

Franklin Tourism Development Authority

Agenda

May 11, 2026

5:30 p.m.

- 1.) **Call to Order – Tim Crabtree, Chairman**
- 2.) **Approval of the April 13, 2026 regular meeting minutes** **Pages 2 – 23**
- 3.) **Financial Reports – ending March 31, 2026** **Pages 24 - 27**
- 4.) **New Business**
 - A.) **Vote on Application – Taste of Scotland Society**
Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival – June 19 – 21, 2026
Requested Amount - \$3,000 **Pages 28 – 32**
 - B.) **Vote on Application – Jodi House Moses**
Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival – May 23, 2026
Requested Amount - \$3,500 **Pages 33 - 39**
- 5.) **Items from the Board**
 - A.) **Marketing Report – Stewart Communications** **Page 40**
 - B.) **Report from TDA Subcommittee** **Pages 41 - 46**
 - C.) **TDA Terms ending June 30, 2026** **Page 47**
- 6.) **Announcements:**
 - A.) **The next regularly scheduled TDA meeting is Monday, June 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.**
- 7.) **Adjourn**



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 2

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Minutes from April 13, 2026 regular meeting

Suggested Motion: If favorable – accept the minutes from the April 13, 2026 regular meeting as presented.

Attachments: Yes X No

Action Taken: _____

TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOURISM DEVELOPEMNT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

April 13 2026

Present: Members: Chair Tim Crabtree, Town Manager Amie Owens, Kevin Covell, Heather Childress Custer, Heather Dombroskie, Guy Gooder, Hannah Edwards, Angela Martin, Colin McGinnis, and Rob Reale.

Others present: Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk
Shelby Powell, The Franklin Press
Daryna Thiemann, Macon Sense
Robbie Tompa, Councilman
Pam Bowen, Pregnancy Care Center
Jodi Moses, Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival

1. **Call to Order- Chair Tim Crabtree**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. **Approval of the March 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Member Hannah Edwards made a motion, seconded by Member Colin McGinnis to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2026 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10 -0.

3. **Financial Reports- ending February 28, 2026**

Town Manager Amie Owens presented the Financial Report through the end of February 2026. She noted that there was \$2,069.06 payment for January that was made in February. The total collection for January was \$10,838.80 (second highest January on record) and the total collections for February were \$10,042.76 (highest February on record). Total expenses thus far \$ \$101,797.87 leaving a balance of \$78,212.13 and \$174,964.66 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 February 28, 2026 as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10 -0.

4. **New Business**

A.) **Post-Event Report – Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival**

The Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival dropped of a notebook that contained their event articles, advertisements and programs for TDA members to view.

B.) **Application for Consideration – Taste of Scotland Society – Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival - June 19-21, 2026 – Requested Amount \$3,000**

The Taste of Scotland Society submitted an application for funding for \$3,000 for their 27th Annual Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival that will be held on June 19-21. Last year the TDA funded \$1,500 for the event. This item will be voted on at the May meeting.

C.) **Application for Consideration – Jodi House Moses – Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival - May 23, 2026 – Requested Amount \$3,500**

Jodi Moses, Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival CEO, presented the application for funding for their event on May 23, 2026. The requested amount is \$3,500. The funds will be used for advertising, printing and promotional outreach. They currently have 67 local vendors plus 7 food trucks. There will be live bluegrass

performances throughout the day. Ms. Moses noted that they did receive TDC support for their event. This item will be voted on at the May meeting.

D.) Vote on Application – The Special Liberty Project Healing Hope Retreat for Military Widows – Date not posted – Requested amount - \$7,500

Jessica Merritt, Executive Director of The Special Liberty Project, presented the application at the March meeting. There was discussion about concerns on the request increase over last year. Several members expressed their support for the foundation’s message/mission, but there were questions about the event’s impact on local tourism.

Member Guy Gooder made a motion, seconded by Member Colin McGinnis to fund \$2,000 for the Special Liberty Project Healing Hope Retreat for Military Widows. Vote 2-8, Motion did not carry.

No further motion was made, and the request was dismissed for lack of motion.

E.) Vote on Application – Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Center Sweet Carolina Music Festival- May 2, 2026 – Requested amount \$8,000

Kellie Burns and Pam Bowen presented the application at the March meeting. Pam Bowen was in attendance and stated that they had currently sold 67 tickets. She also said they currently have 9 food truck vendors and 6 vendor tents for the event. The request for funding increase over last year’s request is due to inflation.

Member Heather Childress Custer made a motion, seconded by Member Kevin Covell to fund \$4,000 for the Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Center Sweet Carolina Musica Festival Fundraiser. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10-0.

5. **Items from the Board**

A.) Monthly Marketing Report- Stewart Communications

Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications, submitted the monthly marketing report to TDA members via email (See Exhibit A). Chair Tim Crabtree read over the report highlights.

B.) Proposed River Stewardship Charter – Member Angela Martin

Member Angela Martin introduced her River Stewardship Charter. She highlighted ideas of preservation control, use of native plants, great for tourism and will attract visitors to Franklin, and would designate Franklin as an ecological appreciative municipality.

Chair Tim Crabtree would like the members to read over the proposed charter and to help with the development before taking it to Town Council.

Town Manager Amie Owens noted the proposed charter would require legal review by the Town’s attorney.

There was additional discussion about the proposed charter and potential actions that could be taken.

C.) Proposed Budget for FY 2026/2027

Town Manager Owens stated the TDA sub-committee had met, and the recommendation is to increase the budget from \$180,000 to \$225,000. The \$45,000 increase would allow for planning of future/larger projects and accounts for the increase in advertising. If the TDA Board was interested in bigger capital purchases they

could save for 2-3 years and then make those purchases. There was also discussion on potential infrastructure projects that would be sponsored by the TDA.

There was additional discussion on the partnership with Stewart Communications. The TDA Board will continue to work with Stewart Communications for FY 2026/2027. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be looked at in FY 2026/2027. Town Manager Owens noted that it was best practice to put out an RFP every three (3) years. Member Guy Gooder would like to have it added to the TDA bylaws that an RFP for marketing will be done every three (3) years.

Member Angela Martin made a motion, seconded by Member Guy Gooder to approve the \$225,000 budget for the TDA, as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10-0.

D.) TDA Subcommittee Recap

Member Colin McGinnis gave a recap of the recent TDA subcommittee meeting.

- 1) There was discussion about the first impression of the Town (plants, murals, etc.)
- 2) There was discussion on the budget for FY 2026/2027
 - New applications for projects/events
 - Addition of mural (Experience Franklin logo) with a QR code.
- 3) There was discussion on syncing up with Town's current project (Main Street Transformation project).

The next meeting will be on April 27th.

6. Announcements

A.) The next regular scheduled TDA meeting will be held on Monday, May 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

7. Adjourn

Member Guy Gooder made a motion, seconded by Member Hannah Edwards to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 10-0.

Timothy Crabtree, Chairperson

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk

Month	FY 2010-2011	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
July	\$14,609.25	\$13,523.75	\$12,199.87	\$12,074.19	\$12,933.83	\$14,781.99	\$16,490.96	\$16,483.17	\$15,894.85
August	\$10,802.81	\$9,436.83	\$10,574.60	\$10,142.03	\$11,288.22	\$10,743.41	\$12,801.13	\$15,268.63	\$12,353.78
September	\$9,825.43	\$8,981.30	\$11,900.99	\$9,362.51	\$9,523.55	\$10,624.11	\$11,754.89	\$14,815.74	\$14,636.43
October	\$13,997.93	\$13,580.58	\$13,809.73	\$13,204.00	\$13,826.66	\$15,955.17	\$19,377.43	\$18,874.81	\$18,173.60
November	\$5,868.77	\$5,767.06	\$6,100.84	\$6,611.03	\$6,311.47	\$7,439.21	\$8,790.32	\$9,873.21	\$13,471.11
December	\$4,501.02	\$4,718.42	\$4,746.80	\$5,173.04	\$5,500.33	\$6,574.55	\$6,879.39	\$8,375.77	\$7,878.56
January	\$4,267.06	\$3,884.80	\$3,742.12	\$4,299.16	\$4,398.08	\$5,152.86	\$6,243.12	\$5,137.19	\$3,999.90
February	\$4,902.24	\$4,085.65	\$4,746.80	\$4,471.66	\$4,919.27	\$5,152.04	\$4,546.77	\$5,404.38	\$6,630.27
March	\$5,824.17	\$5,424.68	\$7,111.54	\$7,875.74	\$6,695.48	\$7,336.92	\$7,233.81	\$8,649.55	\$10,302.99
April	\$7,615.57	\$6,997.08	\$7,814.07	\$7,796.15	\$9,098.44	\$10,186.71	\$11,146.26	\$11,234.35	\$10,830.29
May	\$9,638.25	\$9,306.44	\$10,079.92	\$9,554.36	\$11,368.53	\$11,844.69	\$12,413.42	\$12,024.60	\$14,666.32
June	\$9,781.24	\$9,738.55	\$9,166.06	\$9,084.51	\$11,097.29	\$11,603.51	\$12,131.45	\$12,313.74	\$14,915.56
Totals:	\$101,633.74	\$95,445.14	\$101,993.34	\$99,648.38	\$106,961.15	\$117,395.17	\$129,808.95	\$138,455.14	\$143,753.66
Month	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	Comments	10 year average
July	\$17,886.04	\$10,041.66	\$19,844.89	\$19,505.33	\$20,240.73	\$16,996.76	\$ 16,844.68	Above Avg: below previous 4 yrs	\$16,463.66
August	\$14,413.61	\$12,113.26	\$14,807.56	\$19,036.53	\$13,498.54	\$14,874.97	\$ 17,023.38	2nd highest; above average	\$13,745.42
September	\$12,866.27	\$11,026.88	\$15,164.14	\$17,939.80	\$15,579.41	\$15,903.02	\$ 16,927.28	2nd highest; above average	\$13,621.29
October	\$19,422.94	\$16,212.69	\$18,302.14	\$25,726.85	\$18,956.17	\$23,391.35	\$ 19,631.27	3rd highest; above average	\$18,929.07
November	\$10,692.08	\$9,202.11	\$14,285.57	\$14,836.36	\$16,668.76	\$15,022.50	\$ 18,458.96	Includes late payment from Oct - \$4,261.56; above average	\$11,508.43
December	\$7,013.79	\$6,079.70	\$11,423.43	\$11,503.51	\$12,879.95	\$10,102.09	\$ 12,027.75	2nd highest; above average	\$8,564.64
January	\$6,966.05	\$6,514.55	\$8,193.43	\$10,562.53	\$6,694.79	\$11,129.64	\$ 10,838.80	2nd highest; above average - Jan payment made in Feb added back	\$6,817.47
February	\$6,479.11	\$6,328.60	\$8,862.11	\$13,903.25	\$7,764.10	\$8,474.67	\$ 10,042.76	Highest on Record	\$6,678.34
March	\$4,085.98	\$9,189.78	\$13,973.25	\$13,903.25	\$10,640.82	\$15,940.74			\$9,813.87
April	\$707.20	\$14,346.44	\$16,311.64	\$14,428.14	\$14,456.82	\$15,576.98			\$11,665.75
May	\$4,265.21	\$16,649.89	\$14,899.46	\$19,148.76	\$14,634.68	\$14,698.74			\$13,328.57
June	\$11,137.06	\$16,794.03	\$19,839.83	\$16,077.48	\$19,806.29	\$18,609.36			\$14,938.69
Totals:	\$115,935.34	\$134,499.59	\$175,907.45	\$191,568.98	\$171,821.06	\$180,720.82	\$121,794.88		

Exhibit A

TDA BUDGET ORDINANCE FY 2025-2026

	Total Budgeted	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Balance
Advertising & Marketing	\$ 130,000.00	\$ 87,112.87	\$ -	\$ 42,887.13
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$ 4,200.00			
Stewart Communications - marketing and advertising	\$82,912.87		\$46,087.13	
Audit & Bond	\$ 3,650.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 2,775.00	\$ 2,775.00
Martin Starnes - audit Quarterly payment	\$	\$ 875.00	\$ 2,425.00	
Bond for Finance Officer - annual payment			\$ 350.00	
Festivals & Events	\$ 31,125.00	\$13,800.00		\$17,325.00
Tribal Vibes Promotions - Annual Come Together Festival	\$ 1,000.00			
Macon County Farmers Market	\$ 5,000.00			
Outdoor 76 - The Naturalist 50/100K	\$ 1,600.00			
Crabtree Family Ent - Ruby Drop	\$ 4,000.00			
Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council	\$ 1,200.00			
Macon County Transit - Hiker Route	\$ 1,000.00			
Undesignated/Miscellaneous	\$15,225.00	\$0.00		\$15,225.00
Totals:	\$ 180,000.00	\$101,787.87	\$2,775.00	\$78,212.13
Tim Crabtree, Chair				
Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk				

Exhibit
A

Room Occupancy Tax Report	
2/28/2026	
FY 2025/2026 Budget	\$180,000.00
7/31/2025	\$16,844.68
8/31/2025	\$17,023.38
9/30/2025	\$16,927.28
10/31/2025	\$19,631.27
11/30/2025	\$18,458.96
12/31/2025	\$12,027.75
1/31/2026	\$10,838.80
2/28/2026	\$10,042.76
3/31/2026	
4/30/2026	
5/31/2026	
6/30/2026	
Net Collections:	\$121,794.88
Budgeted Expenses:	
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$800.00
Macon County Farmer's Market	\$5,000.00
Tribal Vibes Promotions	\$1,000.00
Stewart Communications	\$11,330.64
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$11,932.45
Outdoor 76 - The Naturalist	\$1,600.00
Stewart Communications	\$9,615.91
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$800.00
Stewart Communications	\$13,688.61
Crabtree Family Ent - Ruby Drop	\$4,000.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$6,229.16
Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA - audit	\$875.00
Stewart Communications	\$15,362.03
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$600.00
Stewart Communications	\$7,458.03
Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council	\$1,200.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Macon County Transit - Hiker Route	\$1,000.00
Stewart Communications	\$7,296.04
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 101,787.87
Collections (minus) - Expenses	\$20,007.01
TDA FUND BALANCE:	\$174,964.66

Exhibit A

Marketing report

1 message

Morgan Stewart <morgan@stewartcomm.com>

Mon, Apr 13, 2026 at 3:02 PM

To: Timothy Crabtree <timmycrab@hotmail.com>, Heather Dombroskie <srqheather@yahoo.com>, Heather Custer <custerhc@appstate.edu>, Amie Owens <aowens@franklinnc.com>, Brooke and Rob Reale <kitchensinkinc.72@gmail.com>, Kevin Covell <kmcovell@gmail.com>, Guy Gooder <gooderfranklin@gmail.com>, Yonder Community Market <yondernc@gmail.com>, Colin McGinnis <cmcginnis@energyzerosolutions.com>, angela <blueyodel32@gmail.com>
Cc: Robbie Tompa <robbie@kavodfamily.org>, Nicole Bradley <nbradley@franklinnc.com>, Stacy Guffey <stacyjguffey@gmail.com>

Unfortunately, I won't make the TDA meeting tonight, so here is my report. Some key points:

- Social Media: paid and organic posts viewed over 712.7K times, by 334.8K viewers.
 - Followers: 3,217 March → 4,130 April
- Top post was the Sweet Carolina Music Festival promotion. It was paid
- Top organic post was Pickin' in the Square promotion
- Website achieved over 21,000 clicks (more than 2x our goal of 10K).
 - Top pages for views in order:
 - home page followed by
 - Sweet Carolina festival,
 - Hiker AT Days and
 - the overall Events Calendar.
 - Top engagement pages in order:
 - Places to Stay,
 - Things to Do,
 - Annual Events,
 - Things to Do page 2
- Google Search
 - Clicks: 1.13K Feb. → 1.81K March
 - Impressions: 180K Feb. → 205K March
- E-Mail Campaign
 - March 10 & 13
 - Open rate: 24% (industry average: 25.9%)
 - Click rate: 8% (Industry average: 1.4%)
 - April 3 & 5
 - Open rate: 21.4% (industry average: 25.9%)
 - Click rate: 7.2% (Industry average: 1.4%)
- Media relations
 - Stories/publication
 - "20 US Destinations Where Real Gemstones Await" Worthy Magazine
 - Nikwasi Mound – *Asheville Citizen Times*, *Blue Ridge Now*, *Knoxville Sentinel News*
 - "15 Southern Roadside Restaurants Worth Pulling Over For" – Southern Living Magazine, Athens Banner Herald, Augusta Chronicle

Social Media Strategy Notes

- 11 Social Media posts

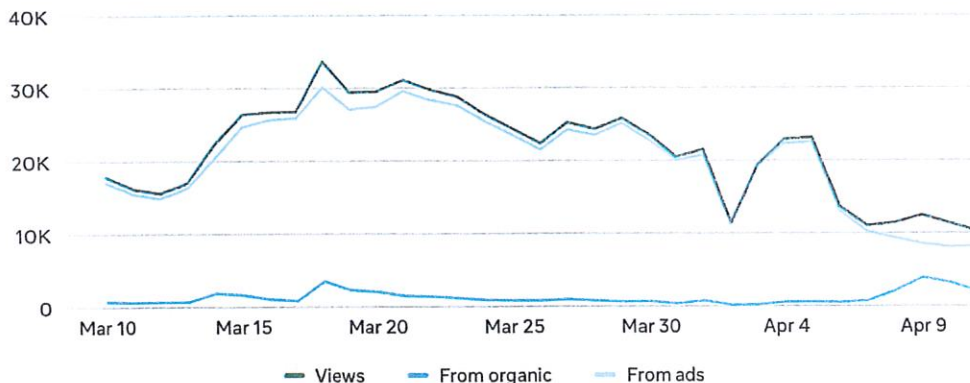
- 3 Paid ads

- \$1,822 Total Ad Spend During Time Period

- Facebook - 4,130 followers (913 new followers this month)

- Instagram - 1,089 followers (114 new followers, 9.1K Views, 259 Interactions - Over 81% are a new audience)

Performance Overview (Facebook)



Views breakdown

Mar 10 - Apr 11

Total

712,660 ↑ 150.9%

From organic

41,329 ↑ 86.5%

From ads

671,331 ↑ 156.3%

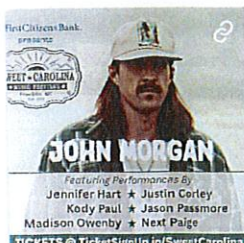
Viewers

334,185 ↑ 114.7%

Top content by views

Boost content

See all content



Country fans...Get ready for t...

Fri Mar 13, 1:56pm

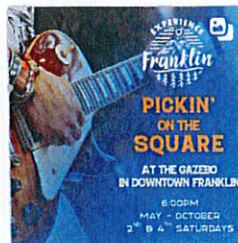
175.4K 357
37 61



AT Hikers - Rest, regroup, restock,...

Sun Mar 15, 6:00pm

94.1K 341
15 23



Saturday nights in Franklin = live music ...

Wed Apr 8, 4:15pm

7.9K 82
2 18



GIVEAWAY TIME! We're...

Wed Mar 18, 3:43pm

5.5K 103
130 18



Hey, we are honored Southern Living chos...

Fri Apr 10, 11:25am


2.1K 36
2 4

Top Content Breakdown (Facebook or Instagram)

Top Performing Post (FB & IG)

Paid

Total since March 13: 172.8K Views

 **Experience Franklin NC**
Published by Morgan Stewart · March 13 at 1:56 PM · 🌐

🎸🎵 Country fans...Get ready for the best, up-and-coming mountain town music festival 🗓️
May 2 🗓️ Mark your calendar and buy your tickets...

🎸 Featuring #1 hitmaker John Morgan, joined by Jennifer Hart, Justin Corley, Kody Paul, Jason Passmore, Madison Owenby, and Next Paige!

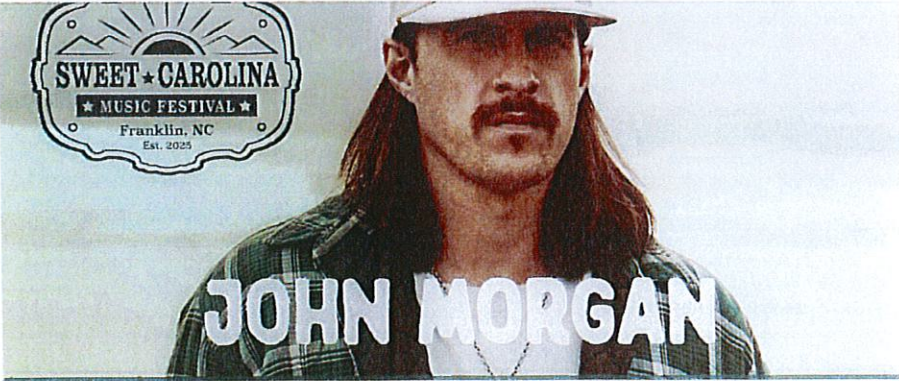
🌟 What Else to Expect:

- ✅ Food trucks & craft vendors serving up delicious eats and local goods
- ✅ Family-friendly activities
- ✅ Unforgettable night of country music under the North Carolina sky

This is one event you don't want to miss! 🗓️ Gather your friends, bring your boots, and join us for an evening of great music and good times in beautiful Franklin, NC.

🙌 Special thanks to our local sponsors: First Citizens Bank, Vignette Realty, Angel Medical, 828Vibes, All Service Heating & Air, Banks Aerospace, Discover Church, Nantahala Flooring & Paint Home Center, Paige Musical Products LLC, Watson Contracting, Young Brothers, and the Tourism Development Authority.

[John Morgan](#) [Experience Franklin NC](#) [Sweet Carolina Music Festival](#) [Visit Smokies](#)
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[#smokymountainvacation](#) [#appalachianmountains](#) [#appalachiantrail](#) [#exploringwnc](#)
[#828vibes](#) [#visit Smokies](#) [#northcarolinaoutdoors](#) [#WNCsmokies](#) [#visitnc](#)
[#visitnorthcarolina](#) [#maconcountync](#) [#franklinnc](#) [#northcarolinabound](#) [#828isgreat](#)
[#justincorley](#) [Jennifer Hart](#) [#kodypaul](#) [Madison Owenby](#) [#nextpaige](#)



★ *Featuring Performances By*
Jennifer Hart ★ **Justin Corley**

EXPERIENCEFRANKLINNC.COM
Sweet Carolina Music Festival

[Learn more](#)

[See insights and ads](#) [Boost again](#)

👍 357 🗨️ 37 ➦ 61 🌐 📺

Total since March 13: 92.3K Views



Experience Franklin NC

Published by Morgan Stewart · March 15 at 6:00 PM · 🌐

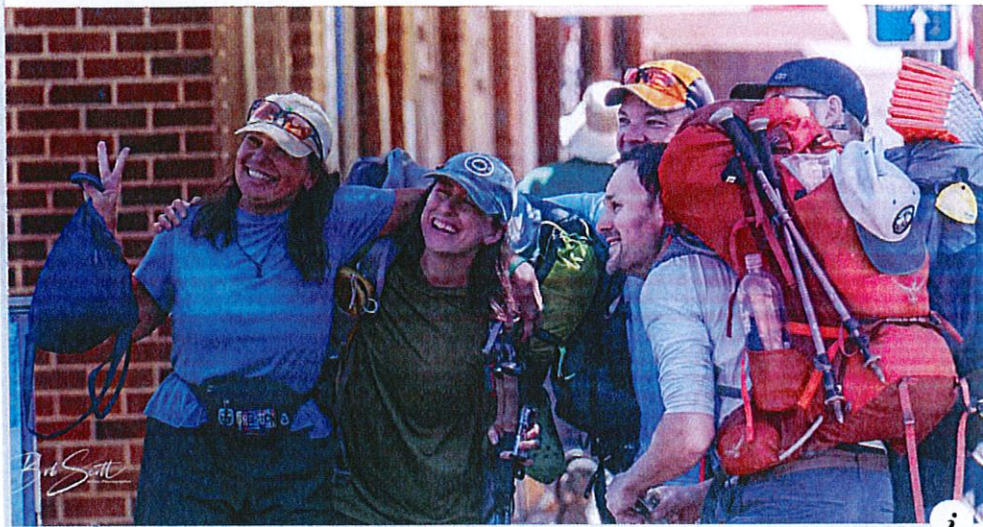
👉 AT Hikers - Rest, regroup, restock, repair. 🚐 FREE shuttles to/from Franklin, NC #AT110 Winding Stair & Rock Gap.

👉 Check in with your loved ones, 🍔🍹 grab a hot meal and cold brew.

👉 As the first Appalachian Trail Community we welcome thru-hikers in so many ways! At 110 miles on the AT, we are an affordable, authentic mountain town. Click the link to see just some of the ways we welcome and celebrate all the brave, intrepid souls on the AT.

[Experience Franklin NC Visit Smokies](#)

#trailmagic #hikerlife #thruhiking #smokymountains #nantahalahiking #SmokyMountains #appalachianmountains #appalachiantrail #exploringwnc #WNCsmokies #VisitNC #visitnorthcarolina #maconcountync #franklinnc #experiencefranklinnc #franklinncchamber #northcarolinabound #visitfranklinnc #828isgreat #828vibes #blueridgebartramtrail



EXPERIENCEFRANKLINNC.COM

Appalachian Trail Days – Welcome Hikers!

[Learn more](#)

i Your last request to boost this post was approved
To see how your post is performing, select See insights and ads.

[See insights and ads](#)

[Boost again](#)

345

15 comments 23 shares

Like

Comment

Share

View more comments



Jon Fuller

I walked the width of the Appalachian trail twice.

4w [Haha](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#)

29

Total since March 13: 82.9K Views



Experience Franklin NC

Published by D.M. Dupuis · March 18 at 3:44 PM · 🌐

🎉 ✨ GIVEAWAY TIME! ✨ 🎉

We're spreading some love with a Downtown Franklin, NC Gift Card Sweepstakes! 🎁💖

🏆 Prizes:

🥇 1st Place: \$50 in gift cards (One Winner)

🥈 2nd Place: \$25 in gift cards (Two Winners)

📖 How to Enter:

1 Follow us

2 Comment on this reel

3 Tag THREE friends 🙌🙌🙌

📅 Enter now through April 17 — don't miss your chance to shop, dine, and explore all your favorite downtown spots!

Winners will be randomly selected after the Sweepstakes close.

🌟 Support local. Win local. Love Franklin. 🌟

[#FranklinNC](#) [#ShopLocal](#) [#DowntownFranklin](#) [#GiveawayTime](#) [#SupportLocal](#) [#WNCEvents](#)



[See insights and ads](#)

[Boost reel](#)

👍❤️ 103

130 comments 18 shares 5.5K views

Top Performing Post (FB)
Organic
Total since April 8 - 7.9K Views



Experience Franklin NC is in Franklin, NC.
Published by D.M. Dupuis · April 8 at 4:15 PM

- 🎸 Saturday nights in Franklin = live music on the Square
 - 📅 May–November
 - 📅 2nd & 4th Saturdays
 - 🕒 6–8 PM
- Free. Fun. Downtown vibes ✨

<https://experiencefranklinnc.com/.../pickin-on-the.../>

#828isgreat #visitfranklinnc #northcarolinabound #franklinncchamber
#experiencefranklinnc #franklinnc #maconcountync #visitnorthcarolina #VisitNC
#WNCsmokies #VisitSmokies #828vibes #exploringwnc #SmokyMountains #freemusic
#pickinonthesquarefranklin #pickinonthesquare




See insights and ads

Boost post

👍 82 💬 2 ↻ 18



Paid Content Breakdown (Facebook)

Title	Status	Results	Cost per result	Amount spent	Views	Viewers
 <p>Post: "Country fans... Get ready for the... Ad • Get website visitors Created by Morgan Stewart</p> <p>Boost again</p>	Active	2,673 Landing Page Views	\$0.22 Per Landing Page View	\$577.30 spent over 30 days	172,775	92,140
 <p>Post: "AT Hikers - Rest, regroup, restock, ... Ad • Get website visitors Created by Morgan Stewart</p> <p>Boost again</p>	Active	2,075 Landing Page Views	\$0.27 Per Landing Page View	\$553.66 spent over 28 days	92,354	52,568
 <p>Promoting website: www.fb.com/61563576... Ad • Get more Page visits and followers Created by D.M. Dupuis</p> <p>Boost again</p>	Completed	990 Facebook Page visits	\$0.42 Per Facebook Page visit	\$419.20 spent over 15 days	56,977	22,858
 <p>Promoting website: www.fb.com/61563576... Ad • Get more Page visits and followers Created by Morgan Stewart</p> <p>Boost again</p>	Active	508 Facebook Page visits	\$0.54 Per Facebook Page visit	\$272.18 spent over 10 days	25,956	13,307

Organic Content Breakdown (Facebook & Instagram)

Title	Boost	Views	Reach	Likes and reactions	Link clicks	3-second views
Photo • Experience Franklin NC	Boost	7,901	5,528	82	30	0
Reel • Experience Franklin NC	Boost	5,502	4,724	103	--	1,633
Experience Franklin NC	Boost	2,142	1,440	36	54	0
Experience Franklin NC	Boost	1,082	634	20	7	0
Experience Franklin NC	Boost	651	412	15	12	0
Carousel • experiencefranklinnc	Boost	617	322	13	--	--
Experience Franklin NC	Boost	606	407	5	7	0
Photo • experiencefranklinnc	Boost	586	430	12	--	--
Story • experiencefranklinnc	Boost	113	--	7	--	--

Website Performance March 10 - April 12, 2026

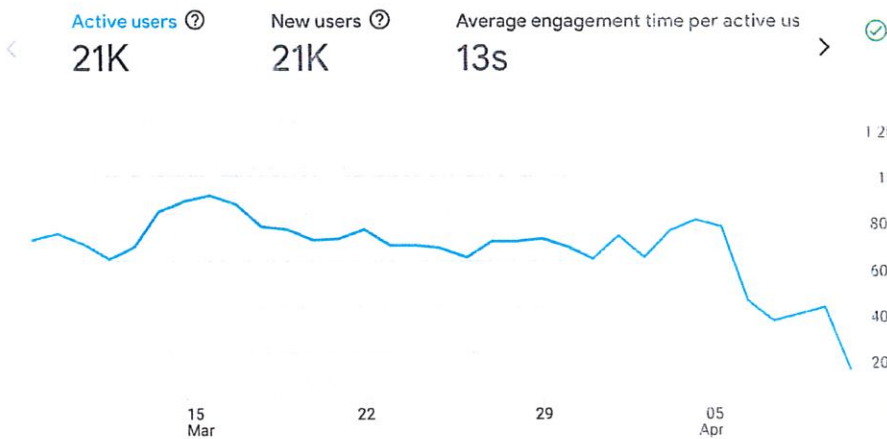
Website Visitors:

- More than 21,400 users
- More than 36,300 page views (image on next page)

All Users Add comparison +

Custom Mar 9 - Apr 10, 2026

Reports snapshot



ACTIVE USERS IN LAST 30 MINUTES

5

ACTIVE USERS PER MINUTE

TOP COUNTRIES

Country	Active Users
United States	3
Singapore	2

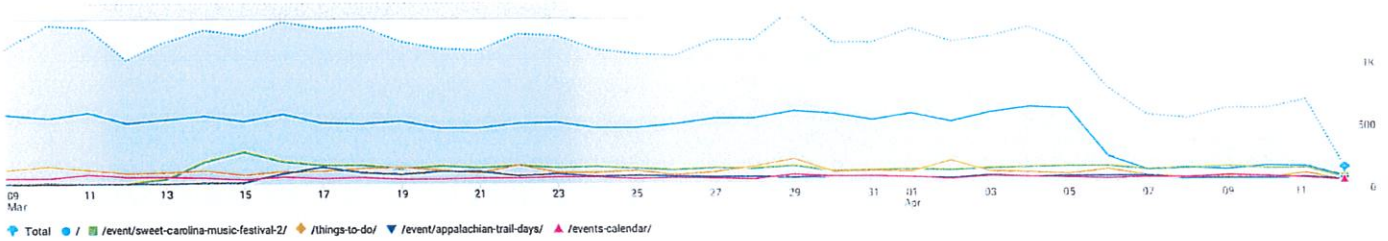
[View realtime](#) →

Top Pages for views

- Home page - 15,116
- Sweet Carolina - 3,645
- Hiker AT Days - 1,453
- Events calendar - 1,298

Top Pages for engagement

- Places to Stay - 41s
- Things to Do - 42s
- Annual events - 35s
- Things to do (page 2) - 26s



Page path and screen class	Views	Active users	Views per active user	Average engagement time per active user	Event count	Key events	Total revenue
Total	36,313 100% of total	21,416 100% of total	1.70 Avg 0%	13s Avg 0%	94,412 100% of total	0.00	\$0.00
1 /	15,116 (41.63%)	11,886 (55.5%)	1.27	1s	41,834 (44.31%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
2 /event/sweet-carolina-music-festival-2/	3,645 (10.04%)	2,995 (13.98%)	1.22	2s	10,213 (10.82%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
3 /things-to-do/	3,021 (8.32%)	1,200 (5.6%)	2.52	42s	6,155 (6.52%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
4 /event/appalachian-trail-days/	1,453 (4%)	1,219 (5.69%)	1.19	4s	4,054 (4.29%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
5 /events-calendar/	1,298 (3.57%)	931 (4.35%)	1.39	17s	2,957 (3.13%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
6 /places-to-stay/	923 (2.54%)	332 (1.55%)	2.78	41s	1,925 (2.04%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
7 /food-and-drink/	673 (1.85%)	396 (1.85%)	1.70	20s	1,571 (1.66%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
8 /things-to-do/page/2/	297 (0.82%)	210 (0.98%)	1.41	26s	664 (0.7%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
9 /events-calendar/category/annual-events-and-festivals/	293 (0.81%)	242 (1.13%)	1.21	35s	569 (0.6%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)
10 /early-spring-blooms-in-the-great-smoky-mountains-	270 (0.74%)	228 (1.06%)	1.18	24s	877 (0.93%)	0.00 (-)	\$0.00 (-)

Google Search Performance

Google Search Console

Your March performance
on Google Search



experiencefranklinnc.com

1.81K

Clicks (web)

205K

Impressions (web)

192

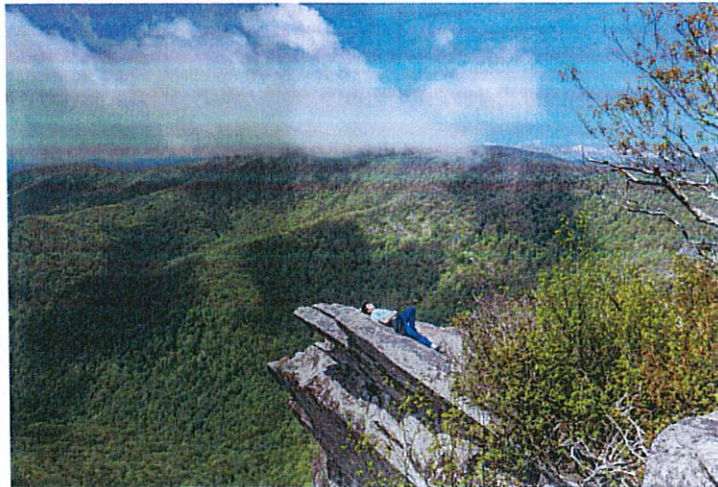
Pages with
first impressions
(estimated)

Email Newsletter Performance

March 10 & 13	Open Rate	Click Rate
ExperienceFranklin	24%	8%
Industry Average	25.9%	1.4%



6 (5.8%)



4 (3.8%)

7 (6.7%)

Spring Break, Smoky Mountain Style

Spring is waking up in the Smoky Mountains—and Franklin is ready for adventure. Think waterfall hikes, mountain views, paddling on scenic rivers, and family-friendly fun around every corner. Planning an outdoor escape? Or a laid-back small-town getaway? Whatever your Spring Break style may be, Franklin is full of fresh air and unforgettable moments for everyone.

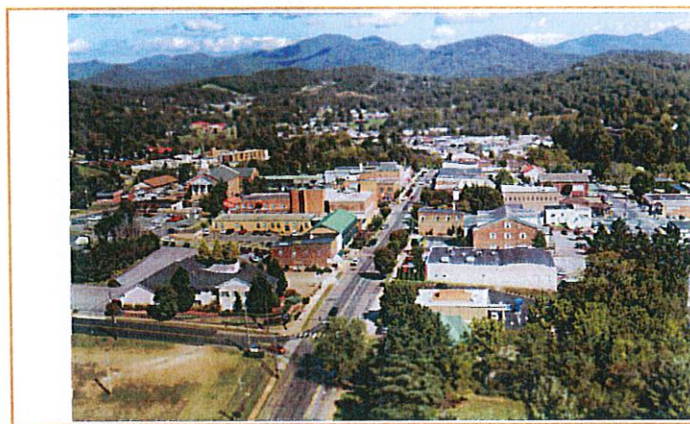
30 (28.8%)

[Read more...](#)

April 3 & 5	Open Rate	Click Rate
ExperienceFranklin	21.4%	7.2%
Industry Average	25.9%	1.4%



14 (11.3%)



10 (8.1%)

12 (9.7%)

The Perfect April Day Itinerary

Spring has arrived in Franklin. The surrounding Great Smoky Mountains are alive with fresh color, flowing waterfalls and crisp mountain air. Now is the time to get outside and soak up the beauty of the season. Ready to plan your visit? Take a look at our perfect April day itinerary and start

mapping out your next great escape.

30 (24.2%)

[Read more...](#)



16 (12.9%)

Mountain Birds



3 (2.4%)

Early Spring Blooms

Media Relations

Our partners at BMF pitched:

- Women's History Month and the Women's History Trail
- Sweet Carolina music fest
- AT Hikers celebration

Coverage

March 10, 2026

- **Worthy Magazine:** [20 U.S. Destinations Where Real Gemstones Awaits](#)

March 13, 2026

- **Asheville Citizen Times:** [Word from the Smokies: Ancient mound returns to Cherokee ownership](#)
- **Blue Ridge Now:** [Word from the Smokies: Ancient mound returns to Cherokee ownership](#)

March 21, 2026

- **Knoxville News Sentinel:** [Ancient Mound returns to Cherokee ownership after more than 200 years.](#)

March 28, 2026

- **Southern Living -** [15 Southern Roadside Restaurants Worth Pulling Over For](#) (Caffe REL)

April 1, 2026

- **Athens Banner Herald -** [15 Southern Roadside Restaurants Worth Pulling Over For](#) (Caffe REL)
- **Augusta Chronicle -** [15 Southern Roadside Restaurants Worth Pulling Over For](#) (Caffe REL)



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 3

Department/Agency: Financials

Subject Matter: March 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 March 31, 2026, as presented.

Attachments: Yes No

Action Taken: _____

Month	FY 2010-2011	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
July	\$14,609.25	\$13,523.75	\$12,199.87	\$12,074.19	\$12,933.83	\$14,781.99	\$16,490.96	\$16,483.17	\$15,894.85
August	\$10,802.81	\$9,436.83	\$10,574.60	\$10,142.03	\$11,288.22	\$10,743.41	\$12,801.13	\$15,268.63	\$12,353.78
September	\$9,825.43	\$8,981.30	\$11,900.99	\$9,362.51	\$9,523.55	\$10,624.11	\$11,754.89	\$14,815.74	\$14,636.43
October	\$13,997.93	\$13,580.58	\$13,809.73	\$13,204.00	\$13,826.66	\$15,955.17	\$19,377.43	\$18,874.81	\$18,173.60
November	\$5,868.77	\$5,767.06	\$6,100.84	\$6,611.03	\$6,311.47	\$7,439.21	\$8,790.32	\$9,873.21	\$13,471.11
December	\$4,501.02	\$4,718.42	\$4,746.80	\$5,173.04	\$5,500.33	\$6,574.55	\$6,879.39	\$8,375.77	\$7,878.56
January	\$4,267.06	\$3,884.80	\$3,742.12	\$4,299.16	\$4,398.08	\$5,152.86	\$6,243.12	\$5,137.19	\$3,999.90
February	\$4,902.24	\$4,085.65	\$4,746.80	\$4,471.66	\$4,919.27	\$5,152.04	\$4,546.77	\$5,404.38	\$6,630.27
March	\$5,824.17	\$5,424.68	\$7,111.54	\$7,875.74	\$6,695.48	\$7,336.92	\$7,233.81	\$8,649.55	\$10,302.99
April	\$7,615.57	\$6,997.08	\$7,814.07	\$7,796.15	\$9,098.44	\$10,186.71	\$11,146.26	\$11,234.35	\$10,830.29
May	\$9,638.25	\$9,306.44	\$10,079.92	\$9,554.36	\$11,368.53	\$11,844.69	\$12,413.42	\$12,024.60	\$14,666.32
June	\$9,781.24	\$9,738.55	\$9,166.06	\$9,084.51	\$11,097.29	\$11,603.51	\$12,131.45	\$12,313.74	\$14,915.56
Totals:	\$101,633.74	\$95,445.14	\$101,993.34	\$99,648.38	\$106,961.15	\$117,395.17	\$129,808.95	\$138,455.14	\$143,753.66
Month	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	Comments	10 year average
July	\$17,886.04	\$10,041.66	\$19,844.89	\$19,505.33	\$20,240.73	\$16,996.76	\$ 16,844.68	Above Avg; below previous 4 yrs	\$16,463.66
August	\$14,413.61	\$12,113.26	\$14,807.56	\$19,036.53	\$13,498.54	\$14,874.97	\$ 17,023.38	2nd highest; above average	\$13,745.42
September	\$12,866.27	\$11,026.88	\$15,164.14	\$17,939.80	\$15,579.41	\$15,903.02	\$ 16,927.28	2nd highest; above average	\$13,621.29
October	\$19,422.94	\$16,212.69	\$18,302.14	\$25,726.85	\$18,956.17	\$23,391.35	\$ 19,631.27	3rd highest; above average	\$18,929.07
November	\$10,692.08	\$9,202.11	\$14,285.57	\$14,836.36	\$16,668.76	\$15,022.50	\$ 18,458.96	Includes late payment from Oct - \$4,261.56; above average	\$11,508.43
December	\$7,013.79	\$6,079.70	\$11,423.43	\$11,503.51	\$12,879.95	\$10,102.09	\$ 12,027.75	2nd highest; above average	\$8,564.64
January	\$6,966.05	\$6,514.55	\$8,193.43	\$10,562.53	\$6,694.79	\$11,129.64	\$ 10,838.80	2nd highest; above average - Jan payment made in Feb added back	\$6,817.47
February	\$6,479.11	\$6,328.60	\$8,862.11	\$8,900.44	\$7,764.10	\$8,474.67	\$ 10,042.76	Highest on Record; 4th Highest on Record; above avg	\$6,678.34
March	\$4,085.98	\$9,189.78	\$13,973.25	\$13,903.25	\$10,640.82	\$15,940.74	\$ 11,414.88		\$9,813.87
April	\$707.20	\$14,346.44	\$16,311.64	\$14,428.14	\$14,456.82	\$15,576.98	\$ 10,838.80		\$11,665.75
May	\$4,265.21	\$16,649.89	\$14,899.46	\$19,148.76	\$14,634.68	\$14,698.74	\$ 10,838.80		\$13,328.57
June	\$11,137.06	\$16,794.03	\$19,839.83	\$16,077.48	\$19,806.29	\$18,609.36	\$ 10,042.76		\$14,938.69
Totals:	\$115,935.34	\$134,499.59	\$175,907.45	\$191,568.98	\$171,821.06	\$180,720.82	\$133,209.76		

TDA BUDGET ORDINANCE FY 2025-2026

	Total Budgeted	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Balance
Advertising & Marketing	\$ 130,000.00	\$ 97,379.46	\$ -	\$ 32,620.54
Allison Outdoor Advertising		\$ 4,200.00		
Stewart Communications - marketing and advertising		\$93,179.46	\$35,820.54	
Audit & Bond	\$ 3,650.00	\$ 1,225.00	\$ 2,425.00	\$ 2,425.00
Martin Starnes - audit Quarterly payment		\$ 875.00	\$ 2,425.00	
Bond for Finance Officer - annual payment		\$ 350.00		
Festivals & Events	\$ 31,125.00	\$17,800.00		\$13,325.00
Tribal Vibes Promotions - Annual Come Together Festival		\$ 1,000.00		
Macon County Farmers Market		\$ 5,000.00		
Outdoor 76 - The Naturalist 50/100K		\$ 1,600.00		
Crabtree Family Ent - Ruby Drop		\$ 4,000.00		
Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council		\$ 1,200.00		
Macon County Transit - Hiker Route		\$ 1,000.00		
Sweet Carolina Music Festival - Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Ctr		\$ 4,000.00		
Undesignated/Miscellaneous	\$15,225.00	\$100.00		\$15,125.00
Visit Smokies Conference		\$100.00		
Totals:	\$ 180,000.00	\$116,504.46	\$2,425.00	\$63,495.54
Tim Crabtree, Chair				
Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk				

Room Occupancy Tax Report	
3/31/2026	
FY 2025/2026 Budget	\$180,000.00
7/31/2025	\$16,844.68
8/31/2025	\$17,023.38
9/30/2025	\$16,927.28
10/31/2025	\$19,631.27
11/30/2025	\$18,458.96
12/31/2025	\$12,027.75
1/31/2026	\$10,838.80
2/28/2026	\$10,042.76
3/31/2026	\$11,414.88
4/30/2026	
5/31/2026	
6/30/2026	
Net Collections:	\$133,209.76
Budgeted Expenses:	
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$800.00
Macon County Farmer's Market	\$5,000.00
Tribal Vibes Promotions	\$1,000.00
Stewart Communications	\$11,330.64
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$11,932.45
Outdoor 76 - The Naturalist	\$1,600.00
Stewart Communications	\$9,615.91
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$800.00
Stewart Communications	\$13,688.61
Crabtree Family Ent - Ruby Drop	\$4,000.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Stewart Communications	\$6,229.16
Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA - audit	\$875.00
Stewart Communications	\$15,362.03
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$600.00
Stewart Communications	\$7,458.03
Franklin Appalachian Trail Community Council	\$1,200.00
Allison Outdoor Advertising	\$400.00
Macon County Transit - Hiker Route	\$1,000.00
Stewart Communications	\$7,296.04
Sweet Carolinas Music Festival - SMPCC	\$4,000.00
Visit Smokies Conference	\$100.00
CNA Surety - Finance Director Bond	\$350.00
Stewart Communications	\$10,266.59
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 116,504.46
Collections (minus) - Expenses	\$16,705.30
TDA FUND BALANCE:	\$174,964.66



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-A

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Taste of Scotland

The Taste of Scotland Society, Inc. submitted an application for consideration of funding on April 2, 2025. The request is for \$3,000 to assist with the 27th Annual Taste of Scotland Festival June 19 - 21, 2026. The TDA provided funding of \$1,500 in FY 2024-2025.

The initial request was heard at the April 13, 2026 meeting. It was requested that someone from TOSS be at the May meeting for questions.

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	(No)	Number of Billboards	Date of Event	JUNE 20, 2026
Name of Organization	TASTE OF SCOTLAND SOCIETY			
Street or PO Box	PO BOX 2216	City, ST Zip	FRANKLIN NC 28744	
Representative	Lucy Thorne	Phone	828-226-6335	
E-mail	TASTE OF SCOTLAND FRANKLIN NC	Web Site	TASTE OF SCOTLAND.ORG	
Project Title	TASTE OF SCOTLAND CELTIC FESTIVAL		Project Date(s)	19-21 JUNE
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	\$ 29,200		TDA Request	\$ 300,000

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?

We are hosting the 27th Annual Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival and Highland Games. We utilize Print Media - newspaper, Rack Cards, Posters, and Banners. We Pull people from all over North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Virginia, and other states.

The Festival helps Macon County by drawing in people from a wide area. While the people often eat at festival, many of them also eat in town, stay at a local hotel and/or make additional purchases in town.

We ask people their zip code, number in party and how they heard about us.

This year we are increasing of our ~~the~~ feature attractions by offering Birds of Prey from Georgia Mountain Falconry, and Viking Reenactors from Hall of the Mountain Horde. We did TV advertising on WLOS out of Asheville. Our spots were seen, but we had a hard time quantifying the results.

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	3000	1500	
Sponsorships <i>TDC</i>	5000	5000	
Booth fees	3700	3575	
Entry / other fees <i>sponsors</i>	6000	5830	
Sales <i>tickets</i>	13000	12305.79	
Other - specify	0	0	
Total Sources of Cash	30,700	28,210.79	
Uses of Cash:			
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits	0	0	
Contracted services <i>music</i>	15,000	13209	
Cost of merchandise sold	0	0	
Rental of facilities (sanitation)	1275	1275	
Rental of equipment	750	600	
Expendable supplies	0	0	
Printing			
Print media	5300	4782.96	
Radio media	600	300	
Other advertising – specify (digital marketing) <i>TV</i>	3500	3500	
Other expenses - specify	4200	3651.20	
Total Uses of Cash	39,625	27,318.16	
Net Cash Flow	\$ 75.00	\$ 892.63	<i>Hotel Rooms Clean up Insurance Phone, tents Sanitation Miss Tartan SCOUTS</i>

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: President/ VP

Date:

Lucy Thane

President

April 21, 2026



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4-B

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Application – Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival

The Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival submitted an application for consideration on April 6, 2026. This is a new event and the first time requesting funds. Geographically, the event is held outside of the town limits; however, this event has partnerships with local occupancy tax collecting agencies in anticipation of attendance. The request is for \$3,500.

The initial request was heard at the April 13, 2026 meeting.

Suggested Motion: If favorable - vote to approve and determine funding amount.

Attachments: Yes No

Action Taken: _____



Town of Franklin

Funds Request

Tourism Development Authority

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

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- 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	Mountain Roots Blue Grass Festival	5-23-26
Street or PO Box	4450 Highlands Rd	City, ST Zip Franklin NC 28734
Representative	Jodi House Moses	Phone 678-858-8033
E-mail	highlandsriverband.com	Web Site
Project Title	Mountain Roots Blue Grass	Project Date(s) 5-23-26
Total Budgeted Cash Sources	\$8800	TDA Request 3500

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?

Mountain Roots Bluegrass Festival Grant Application

The Event or Purchase – What are you proposing to do?

The Mountain Roots Bluegrass Festival is a free, family-friendly community event hosted at Highlands Riverbend RV Resort & Cabins in Franklin, North Carolina. The festival will feature 65+ local vendors (currently full with a waitlist), 7 food trucks, and live bluegrass performances throughout the day. Vendor fees have been intentionally kept low at \$25 per booth to encourage participation and accessibility for local artisans and businesses. Vendor fees are used to fund our bluegrass bands, which represent our largest expense. These bands are also helping promote the event and attract out-of-state and out-of-county visitors. The event is held on privately owned land (8-acre venue at Highlands Riverbend with additional space through partnership with Heritage Garage Doors), with no facility rental costs. Cullasaja Fire Department will manage parking and traffic. This event is not for profit, but to support small businesses and provide a meaningful community experience.

Marketing – How will you market the project?

Our marketing strategy includes print, digital, and community outreach efforts: - 200 posters distributed across Western North Carolina and North Georgia - Magazine advertising (Laurel Magazine) - Radio advertising campaign - Facebook promotions and event marketing - Band promotion through their networks - Festival T-shirts for ongoing promotion - On-site banners with QR codes for engagement tracking Grant funds are being used specifically for advertising, printing, and promotional outreach.

Tourism Enhancement – How does the project enhance tourism?

This festival serves as a kickoff to the summer tourism season in Macon County. We have partnered with local hotels to offer festival rates, helping attract and track out-of-town visitors. The event encourages guests to explore Franklin, filling restaurants, lodging, and local businesses. By highlighting bluegrass music, local vendors, and Appalachian culture, we aim to position Franklin as a repeat destination for visitors.

Measurements – How will you measure success?

We will track success using: - QR code engagement tracking - Vendor surveys (sales performance and feedback) - Hotel participation and festival rate usage - Vehicle counts and attendance estimates - Data collection by assigned data clerk Survey participation will influence vendor priority for future events.

Improvements – What will you do to improve?

This is our first year, but we have systems in place for improvement: - Monthly committee meetings - Post-event recap and analysis - Vendor feedback integration - Emergency planning and volunteer coordination - Data-driven improvements for future growth Our goal is to build this into a signature annual event.

Net Cash Flow – How will funds be used?

We do not anticipate profit. Funds generated through T-shirt sales will cover event expenses including porta potties, volunteer meals, dumpsters, supplies, vendor badges, sound, and photography. Any remaining funds will be reinvested into improving future festivals and expanding marketing efforts.

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	5000	
Booth fees	1,625	
Entry / other fees		
Sales		
Other - specify		
Total Sources of Cash		
Uses of Cash:		
Salaries, wages, taxes & benefits	2000	
Contracted services	400	Photo / Sound
Cost of merchandise sold	2600 .	
Rental of facilities (sanitation)	? 1200	
Rental of equipment	200	Dunster
Expendable supplies	? 300	
Printing	400	
Print media	500	
Radio media	400 .	
Other advertising – specify (digital marketing)		
Other expenses - specify	Volunteer food \$1000	- food truck vouchers. and snacks .
Total Uses of Cash	8900	
Net Cash Flow	0	0

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:

Godwin

Title: President/ VP

CEO

Date:

5/ 4/6/26



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5-A

Department/Agency: Stewart Communications

Subject Matter: Marketing Report

There will be a monthly marketing report provided by Stewart Communications to the TDA Board related to activities each month.

Suggested Motion: Received for information only.

Attachments: Yes No

Action Taken: _____



Agenda Item – Tourism Development Authority

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5-B

Department/Agency: TDA Subcommittee

Subject Matter: TDA Subcommittee Report

The TDA Subcommittee has been meeting to develop a list of strategies for consideration and recommendation to the Town Council surrounding the following goal – To Effectively operate as a steward of the budget, promoting the Town of Franklin bringing in visitors and tourists to our town, while driving revenue for our businesses and budget dollars to expand our ability to promote the Town of Franklin.

Suggested Motion: Received for information and discussion. Action to be determined.

Attachments: Yes No

Action Taken: _____

TDA Sub Committee Recommendations

Goal: Effectively operate as a steward of the budget, promoting the Town of Franklin bringing in visitors and tourists to our town, while driving revenue for our businesses and budget dollars to expand our ability to promote the Town of Franklin.

How does the TDA positively impact the “*First Impression*” and “*Overall Experience*” for visitors and tourists to the Town of Franklin.

