
Allison Outdoor Advertising	$ 5,356.00	$ 2,060.00	$ 3,296.00	
Stewart Communications	$ 143,144.00	$33,318.12	$109,825.88	
Audit & Bond	**$ 3,950.00**	**$ 900.00**		**$ 3,050.00**
Martin Starnes - audit Quarterly payment	$ 3,600.00	$ 900.00		
Bond for Finance Officer - annual payment	$ 350.00			
Festivals & Events	**$ 30,000.00**	**$19,200.00**		**$10,800.00**
80's Flashback Weekend		$ 7,500.00		
Come Together Festival - Tribal Vibe Promotions		$ 1,000.00		
Outdoor 76 - Naturalist 25/50K		$ 1,600.00		
Macon County Farmers Market		$ 5,000.00		
Macon County Art Association - Plein Air Art Festival		$ 1,600.00		
KIDS Place - 828 Treasure Quest		$ 2,500.00		
Undesignated/Miscellaneous	**$42,550.00**	**$0.00**		**$42,550.00**
Totals:	**$ 225,000.00**	**$55,478.12**	**$113,121.88**	**$169,521.88**
Timothy Crabtree, Chair _____				
Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk _____				

Room Occupancy Tax Report	
8/31/2026	
FY 2027/2027 Budget	**$225,000.00**
7/31/2026	$17,932.97
8/31/2026	$18,723.14
9/30/2026	$15,420.62
10/31/2026	
11/30/2026	
12/31/2026	
1/31/2027	
2/28/2027	
3/31/2027	
4/30/2027	
5/31/2027	
6/30/2027	
Net Collections:	**$52,076.73**
Budgeted Expenses:	
Tribal Vibes - Come Together Festival	$ 1,000.00
80's Flashback Weekend	$ 7,500.00
Martin Starnes & Associates CPA (1/4 audit expense)	$ 900.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	$ 1,236.00
Stewart Communications (July)	$ 9,488.88
Allison Outdoor Advertising	$ 412.00
Stewart Communications (August)	$ 9,557.76
Outdoor 76/Naturalist 25/50K	$ 1,600.00
Macon County Farmers Market	$ 5,000.00
Macon County Art Association - Plein Air Art Festival	$ 1,600.00
KIDS Place - 828 Treasue Quest	$ 2,500.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising - Sept	$ 412.00
Stewart Communications (September)	$ 14,271.48
TOTAL EXPENSES:	$ 55,478.12
Collections (minus) - Expenses	($3,401.39)
TDA FUND BALANCE:	$183,997.92

Month	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
July	$13,523.75	$12,199.87	$12,074.19	$12,933.83	$14,781.99	$16,490.96	$16,483.17	$15,894.85	$17,886.04
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May	$9,306.44	$10,079.92	$9,554.36	$11,368.53	$11,844.69	$12,413.42	$12,024.60	$14,666.32	$4,265.21
June	$9,738.55	$9,166.06	$9,084.51	$11,097.29	$11,603.51	$12,131.45	$12,313.74	$14,915.56	$11,137.06
Totals:	**$95,445.14**	$101,993.34	$99,648.38	$106,961.15	$117,395.17	$129,808.95	$138,455.14	$143,753.66	**$115,935.34**

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August	$12,113.26	$14,807.56	$19,036.53	$13,498.54	$14,874.97	$ 17,023.38	$ 18,723.14	2nd highest on record; above 10 yr avg.	$ 14,619.14
September	$11,026.88	$15,164.14	$17,939.80	$15,579.41	$15,903.02	$ 16,927.28	$15,420.62	5th highest on record; above 10 yr average	$ 14,661.39
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November	$9,202.11	$14,285.57	$14,836.36	$16,668.76	$15,022.50	$ 18,458.96			$ 13,130.10
December	$6,079.70	$11,423.43	$11,503.51	$12,879.95	$10,102.09	$ 12,027.75			$ 9,416.39
January	$6,514.55	$8,193.43	$10,562.53	$6,694.79	$11,129.64	$ 10,838.80			$ 7,628.00
February	$6,328.60	$8,862.11	$8,900.44	$7,764.10	$8,474.67	$ 10,042.76			$ 7,343.32
March	$9,189.78	$13,973.25	$13,903.25	$10,640.82	$15,940.74	$ 11,414.88			$ 10,533.51
April	$14,346.44	$16,311.64	$14,428.14	$14,456.82	$15,576.98	$ 19,107.03			$ 12,814.52
May	$16,649.89	$14,899.46	$19,148.76	$14,634.68	$14,698.74	$ 18,514.21			$ 14,191.53
June	$16,794.03	$19,839.83	$16,077.48	$19,806.29	$18,609.36	$ 18,025.91			$ 15,965.07
Totals:	**$134,499.59**	**$175,907.45**	**$191,568.98**	**$171,821.06**	**$180,720.82**	**$188,856.91**	**$52,076.73**		

Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-A

Department/Agency: Come Together Festival

Subject Matter: Event Follow Up Report

Mary Guercio, Tribal Vibe Promotions, will present a follow up report.

Suggested Motion: Received for information only.

Attachments: Yes ____ No _X_

Action Taken: _____

Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-B

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Macon County Transit – Hiker Route

Macon County Transit (MCT) submitted a new application for consideration for funding on July 22, 2026. The application was held due to revisions being discussed to the application process and the fact that the event is not until March 2027. The request is for $6,000.00 for driver salary, vehicle maintenance and marketing of the Hiker Route. The funding approved in the last budget year was $1,000.

Darlene Asher provided information at the October 12, 2026 meeting.

Suggested Motion: If Favorable – vote to approve and determine funding amount.

Attachments: Yes __X__ No __

Action Taken: _____

Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828) 524-2516

Due two months prior to regularly scheduled meeting where the request will be considered.

The Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin allots funds for the purpose of **PROMOTING TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN.**

Conditions of all funds allotments include:

- ☐ Subject to approval and availability of funds.
- ☐ Applicant recognizes the contribution made by the Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin through the use of the TDA/Franklin logo in all print media.
- ☐ Applicant utilizes the TDA/Franklin logo or tagline on all print media.

Only funding requests received two months prior to monthly TDA meetings will be considered.

For billboard requests, copy ready electronic proof must be submitted with request.

Billboard (s) Request ~~Yes~~/ No	Number of Billboards	Date of Event

Name of Organization	Macon County Transit		
Street or PO Box	36 Pannell Lane	City, ST Zip	Franklin, NC 28734
Representative	Darlene Asher	Phone	828-349-2566
E-mail	dasher@maconnc.org	Web Site	macontransit.com

Project Title	2027 Hiker Route	Project Date(s)	Mar-May 2027
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	TDA, TDC, Macon County, Local Business	TDA Request	$6,000

The Project

Please describe your project and include the following paragraph headings:

- ☐ The event or purchase – what are you proposing to do?
- ☐ Marketing – how will you market the project (be specific)?
- ☐ Tourism Enhancement – how does the project enhance tourism in the Town of Franklin?
- ☐ Measurements – what tools will you use to measure the effectiveness / success of the project?
- ☐ Improvements – if you have done it before, what are you going to do to make it better?
- ☐ Net Cash Flow – how will you put to use any net cash flow generated by project?

The Event or Purchase – What Are You Proposing to Do?

Macon County Transit proposes to continue its seasonal shuttle service for Appalachian Trail (AT) hikers traveling to and from Rock Gap and Winding Stairs Gap and the Town of Franklin. The service will operate Monday through Friday, three (3) times per day, from March 2027 through May 2027, coinciding with the peak hiking season. Limited service may also be provided during off-peak times upon request and based on scheduling availability. The shuttle provides hikers with convenient transportation between the AT and Franklin, allowing them to access local businesses, lodging, restaurants, grocery stores, outfitters, and other destinations.

Marketing – How Will You Market the Project (Be Specific)?

Macon County Transit will market the shuttle service through brochures, flyers, and advertisements specifically targeted toward Appalachian Trail hikers. Brochures and flyers will be distributed to local businesses, hotels, outfitters, restaurants, grocery stores, Trail Information Centers, and other locations frequented by hikers. Information about the shuttle will also be advertised in the AT Hikers Guide, providing hikers with specific information regarding service days, times, and locations. These marketing efforts will help ensure that hikers are aware of the transportation available to and from the Town of Franklin.

Tourism Enhancement – How Does the Project Enhance Tourism in the Town of Franklin?

The shuttle enhances tourism in the Town of Franklin by providing AT hikers with reliable transportation from the Appalachian Trail into town. This allows visitors to access local hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, outfitters, retail businesses, and other attractions. By making it easier for hikers to visit and spend money in Franklin, the project directly supports local businesses and the local tourism economy. The service also provides visitors with an opportunity to become familiar with Franklin and may encourage them to return for future visits, vacations, or extended stays.

Measurements – What Tools Will You Use to Measure the Effectiveness/Success of the Project?

The primary tool used to measure the effectiveness and success of the project will be ridership data. Macon County Transit has provided this service for eight years and will continue tracking the number of passengers using the seasonal shuttle. Ridership trends will be compared with previous years to evaluate demand and the effectiveness of the service. MCT has also observed increased ridership on its fixed-route services during the peak hiking season, demonstrating the broader impact that AT hikers have on local public transportation usage.

Improvements – If You Have Done It Before, What Are You Going to Do to Make It Better?

Macon County Transit will continue to evaluate ridership patterns, customer demand, and feedback to determine whether changes to scheduling, marketing, or service availability are needed. Marketing efforts will be reviewed and expanded as appropriate to ensure hikers are aware of the shuttle and other available transportation options in Franklin. MCT will also continue coordinating service information with businesses and locations frequented by hikers.

Net Cash Flow – How Will You Put to Use Any Net Cash Flow Generated by the Project?

All cash flow generated through this project will be used to cover the costs associated with providing the AT Hiker Shuttle service. Macon County Transit has requested funding specifically for the seasonal shuttle service and has not requested additional funding for the fixed-route service. Any funds generated through the shuttle service will be used to help offset the costs of operating the shuttle and support the continued availability of this seasonal transportation service.

Project Budget

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

	Current Year Budget	Prior Year Actual (if appropriate)
Sources of Cash:		
Your organization		
Town of Franklin TDA	**$6,000**	**$1,000**
Sponsorships		
Booth fees		
Entry / other fees	**$6,000**	**$5,000**
Sales		
Other - specify **TDC**	**$6,000**	**$6,000**
Total Sources of Cash	**$18,000**	**$12,000**
Uses of Cash:		
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits	**$11,500**	**$9,199**
Contracted services		
Cost of merchandise sold		
Rental of facilities		
Rental of equipment		
Expendable supplies		
Printing	**$1,000**	**$1,000**
Print media		
Radio media		
Other advertising – specify		
Other expenses - specify **vehicle Cost**	**$8,000**	**$8000**
Total Uses of Cash	**$20,500**	**$18,199**
Net Cash Flow	**-$2,500**	**-$6,199**

I certify that any significant alterations in the project will be reported to this committee as soon as possible and that I will provide TDA with the required Project Report within thirty (30) days of the completion of the project.

Signature:	Title:	Date:
Darlene Asher	**Transit Director**	**07/22/2026**

Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-C

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Crabtree Family Enterprises

Crabtree Family Enterprises submitted an application for consideration of funding on October 12, 2026. The request is for $6,500 for the 13th Annual Ruby Drop to be held on December 31, 2025. This event has been previously funded and is the only public event for New Year's Eve in Franklin.

This item was presented by Tim Crabtree at the October meeting.

Suggested Motion: If favorable - approve request and set funding amount.

Attachments: Yes __X__ No __

Action Taken: _____

Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828) 524-2516

Due two months prior to regularly scheduled meeting where the request will be considered.

The Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin allots funds for the purpose of **PROMOTING TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN.**

Conditions of all funds allotments include:

- ☐ Subject to approval and availability of funds.
- ☐ Applicant recognizes the contribution made by the Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin through the use of the TDA/Franklin logo in all print media.
- ☐ Applicant utilizes the TDA/Franklin logo or tagline on all print media.

