

TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOURISM DEVELOPEMNT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

April 14, 2025

Present: Chairperson Connie Grubermann, Members: Town Manager Amie Owens, Hannah Edwards, Rob Reale, Angela Martin, Guy Gooder and Tim Crabtree (arrived at 5:31).

Absent: Members Kevin Covell and Matt Holland

Others present: Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk
Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications
Mia Overton, The Franklin Press
Tracy and Joe Griffith – 80’s Flashback Weekend Board Members
Dave Linn – 80’s Flashback Weekend Event Organizer

1. Call to Order- Chair Connie Grubermann

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

2. Approval of the March 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Member Guy Gooder made a motion, seconded by Member Angela Martin to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2025 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

3. Financial Reports- ending February 28, 2025

Town Manager Amie Owens presented the Financial Report through the end of February 2025. She noted that the amount of occupancy tax collected in February was \$8,474.67 (3rd highest February to date and above the 10-year average). Total expenses thus far \$115,455.79 leaving the balance of \$439.21 and \$173,141.61 remains in TDA Fund Balance. The report is incorporated into these minutes as Exhibit A.

Member Tim Crabtree made a motion, seconded by Member Hannah Edwards to approve the financial report ending February 28, 2025. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

4. New Business

A.) New Application for Consideration

Devon Dupuis, Macon County Farmers Market, joined the meeting via phone. The Macon County Farmers Market has submitted an application for funding for \$5,000. Devon gave a recap of last year’s Farmers Market. They were open for 30 Saturdays (May- November) and had over 40 vendors. They averaged approximately 400 patrons each Saturday and their gross revenues for the year were around \$200,000. The requested funds will be used for strategic marketing. This item will be voted on at the May meeting.

B.) New Application for Consideration

Macon County Transit re-submitted their application for funding for \$6,000 for the marketing of their Hiker Route. This item will be voted on at the May meeting.

C.) New Application for Consideration

80's Flashback weekend submitted their application for funding for \$5,000 for their event that will be held August 1 and August 2, 2025. Tracy Griffith, Board Member, said they are planning for a bigger event this year. They are getting a larger stage and plan to have more vendors. The requested funds will be used to promote the event. This item will be voted on at the May meeting.

D.) Vote on Application

Special Liberty Project submitted an application for funding for their Healing Hope Retreat for military widows, July 8-11, 2025. The requested amount is \$10,000.

Member Hannah Edwards made a motion, seconded by Member Guy Gooder to fund \$2,000 for the Healing Hope Retreat. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

E.) Vote on Application

Yonder submitted an application for funding for their 2025 Sunday Summer Concert Series. The requested amount is \$3,000. Hannah Edwards gave a recap of the event.

Member Tim Crabtree made a motion, seconded by Member Rob Reale to approve the funding of \$3,000 as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0 (Member Hannah Edwards, owner of Yonder, recused herself from the vote).

5. Items from the Board

A.) Marketing Report- Stewart Communications

Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications, gave the marketing update:

- Discussion on recent ads
- New website features
 - Weekend events
 - Individuals can submit events for approval
 - New blog post
 - Promotion of golf, Sweet Carolina Music Festival, Naturalist Race, gem mines, museums
- Emails: Open/Click rates
- Resent survey

6. Budget Discussion – TDA Board

Town Manager Amie Owens led the discussion. She noted that there is a \$200 increase for the annual audit with Martin Starnes. Town Manager Owens discussed the current year statistics and projections. Town Manager Owens noted the marketing contract is an annual contract. The contract

with Stewart Communications can be renewed for another year or the Board can put out another Request for Proposal (RFP).

Member Tim Crabtree made a motion, seconded by Member Hannah Edwards to keep the budget allocation at \$180,000 and to sign another one-year contract with Stewart Communications for marketing. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

7. Membership – End of Terms

Connie Grubermann – not eligible to serve again without a 1-year break in service.

Matt Holland – eligible for an additional term.

Vacation Position – must be a collector of occupancy tax.

There was discussion about who can serve on the Board and looking for someone who collects occupancy tax within the Franklin town limits.

8. Announcements

A.) The next regular scheduled TDA meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

9. Adjourn

Member Guy Gooder made a motion, seconded by Member Tim Crabtree to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 p.m. Chairperson Grubermann adjourned the meeting.

Connie Grubermann, Chairperson

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk