

McCurtain County Tourism Authority Minutes

Held Tuesday, December 5, 2023 - 1:00 PM

(previously scheduled for November 28th, 2023)

Meeting held at Broken Bow Chamber of Commerce Board Room

Chairman Dave Smulyan called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Members present: Dave Smulyan, Craig Young, Wenda Blankenship and Tommy Julian. **Absent Board Members:** Jerry Don Smith and Teresa Mullins. Executive Director, Charity O'Donnell was also present. Guests in attendance were Dian Jordan, Janet Cress, and Shellye Copeland.

Minutes: Craig Young made the motion to approve the September meeting minutes as presented. Dave Smulyan seconded. Motion passed 2-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, abstained; and Tommy Julian, abstained since they were not at the last meeting.

Financial Report: Charity O'Donnell presented the financial report. Tommy Julian made a motion to approve the Financial Report as presented, seconded by Craig Young. The motion passed unanimously 4-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Craig Young, yes; Tommy Julain, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes.

Purchase Orders: Purchase Order amounts for September and October were presented and reviewed. Tommy Julian made the motion to approve as presented seconded by Wenda Blankenship, made a motion to approve the purchase orders as presented. Motion passed unanimously 4-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes.

Advertising Update: Charity reported that we have two things that she needed the board to let her know about. She reported that she had sent emails to the board previously so they could review them in advance. One of them is the Dallas digital billboard retargeting campaign, she passed around a copy of the redesign of this project creative. She stated she had them redo it because it wasn't targeting the viewer to book now it was a basic ad stating to take a breath, come to McCurtain County. Charity explained that she got on a call with them and asked them to redirect their ad focus to book now instead of just pretty award winning creative. She stated that she explained that she felt that the cabins needed an extra push this off season. Dave explained that the audio redo was better. Dave played the audio redo from his phone so those that didn't review the email could hear it. Wenda stated to keep in mind we are promoting the area. Janet asked if she could say something, Dave told

her to go ahead. She said that she is seeing a lot more from Louisiana and she felt it would be worth our while to target that area. Tommy and Dave told her that we were. Wenda asked if we have a comparison of pricing of what we are putting into Dallas vs Louisiana vs OKC, Tulsa and surrounding areas. Charity explained that ICG had presented that information in May to us. She went on to explain that for example the Dallas billboard is so much higher that they were able to place 4 in Oklahoma billboards for longer time frame for less the price of the one in Dallas. She said it is like this for all forms of media not just billboards. She stated Louisiana is probably the least expensive market to advertise in. Wenda stated that she too had seen more visitors from Louisiana as well and not so much the Tulsa market. She stated she wanted them to approve of the creative for the digital media. She stated these would be placed in few high traffic areas in Dallas like outdoor shopping centers and such. And some of them would be digital ads on the computer. Everyone seemed okay with the creative. Charity stated the other thing was the additional off season support \$70,000 native ads, social media ads, beefing up the January buy and a partnership with Dallas Loveliest and two influencers. Charity explained that several other options that had been presented were previously nixed because they were not the best options for us. Dave stated that he personally would like to see this go into broadcast media to reach the masses instead of all going into social media and online. Charity explained that some broadcasts are going already in December and January. Wenda explained that she would like us to be doing more trackable media and that influencers are harder to track. She went on to state she wants us to determine how to figure out how many clicks from our site to theirs results in bookings. Tommy explained this isn't possible right now. Others explained that it couldn't get that detailed to the level of tracking you are wanting. Wenda Blankenship made a motion to take the \$70,000 additional for digital ads and the additional social buy and to nix the \$15,000 influencer and Love List buy and redirect it to broadcasting. Craig Young seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 4-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes.

Audit for FYE 2022 review: Charity reminded the board that this was emailed digital to them. And is also posted at the website. A motion was made by Tommy Julian that we have received the audit for fiscal year ending 2022 and accept it. Wenda Blankenship seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 4-0. Dave Smulyan, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Craig Young, yes;

Wenda Blankenship, yes. Charity stated she would get it to the commissioners for their records.

Amended Budget for 2024: Craig Young made the motion to approve the amended budget as presented. Tommy Julian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Dave Smulyan, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes. Charity stated she would get this to the commissioners for their records.

Open Records, Records destructions, and public comments policies: Charity went over with the board this seminar she attended, taught by the Attorney Generals office and what she learned and why it is important to have these specific policies in place. She said she wanted to get it on the agenda so we could begin this process of adopting these policies. She gave examples from her research, others in the room gave examples of other boards they serve on. Guest Dian Jordan stated that the city of Hochatown is working on this and that she would send Charity what she received to pass along. Craig stated why he felt it was best to have comments at the end of the meeting instead of before and he explained why. After everyone chimed in on their thoughts for others to think about and decide what they want. A motion was made by Craig Young, seconded by Tommy Julain to table this item until the next meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Dave Smulyan, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes.

Meeting Dates for 2024: A motion was made by Tommy Julian and seconded by Wenda Blankenship to approve the dates as presented. The motion passed unanimously. Dave Smulyan, yes; Tommy Julian, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes. Charity stated to plan to decide a location for annual meeting.

Trash Contract Update: Dave explained he was supposed to be getting with the Sherrif in Push County and hasn't yet. Wenda asked Dave why we can't get our county to do it. He explained that we had met with Solid Waste, and they had too many rules and regulations that they probably couldn't help us. Dave quickly went through all the reasons with the boards and Wenda. Tommy explained that Push County does this in other counties and that we need to work with them since our county can't or will not. Dave explained that another update would be at the next meeting.

Discussion and Possible Action on Tax Collection Issues: Dave stated whoever collects the tax is supposed to pay they tax and there are issues because it isn't being done this way. There is VRBO and Airbnb, one is, and one isn't. It was suggested we get with our local legislatures then work our way up the chain to try to get this taken care of. Dian mentioned this was a national problem, and we need to tackle it on a national level. This is again another issue that we need to work on perusing. After much discussion, no action was decided. Dave did state that he would talk to the Senator and see what he says.

Unscheduled New Business: Tommy explained that the Hochatown sign, the current owners of the meat market want it removed. He explained that the city of Broken Bow has a signed easement, signed contract agreement, etc. Charity explained to the board that the sign cost 10,000. Tommy paid for all the rock work and still pays for the electricity every month. MCTA paid \$5,000 and the city paid \$5,000. Charity stated it has been up since 2016. Dian stated it was on the City of Hochatown agenda. They will be discussing it in their meeting. Are we okay with whatever happens with this sign at this point? Everyone agreed we just need to do what we need to do for what we have.

Shellye Copeland stated that Matt at ICG had brought up some kiosks. And business clings. Hochatown has been approved for a library and she would like a hot spot. Charity explained all the other options that the kiosks can offer. These downloadable option for all these informational services.

Tommy left the meeting.

Adjournment: Craig Young made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Wenda Blankenship. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:06 PM. