

**Graham County Travel & Tourism Regular Board Meeting**

**July 11, 2019**

**4:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

**Attending: Dale Wiggins; chairman, Billy Brown, Jessica Wehr, Mary Griffin**

**Absent: Robin Turner; vice-chairman, Meredith Jenkins, Michelle Redmon**

Chairman Wiggins called meeting to order

Motion to approve minutes from June 13, 2019 Public Hearing on budget meeting was made by Billy Brown. Mary Griffin second. **VOTE UNANIMOUS**

Motion to approve minutes from June 13, 2019 Regular Meeting was made by Billy Brown. Mary Griffin second. **VOTE UNANIMOUS**

Becky Garland, finance officer, gave the financial and budget report and distributed the accommodation tax sheets. Total Cash Available for Expenditures is \$362,011.79, there is \$49,489.97 in Capital Reserve, and 27% remaining in budget at the end of June.

Ms. Garland presented a request from Stecoah Valley Center for the \$15,000 that Travel & Tourism has allocated for them; \$10,000 was put in the 2019/2020 budget and \$5,000 was included to match a grant from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation. Mary Griffin made a motion to make the full \$15000 allocation to Stecoah Valley Center. Jessica Wehr second the motion. **VOTE UNANIMOUS**

Ms. Garland briefly discussed the annual audit conducted by Turner & Co. and explained that the cost of the contract was \$4200. Billy Brown made a motion to accept the contract. Jessica Wehr second the motion. **VOTE UNANIMOUS**

**Chairman's Remarks:** Chairman Wiggins explained that the U.S Forest Service is scheduled to release the management plan for the Nantahala National Forest in September. Chairman Wiggins also stated that there would be a meeting August 25, 2019 with the Forest Service to review and discuss the engineer's report for getting the Santeetlah Lake trail up to their specifications.

Director's Report: Daniel Allison, See attached sheet

**Public Comments:** Rick Davis, representing GREAT, stated that the GREAT annual meeting would be next Thursday, July 18, at the Graham County High School. Guest speaker will be Dr. Arthur Salido, Executive Director for Community and Economic Engagement and Innovation at Western Carolina University.

Mr. Davis also updated the Board on the online mapping project. When this project is complete, it will allow the user to download and locate almost any point or location in Graham County. There will be a training session July 29, 2019 at Stecoah Valley Center on how to work the system.

Beth Fields, Director of Stecoah Valley Center, addressed the Board about the recap meeting of the Azalea Festival Committee. She said the Friday night event at Stecoah Valley Center was successful. The Friends of Joyce Kilmer were given a check for \$615 and will be given \$175 more. This was half of what Stecoah Valley Center made on the Cherokee Dinner and the Pow Wow Dance.

Ms. Fields also commented that the Stecoah Valley Center is interested in hosting Friday night events for the upcoming Azalea Festivals.

Ms. Fields also showed the Board examples of regional publications that she felt should be considered for promoting the Azalea Festival.

Brian Johnson, Graham County Festivals, told the Board how much he appreciated the funds given to the Graham County Festivals. He explained that everyone thought the fireworks were very good this year and that The Heritage Festival went great.

Mary Griffin offered some suggestions about ways to promote individual accommodations on the Travel & Tourism face book. Chairman Wiggins stated that he and Daniel have already been discussing ways to do this. He then asked Daniel to work with our social media managers to determine the best way to accomplish this.

Billy Brown made a motion to **ADJOURN**. Jessica Wehr second. **VOTE UNANIMOUS**

**Next meeting August 8, 2019**

4:30 P.M.

Travel & Tourism office, 474 Rodney Orr Bypass, Robbinsville NC

Closed session if necessary – G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (1)(3)(5)(6) For privileged or confidential and Attorney/client, contract, personnel privilege