- It is our recommendation the TDA funds and/or works with other associated groups to develop a comprehensive program for the town. (Note: some of these items may be included in other budgets or projects. The TDA should still provide recommendations for a consistent look for the town)

Signing

- Welcome to the Town of Franklin
 - Have **consistent** “Welcome” signing at **all entry ways** into the Town of Franklin (Note: Sizing may vary based on codes but look and messaging should be consistent)
 - We recommend not using a **marketing slogan** that will become dated, e.g. Discover Franklin
 - These signs should be **designed** to stand out and contain **elements** that represent the Town of Franklin
 - **Impressive** and robust where visitors notice and say “Wow!”
 - Need to **identify** where signs should be **located**
 - Zoning may require **different sizes**, but **design**, look and feel should be **consistent**
- Way Finding Signing
 - Examples include
 - **District signing**, e.g. River District, Heritage District, etc.
 - This would/could include **all signing** in a particular district; **street** signs, **directional** signs (parking, cultural, historical, banners)
 - These signs should be “**themed**”. This could include **colors** (Green = River District), contain **icons** (contain a Ruby)
 - There should be a **limited** number of districts
 - We recommend there are **District Totems** placed in key locations aiding visitors. These Totems should follow **similar themes**; color markers, icons, similar structural features as the welcome signs.
 - Where possible signs should include **branding**, **QR** code (website)
 - Expand to **street signs** that follow the district themes, e.g. color, **naming conventions**
 - Include **banners**, e.g. Main street banner signs and expand to **other districts**

Functional Exterior Décor

- Exterior Speakers

- Located in **walking areas** where appropriate, e.g. Main Street
- Speakers utilized for **events, seasons**, not 24/7/365
- Decorative Trash Receptacles
 - These should also be **themed by district**, so you have a **comprehensive look** by area
 - Plan for maintenance and **dumping**
 - Receptacles should be **strong**, powder coated, something that will **last 15 years**, won't be carried off
 - Can be painted the **same color** as the **district theme** with panels to include art work for district
- Planters
 - These should also be **themed** by District so you have a comprehensive look **by area**
 - Signs promoting native plants, **information/facts** about Franklin
 - **Easy** to maintain for town to **limit costs**
- Restroom Facilities
 - Locations: TBD
 - Accessible, clean, freshly painted (mural?)
- **Grants** to incentivize scale and care of all **exterior decor**
- **Utilize** organizations to **assist** in care, e.g. boy scouts, volunteers
- **Functional role** of TDA **evolves** to include oversight of these town assets with care and **maintenance managed** by the TDA

Murals

- Murals that are **unique** to Franklin
 - Contain **elements** of Franklin and our surrounding area
 - Could also align with **district themes** where appropriate, e.g. River District, Cultural District
 - Murals have **photo opportunities** for visitors, e.g. Butterfly wings
 - Arts council can assist in **identifying** qualified **artists** working with TDA and Town Council
 - Town Council must **approve** final designs
 - Murals should **contain** QR code (website)
 - Potential locations to **include** but **not limited** to;
 - Wall behind Gazebo, alleys and breezeways, entry corridors into Franklin
 - Could **market visitors** to come and see all the murals

Landscape

- Focus for **tourism** on planters, entryways, and **specific areas** related to attractions
 - Could even lead to a **town event** “Dogwood Days”, if there was a concentrated focus of planting Dogwood trees in an area as an example
 - Possible **concerns**, Note: Landscaping costs are significant and additional funding or private funding may be required
 - Lowes, Shulers and others, may **be willing** to donate money or materials for planting and maintaining area

Statues & Other

- **Statues**, benches, other structural features are more likely part of a 3/5 year plan due to cost

- Locations should be considered, as should themes related to Districts, Town, etc.

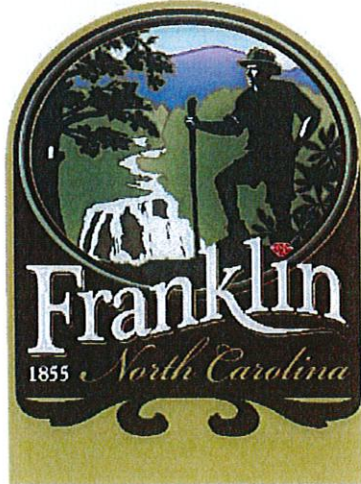
Marketing and Social Media (First Impression)

- Traditional Marketing
 - Billboards, Guides, Brochures, Media
 - All branded the same
 - Inclusive Dining, Hiking, Shopping, Maps
 - Guides should tie into District Themes
 - Hotels, Chamber, Businesses, should carry same guides
 - Leverage Chamber and TDC to help defer the costs
- Social Media, SEO, GEO
 - Utilize lots of photos of “first impressions”
 - Charm of Franklin
 - Things to do in our themed areas, e.g. River District, enjoy strolling the Greenway, Historic District, visit our museums
 - There is always something going on in Franklin
 - Establish full collaboration with TDC as a goal

- It is our recommendation that the TDA should be prescriptive when funding events and activities to promote, support, or enhance tourism and experiences for visitors coming to Franklin (Note: some of these items may be included in other budgets or projects.)

- TDA Funding application
 - There should be a review and overhaul of the current application
 - Focus on areas that are consistent with our goals
 - How many people will attend
 - How many individuals from more than 50 miles
 - How many anticipated overnight stays
 - Anticipated economic benefits
 - How will this event promote Franklin
 - How is the event being marketed to bring people to Franklin
- Marketing and Social Media (Events)
 - Use the existing Experience Franklin NC website and associated Facebook and Instagram platforms as the primary centralized marketing tools for tourism promotion in Franklin.
 - Coordinate and maintain all owned platforms with matching branding and information, e.g. Town of Franklin, Experience Franklin and others promoting the same geographic area should post the same information, and same graphics when appropriate.
 - Integrate a dedicated section on the website highlighting TDA/Town-funded events, festivals and tourism-related projects. This section should include event dates, descriptions, locations, sponsor information and links to participating organizations. Items should coordinate with other like platforms.
 - Continue to utilize the Experience Franklin NC social media platforms to reinforce the ongoing messaging that Franklin offers year-round activities and experiences, emphasizing recurring events, music festivals, outdoor recreation, downtown activities, seasonal celebrations and family-oriented events.

- Advise those looking to have an event on opportune timing if possible
 - Example May 2nd had at least 7 events that impacted each other and local business adversely
- Cap the annual number of events funded
- Ideal events
 - Larger events that can grow and or become recurring over time
 - Events that draw overnight or day trip visitors that will spend in the area
 - Complimentary or adjacent events to already established “anchor events”
 - E.g. A day of events on New Years Eve that lead up to Ruby Drop (5K run, Festival, Artisans, etc.
 - Work with event sponsors to encourage them to expand or make events grander, more inclusive of larger audiences, crowds, maybe partner with other groups, e.g. add an Art Walk into a downtown event
 - Multi-day events or activities that bring visitors over days or for overnight stays
- TDA Event
 - Develop and host an annual event TBD
 - Could be a festival, conference or charitable fund raiser
 - Probably target a typical slower tourist timeframe
 - Use Amie’s room night utilization stats
 - The event should be executable without significant volunteer commitment
- Once approval is received for our recommendations, the TDA and this sub-committee should develop a 1/3/5 year plan that supports the first two tenants listed working in sync, collaboratively with other groups/organizations and government
 - Considerations
 - Determine the 5 year desired outcome and work backwards
 - Build a flexible plan that can accelerate or decelerate as needed
 - Understand budget needs and constraints
 - Establish full collaboration with TDC as a goal



Agenda Item – TDA

Meeting Date: May 11, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5-C

Department/Agency: TDA Board

Subject Matter: Membership Terms Expiring – June 2026

There are three (3) individuals whose terms expire on June 30, 2026. As per the Town Council policy related to boards and commissions, vacancies are advertised in the newspaper and online.

If individuals wish to be considered for reappointment, an application should be filled out and submitted by the June 4, 2026 deadline.

Those whose terms are expiring are:

- Kevin Covell
- Angela Martin
- Rob Reale

Suggested Motion: No motion – received for information only.

Attachments: Yes No

Action Taken: _____