

McCURTAIN COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY MINUTES

TUESDAY MAY 18, 2021 - 10:00 AM

MEETING HELD AT BROKEN BOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEETING ROOM

Chairman Dave Smulyan called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

Members present: Dave Smulyan, Aron Maib, Joe Silk, Vic Clay, Teresa Mullens and Tommy Julian. Debbie Elliot arrived late. Alternate board member Terry Walker was present. Executive Director Charity O'Donnell was also present. Guest's present were Tommy McDaniel, Robyn Adams, Brooke Rose, Shelly Copeland, Skip Copeland, Calista Stephens, Doug Zook, Patti Turpin. Michelle Finch-Walker, Sharron Helms and Chris White arrived later.

The following grant projects were presented and submitted to the board: Beavers Bend Folk Festival, Kiamichi Owa-Chito, Dog wood Days, Idabel Fall Festival, Wright City Lumberjax Festival, Texarkana American Legion Arkansas Razorback sponsorship. Also presented was a Broken Bow Lake Traveling Exhibit project, which they asked MCTA to fund. Debbie Elliot arrived during the beginning of these presentations. At the end of the presentations at 10:31am the following people left: Robyn Adams, Shelley and Skip Copeland, Doug Zook, Calista Stephens.

Erin Acuff, Matt Farley, Rusty Duncan, Mason Grimes, and Kriste Day from Insight Creative Group arrived. After a brief break, at 10:45 ICG presented information about an overview of the past year and goals for next year. Michelle Finch Walker and Sharon Helms arrived at 11:00am. Joe Silk left and came back. At 12:03 everyone took a break for lunch. Patti Turpin left. At 12:35 meeting continued as ICG presenting more plans for next year. The board asked questions. Chris White arrived at 1:06pm. Then once they were done presenting, they left the meeting. Everyone took a quick break. Debbie Elliot left.

Dave called the board meeting at 1:39pm.

Members present: Dave Smulyan, Aron Maib, Joe Silk, Vic Clay, Teresa Mullens and Tommy Julian. **Absent board member:** Debbie Elliot. Alternate board member Terry Walker was present. Executive Director Charity O'Donnell was also present. Guest's present were Tommy McDaniel, Brooke Rose, Michelle Finch-Walker, Sharron Helms and Chris White.

Tommy Julian made the motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting with last name error corrected. Vic Clay seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 7-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes and Vic Clay, yes.

Financial Report: Vic Clay, seconded by Tommy Julian, made a motion to approve the Financial Report as presented. Motion passed unanimously 7-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes and Vic Clay, yes.

Purchase Orders: Purchase Order amounts were presented and reviewed. Terry Walker made a motion to approve the purchase orders as presented Tommy Julian seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 7-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes and Vic Clay, yes. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

ADVERTISING COMMITTEE REPORT: Charity reported that the ad agency has given a good update. She asked the board if there was anything they wanted changed in the plan. They discussed a few items and made a couple of adjustments.

NEW BUSINESS:

2021-2022 Budget was presented. Chris White asked some occupancy rate questions. Those in the room that owned cabins responded. Tourism trends and economic development in our area were discussed. The need to put a little back in case of a downturn was discussed and it was decided when we amend the budget later (when the actual numbers come in) that extra would be put in a rainy day reserve fund. Terry Walker made the motion to accept the budget and follow the plan to put some back in case of a drop in tax collections. Tommy Julian seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 7-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes and Vic Clay, yes. Motion passed. Vic Clay left at 2:16.

2021-2022 Community Grant Proposals were discussed. Dave abstained from voting and discussion on all things Dogwood Days and Fall Fest because it was a conflict of interest. A motion was made by Tommy Julian to approve the following grants: Beavers Bend Folk Festival, Kiamichi Owa-Chito, Dog wood Days, Idabel Fall Festival, Wright City Lumberjack Festival as presented and to not approve

Texarkana American Legion Arkansas Razorback sponsorship. Joe Silk seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 5-0. Dave Smulyan, abstained; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes. Motion passed. The Broken Bow Lake exhibit was discussed and it was decided that we couldn't fund it because it isn't advertising. Once built we could promote it with advertising.

Board Appointment's for 2021-2022: Charity stated that Dave Smulyan, Teresa Mullins, and Terry Walker were up for reappointment. Tommy Julian made the motion and Aron Maib seconded to request that the county commissioners reappoint them for another term. Motion passed unanimously 6-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes. Motion passed. Vic Clay came back to the meeting.

Officers, 2 requisitioning, 2 receiving: Terry Walker made the motion for the following officers Dave Smulyan – Chairman, Aron Maib -Vice Chairman, Joe Silk Sec/Treasure. For the requisition officers to be Charity O'Donnell and Aron Maib, and the Receiving officers to be Tommy Julian and Vic Clay. Aron Maib seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 7-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes and Vic Clay, yes. Motion passed. Tommy McDaniel left the meeting at 2:40pm.

2021 – 2022 Tentative Meeting Dates: Charity presented the list of meeting dates for next fiscal year. Vic Clay made the motion to accept the dates as presented, Joe Silk seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 7-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; Terry Walker, yes and Vic Clay, yes. Motion passed.

Chris White asked if we felt like 5% lodging tax would hurt tourism in our area. Charity responded that based on all the research she has seen on other destinations that for those destinations it had not. The board agreed they didn't think it would. Chris White then asked if the tourism board would support the 2% lodging tax for the new hospital. After much discussion, they came to a conclusion that a feasibility study needed to be done (not by the hospital) by an independent source. The right size needed to be determined, the right location needed to be determined and with the right ballot wording, whereas it would be used for building and building upkeep (not salaries) then they would support it. Chris was asked if he was going to take

away the 3% lodging that that MCTA receives. He stated that he does not promote taking the tax. Michelle Finch-Walker left at 2:51, Vic Clay left at 3:45 pm.

Adjourn: Aron Maib made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe Silk seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 6-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Aron Maib, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Joe Silk, yes; Teresa Mullens, yes; and Terry Walker, yes. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Dave Smulyan, Chairperson