

GRAHAM COUNT TRAVEL & TOURISM REGULAR BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 7, 2020 (Postponed from February 6, 2020) 4:30 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.

Attending: Dale Wiggins; chairman, Robin Turner; vice-chairman, Billy Brown, Jessica Wehr, Mary Griffin

Absent: Meredith Jenkins, Rick Davis

Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman Wiggins then allowed a change in the agenda to accommodate Bob Wehr and allow him to speak first.

Mr. Wehr gave an update on the points map. Chairman Wiggins pointed out that some changes needed to be made on the map. Mr. Wehr then asked that folks let him know what needed to be changed and he would be sure it got done. Mr. Wehr also suggested that Travel & Tourism take ownership of the points map.

Chairman Wiggins asked for a motion to approve the minutes from January 9, 2020 regular meeting. Robin Turner made a motion to approve the minutes. Billy Brown second. **Vote Unanimous**

Becky Garland, Financial officer was not present. A copy of the financial report was given to the Board members. Chairman Wiggins stated that we are financially stable and that we are moving along on some big projects.

Chairman's Remarks: Chairman Wiggins explained that he and Daniel were in the process of putting the Santeetlah Lake Trail project out for proposals. The RFP ad has been developed and should be in The Graham Star next week. Also, they have put together a notice to send out to individuals and organizations who have asked for funding from Travel & Tourism in the past. Those folks seeking funding for projects in the upcoming fiscal year will be asked to provide a written request detailing what the funds will be used for and how it will promote tourism in Graham County. The Board will review these requests, and requests that are approved will be included in the Travel & Tourism 2020/2021 budget.

Lisa Gonzalez, with EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems, was scheduled to speak to the Board but could not attend because of the weather.

Calendar: Mary Griffin thanked the Board for letting her do the calendars. She had 250 printed and she stated that she would like to keep doing the calendars.

Ms. Griffin then asked Chairman Wiggins if she could continue on another subject. She commented that she would like to see the farmers market moved to a more visible area. Jessica Wehr said that she is willing to let them set up at Wehrloom Honey. They would be on the main road and there is plenty of parking and space to set up.

Welcome Center/Office: Robin Turner reported that work on the wall applique for the Graham

County Historical Association preview exhibit is being finished now. Mr. Turner explained that the landlord is going to do some upgrades on the building, but is not going to install a new façade. Mr. Turner suggested investing in a large monument sign such as a two sided digital board that would be programmable and could be changed to include activities and upcoming events. It would be adjacent to the street, so that both sides could be easily seen and read. He said that the cost would be high, and suggested that the Board consider financing it over a number of years. He stated that this type of sign would be long lasting, and well worth the investment. Billy Brown made a motion to go ahead and move forward with this idea. Robin Turner second the motion. **Vote Unanimous.** Mr. Turner will bring information back to the Board on designs, companies, facts, and figures at the March meeting.

Director's Report: See attached sheet. At the conclusion of Mr. Allison's report, he presented an advertising proposal from "Our State Magazine" for consideration by the Board.

Robin Turner made a motion to approve this advertising proposal. Billy Brown second the motion. **Vote Unanimous**

Public Comments: Valerie Frapp, Events/Marketing Manager at Tapoco Lodge, stated that there are only 2 tables left open for their Valentine's Dinner event. She also said the grand opening for the Tavern at Tapoco Lodge will be March 13, 2020.

There was a discussion on the Cheoah River Release dates and Chairman Wiggins stated that it is time to get all the stake holders together to discuss the releases.

Diana Simon, Town of Lake Santeetlah TDA, introduced herself and explained that she has gotten the website up for the Lake Santeetlah TDA. The new Facebook page is also operational. She is hoping to partner with Graham County Travel & Tourism on some advertising. She commented that the Town of Lake Santeetlah TDA's capital project is to add an electric charging station that could accommodate 2 vehicles near the entrance of the Town of Lake Santeetlah.

No New Business:

Old Business: Mary Griffin presented a list of things she and Karen Mickler had discussed concerning the hidden items project that she had brought before the Board at the January meeting. Ms. Griffin will continue to work on ideas for this project.

Chairman Wiggins asked if there was anything else and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Robin Turner made a motion to Adjourn. Billy Brown second the motion. **Vote Unanimous**

Next meeting March 5, 2020

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

