

TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOURISM DEVELOPEMNT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

May 13, 2024

Present: Chairperson Connie Grubermann, Members Josh Drake, Hannah Edwards, Rob Reale, Amie Owens, Tim Crabtree, Angela Martin, Kevin Covell and Guy Gooder

Absent: Matt Holland

Others present: Robbie Tompa, Town Council Member
Carly Moser, Drake Enterprises Limited (DEL)
Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications
Don Pickett, Macon Fest Sponsor
Thomas Sherrill, The Franklin Press

1. Call to Order- Chairperson Connie Grubermann

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Approval of the April 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Member Rob Reale made a motion, seconded by Member Kevin Covell to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2024 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

3. Financial Reports- ending March 31, 2024

Town Manager Amie Owens presented the Financial Report through the end of March 2024. She noted that the month of March 2024 was the 3rd highest on record, with \$10,640.82 in occupancy tax collected. Ms. Owens noted that this is down from last year at the same time by \$3,262.

Total expenses year to date are \$190,525.05 leaving negative balance of \$67,601.78 of collections minus expenditures. TDA Fund Balance is \$165,720.61. The reports are incorporated into these minutes as Exhibit A.

Member Hannah Edwards made a motion, seconded by Member Tim Crabtree to approve the financial report ending March 31, 2024. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

4. New Business

A.) Vote on Application for Funding
Request for TDA support for the Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy (BRBTC). The requested amount is \$2,000.

The BRBTC submitted an application for funding to assist with the cost of a banner and stickers for the Bartram Trail Conference on May 30- June 1 and to install a kiosk illustrating the Bartram Trail and its path through downtown.

Member Angela Martin made a motion, seconded by Member Guy Gooder to approve the funding request of \$2,000 for the Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

B.) New Application for Consideration

Request for TDA support for the Taste of Scotland Celtic Festival and Highland Games – event is scheduled for June 14 – 16, 2024. The requested amount is \$5,000. The TDA provided funding of \$3,000 in FY 2022-2023 for this event. This request will be voted on at the June meeting.

C.) New Application for Consideration

Request for TDA support for Macon Music and Arts Festival (MaconFest) – the event is scheduled for October 25 and 26, 2024. The requested amount is \$5,000. This is a new event for the area. Mr. Don Pickett provided the group with an overview of the event noting that it would be an alcohol free, family friendly event where businesses can connect with the community. This request will be voted on at the June meeting.

5. Items from the Board

A.) Marketing Report

Carly Moser, Drake Enterprises Limited (DEL), provided a quarterly update related to the marketing for the TDA. She noted that the averages for click throughs and email openings were still high. She and Eric Haggart have been working on the social media platforms and will be focusing on highlighting local businesses as part of promotion efforts. Ms. Moser noted that she has been building a calendar of events.

B.) Review of RFPs submitted for Marketing Services for FY 2024-2025

As part of her report, Ms. Moser provided an overview of the proposal submitted by DEL including continued partnership with Local iQ and Eric Haggart. The proposal presented was a budget of \$172,462 with staffing provided free of charge.

Morgan Stewart, Stewart Communications, provided an overview of the proposal submitted including the various partnerships the firm has in place for co-op advertising. The budget presented was \$150,000 including costs for staffing, media and advertising content.

A third proposal from Kudzu Brands was available for review as well. The proposal budget was \$180,000 including staffing and content.

Discussion was held and the TDA Board was encouraged to ask questions of Ms. Moser and Mr. Stewart.

The TDA Board was provided the proposals in advance of the meeting for review; however, there was no motion to accept a proposal at this meeting. Due to the TDA budget deadline, a choice must be made at the June meeting.

Ms. Owens shared an email she received from Bob Scott related to charges for photographs for the TDA. As with the proposal for marketing, this will be decided at the June meeting.

6. Announcements

A.) The next regular scheduled TDA meeting will be held on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room.

7. Adjourn

Member Kevin Covell made a motion, seconded by Member Josh Drake to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 p.m. The motion carried unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

Connie Grubermann, Chairperson

Amie Owens, Town Manager, Acting Clerk