Only funding requests received two months prior to monthly TDA meetings will be considered.

Billboard (s) Request Yes/ No	Number of Billboards	Date of Event

Name of Organization	Crabtree Family Ent.		
Street or PO Box	2119 Lakeside Dr. Suite B	City, ST Zip	Franklin, NC 28734
Representative	Timothy Crabtree	Phone	828-371-2665
E-mail	timmycrab@hotmail.com	Web Site	

Project Title	13th Annual Franklin Ruby Drop	Project Date(s)	12-31-26
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	19,500	TDA Request	6500

13th Annual Franklin Ruby Drop

A New Years Eve to remember Presented by Crabtree Family Ent. and Main Street Merchants

The Event

Crabtree General Store is planning their 13th Family Friendly New Years Eve event after it's success the last Twelve years. Franklin Town Board has been asked to approve closing all of main street, Iotla, and Phillips St. for the event this year. Throughout the evening from 7pm – 10pm music will be played in the street. We have Carolina Horse and Carriage returning this year to offer carriage rides at the event. We will be returning live music to the event this year for our 13th celebration! This year we are planning to ask Reds Lemonade Stand to return. At Midnight we will ring in 2027 with the official RUBY DROP!!! The Ruby was constructed for the first Ruby Drop in 2014, at over 6 & a half feet tall and 7 feet in diameter with over 1300 led lights it is quite the attention grabber. The plan this year is to add a tent on Iotla Street to offer better climate control for our entertainment.

Marketing

To spread the word of the event we will utilize tools such as radio ads, newspaper, Facebook & other social media, and most important word of mouth. We will develop specific ads for radio to the event. Flyers will be posted around town and in print media. As this year is year # 13 of the event we will be inviting WLOS in hopes that it will stir excitement for the future. We will also have a banner to cross Main St. this year if approved by the town.

Tourism Enhancement

Our town has little in the way of events in the Winter months. This event is planned to give travelers and our locals something to be excited about. We have many tourists traveling through around the holidays, and we hope to capitalize on some of those tourist dollars. We must give them a reason to want to stop in Franklin. Every year this event gets bigger. We hope this year to have a larger than ever crowd.

Mission

As a Franklin Main Street Business our goal is to bring more people into our town while also providing opportunities for locals to participate in events. We strive to grow our organization while also growing and improving our town.

TDA Mission

This event is a unique outdoor New Years Event. There are limited activities for the whole family to participate in on New Years Eve in Western NC and we hope to change that with this event.

Measurements

We will be speaking with attendees of the event throughout and also collecting information from them to better the event in years to come.

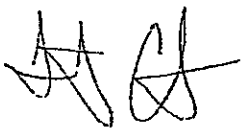
Net Cash Flow

We hope to enhance the spending of money at an otherwise slow time for Main Street Franklin. We hope to break even on the event.

Project Budget

Sources of Cash:		**$**
Crabtree Family Ent.		4500
Requesting from TDC		8500
Requesting from TDA		6500
TOTAL SOURCES OF CASH		**19,500**
Uses of Cash		
Contracted Services		5000
Rental of Equipment	Crane	250
	Heat	600
	Stage & Lighting	2350
	Tent	7000
Main St. Banner		800
Video Ad development		350
Printing		400
Print Media		750
Radio Media		650
Other Advertising (Social Media)		1350
Total Uses of Cash		**19,500**

I certify that any significant alterations in the project will be reported to this committee as soon as possible.

Signature:	Title:	Date:
	Owner/President Crabtree Family Ent. LLC	09/30/2026

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Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-D

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: New TDA Grant Application

The TDA subcommittee developed a new grant application. The new application states that applications for events will be accepted and voted on quarterly. The new application also outlines eligibility/grant requirements and summarizes the conditions of the application.

Suggested Motion: If favorable - approve the new application.

Attachments: Yes __X__ No __

Action Taken: _____

Grant Funds Request

Franklin Tourism Development Authority

P.O. Box 1479 • Franklin, North Carolina 28744 • (828) 524-2516

Applications for events occurring in First Quarter (January – March) should be submitted by ~~December~~ Nov. 15; Second Quarter (April – June) by ~~March~~ Feb 15; Third Quarter (July – Sept) by ~~June~~ May 15, and Fourth Quarter (Oct – December) by ~~September~~ Aug 15. Applicants will provide an overview of their event at the first meeting each quarter. Funding decisions will be made during the March, June, September and December regular meetings.

The Tourism Development Authority of the Town of Franklin allocates funds for the purpose of **PROMOTING TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN.** **The only source of revenue for TDA is Occupancy Tax and is collected either from short-term rentals or Hotel/Motel stays.

Name of Organization			
Street or PO Box		City, ST Zip	
Representative		Phone	
E-mail		Web Site	
Project Title			Project Date(s)
Total Budgeted Cash Sources			TDA Request

Expected Attendance:

Expected Attendance: _____ Percentage attending from >50 miles away: _____

First Time Event (Yes or No): _____ If No, how many years has the event been held?____

Last Year's Attendance: _____ Anticipated Overnight Stays: _____

How many years has the event been funded by the Franklin TDA? _____

Total amount funded in previous years: _____

Eligibility and Grant Requirements

1. Any non-profit entity with an organizational structure and non-profit tax identification are eligible.
2. Private businesses and Government related events or requests are eligible.
3. No funding will be provided for entities outside of Macon County, preference will be given to those entities within the town limits of the Town of Franklin.
4. Grant funding is short term seed money to help grow events. There is NO guarantee for multi-year support.
5. Required documentation (post-event evaluation report) must be submitted within 60 days of the event's completion, including a detailed reconciliation to budget with receipts.
6. Events generating overnight stays are preferred.
7. Events must be open to the general public. For those events charging admission, it is assumed that within five (5) years the event would become self-sustaining.
8. Events cannot promote any specific candidate, political party or platform.
9. Applicant must agree to allow the Franklin TDA access to and use of photos for advertising purposes.
10. Franklin TDA will not be held responsible for any issues resulting from the activities of the event/project.
11. Applications MUST include a detailed budget and a narrative regarding the project.
12. The Applicant understands that funding is subject to approval and availability of funds.
13. The Applicant recognizes with any contribution made by Franklin TDA, the applicant agrees to use the TDA logo ("Experience Franklin") and tag line in all media (Print, Social, Radio, Television).

Narrative for the Project

Please describe your project, include the following paragraph headings and answer the following questions:

- ☐ The event or purchase – what are you proposing to do?
- ☐ How Many Out-of-Town Visitors (Who Stay Overnight) will your Event attract? If purchase, how is tourism enhanced?
- ☐ Marketing – how will you market the project to attract visitors and overnight stays (be specific)? Has any marketing been done for the event prior to approaching the TDA for funding? If so, what and where?
- ☐ Tourism Enhancement – how does the project enhance tourism in the Town of Franklin?
- ☐ Measurements – what tools will you use to measure the effectiveness / success of the project? (example: Economic impact, attendance, travelers from over 50 miles)
- ☐ Improvements – if you have done it before, what are you going to do to make it better?
- ☐ Net Cash Flow – how will you put to use any net cash flow generated by project? Is the event meant to be a fundraiser? Or will the money be re-invested in your next event?

Project Budget

Insert or delete lines / columns in the table as needed and round to the nearest dollar.

	Current Year Budget	Prior Year Actual (if appropriate)
Sources of Cash:		
Your organization		
Town of Franklin TDA		
Sponsorships		
Booth fees		
Entry / other fees		
Sales		
Other - specify		
Total Sources of Cash		
Uses of Cash:		
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits		
Contracted services		
Cost of merchandise sold		
Rental of facilities (e.g. sanitation)		
Rental of equipment (detailed breakdown)		
Expendable supplies		
Printing		
Print media		
Radio media		
Other advertising -- specify (digital marketing)		
Other expenses - specify		
Total Uses of Cash		
Net Cash Flow	**0**	**0**

Certification/Signature

The undersigned hereby certifies:

