

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

**Held in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street, Robbinsville, NC**

**June 4, 2020**

**5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

Present: Chairman Wiggins, Robin Turner; vice-chairman, Billy Brown, Jessica Wehr, Rick Davis, Mary Griffin

Absent: Meredith Jenkins

Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Wiggins asked for a motion to approve the minutes from March 5, 2020 regular meeting. Billy Brown made a motion to approve the minutes. Jessica Wehr second. Vote Unanimous.

There were no meetings in April or May because of COVID-19.

### **Finance Report:**

Financial Officer Garland asked if she could give the financial report and then move into the presentation of the 2020/2021 proposed Budget. Chairman Wiggins told her that would be fine.

Ms. Garland gave the financial report. Total Cash Available for Expenditures is \$369,617.47 with \$65,810.11 in Capital Reserve, and 49.95% remaining in budget.

Ms. Garland presented Budget Amendment #1 FYE 6-30-20 that changes several expenditures before closing out the 2019/2020 budget. Chairman Wiggins asked for a motion to approve the amendment. Billy Brown made a motion to approve the amendment. Robin Turner second. Vote Unanimous

Ms. Garland and Director Daniel Allison presented the proposed Graham County Travel & Tourism budget for 2020/2021, briefly explaining the budget process and highlighting the changes from past years budgets.

Rick Davis asked about the proposals on the sign for the street that was discussed at the last meeting. Robin Turner said the sign had been put on hold. Chairman Wiggins said that because of the circumstances and the uncertainty of the future of revenue, that it was best to put this on hold.

Mr. Davis commented that he thinks there are things that need to be in the budget that are not included in it. He also said there should be an opportunity to hear funding requests from community groups before the public hearing of the budget. Chairman Wiggins explained that as things come up, requests can be brought before the Board and they will vote on them. Also, the proposed budget includes some line items that represent previous funding requests from community groups with no funding allocated for them. The Board could choose to honor those requests when resources become available. If anyone has anything they want to discuss, they can attend the public hearing.

Robin Turner then asked Ms Garland about revenues. Ms. Garland responded and briefly updated the Board on the current status of Fontana Village Resort.

After discussion, Billy Brown asked if they could vote on the 2020/2021 proposed budget and get it started, since it has to lay for view for 10 days. Chairman Wiggins said that if the Board wanted to vote on it now that they could. Mr. Davis then stated that he still thought that people should have a chance to present their case for funding before the public hearing was held. Billy Brown made a motion to approve the Budget Proposal. Robin Turner second. The vote was carried five to one. Rick Davis opposed.

The Public Hearing for the Budget was set for June 18, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street, Robbinsville, NC.

Billy Brown made a motion to approve the date for the Public Hearing. Robin Turner second.  
Vote unanimous

An announcement of the Public Hearing meeting date will be put in the Graham Star.

**Chairman's Remarks:**

Chairman Wiggins commented that things are opening up. There is more traffic and more people coming in.

**Director's Report:** Daniel Allison, see attached sheet

**Public Comment:**

Karen Taylor, Director of RTA, said that The Town Hall will be open Monday. The RTA events should start in October with Trunk or Treat.

**New Business:**

Mary Griffin asked to be recognized to present several items for discussion.

Ms Griffin stated that the Farmers Market should be open July 8, 2020. She explained that there would be produce brought in from outside of Graham County, but it would not hurt local growers. The produce brought in will cost more than that of the local growers. This price difference will give local growers a chance to sell their product first.

Ms. Griffin then asked if the Board could help the accommodation owners with their water bill by waiving their 3% occupancy taxes for the month of May. Chairman Wiggins said "No, it's a statutory requirement that they pay their taxes."

Ms. Griffin then asked about the proposed monument sign along the street. Robin Turner explained to her that the sign has been put on hold.

Jessica Wehr asked to be recognized to make a suggestion for getting Graham County promoted more. Ms Wehr asked if there could be a give-away for things such as gift certificate to local restaurants and local businesses for people who would come to Graham County and then post about their experiences in the county on their Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

Chairman Wiggins asked Ms. Wehr if she would like to make a proposal for this idea. She agreed to do so.

**Other Business:**

Daniel Allison, director, explained that he had been offered an excellent advertising opportunity to place an ad in "Blue Ridge Magazine". This would be a one half page ad for \$1250. Rick Davis made a motion to take the ad. Billy Brown second. Vote unanimous

The \$1250 will come out of the 2019/2020 budget.

**Old Business:**

None

Chairman Wiggins asked for a motion to adjourn if there was nothing else. Robin Turner made a motion to Adjourn. Billy Brown second. Vote Unanimous.

**Next Regular Meeting July 2, 2020**