- I understand that a brief presentation of the grant proposal by the applicant or their designee is required as part of the review process.
- Grant acceptance and funding amount are entirely at the discretion of the Franklin Tourism Development Authority.
- I understand that the TDA encourages the use of environmentally conscious practices as part of all events and I will make efforts to operate the event in such a manner.
- I understand that a post-event report will be required and should illustrate the number of visitors, locations of where visitors attended from, and any other pertinent information such as event surveys or general feedback.
- I understand that I am required to acknowledge the contribution made by Franklin TDA by using the TDA logo and tag line "Experience Franklin" in all media and promotional materials.
- I have reviewed the attached grant application from the Franklin Tourism Development Authority. I understand the grant funding requirements stated therein. I acknowledge that information contained in this application and any attachments are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I realize that the TDA will rely upon those representations in their evaluation and consideration of the attached grant.

Signature: _____
(Authorized Representative)

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: November 9, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5-B

Department/Agency: TDA Subcommittee

Subject Matter: TDA Subcommittee Report

TDA Subcommittee Member Colin McGinnis sent out the list of the priority initiatives on October 14, 2026. He asked TDA members to select an area of interest. The TDA subcommittee met on October 28, 2026 and information from the meeting is include on the packet.

Suggested Motion: Received for information and discussion.

Attachments: Yes _X_ No ___

Action Taken: _____

Priority Initiatives

Infrastructure

District Banners

Assigned: Rob, Daniel, Heather C

- Identify names for each district.
- Determine banner specifications, including size, style, color scheme, font, design, and mounting hardware.
- Determine the quantity required for each district.
- Identify potential vendors, request samples, and obtain pricing and project timelines.
- Develop a preliminary budget.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Murals

Assigned: Heather D, Morgan, Hannah

- Identify potential mural locations.
- Confirm property owners' willingness to participate.
- Determine mural sizes and design concepts.
- Identify local artists for consideration.
- Obtain and negotiate cost estimates for each mural.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Welcome Signage

Assigned: Hannah, Steve

- Identify and confirm locations for "Welcome to Franklin" signage.
- Develop design concepts and secure necessary approvals.
- Determine costs for materials and installation.
- Establish a project timeline following approval.

- Prioritize installation locations.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Event Administration

Event Funding Process

Assigned: Colin

- Develop the event funding request timeline for 2027.
- Create a communication plan.
- Finalize expectations and procedures for:
    - Funding approvals
    - Post-event reporting
    - Communication with requestors
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Event Calendar

Assigned: Guy, Colin, Robbie

- Define the structure and format of the calendar.
- Develop a process for updating and maintaining the calendar.
- Determine ownership and responsibility for coordinating with partner organizations to ensure a comprehensive community calendar.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Wayfinding Kiosks

Assigned: Guy, Colin, Robbie

- Identify appropriate kiosk locations.
- Determine the information to be displayed.
- Establish responsibility for ongoing management and maintenance.
- Determine installation requirements and considerations.

- Research potential solutions and vendors.
- Develop a preliminary budget.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Events

TDA Signature Event

Assigned: Rob, Morgan, Guy, Heather C

- Determine the event theme and overall vision.
- Propose potential dates and timing options.
- Identify an event manager or lead coordinator.
- Develop a comprehensive event plan, including vendors, exhibits, booths, entertainment, and logistics.
- Evaluate whether the event should serve as a fundraiser for a community initiative, such as Main Street revitalization.
- Develop a preliminary budget.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Collaboration

TDC Cross-Functional Meetings

Assigned: Tim

- Define the structure and purpose of the meetings.
- Determine meeting frequency.
- Establish standard agenda items and discussion topics.
- Present recommendations to the TDA Board.

Project Plan Timeline

- Each group should complete its project plan and submit it to the subcommittee for review no later than **November 23.**

Budget Development

- Budget planning will be a discussion item at the **December TDA meeting.**
- It is imperative that all project plans are completed by **November 23** to support the budget development process and facilitate informed discussion.

Town Council Updates

- Quarterly progress updates will be provided to the Town Council outlining the status of each initiative and the accomplishments of the respective working groups.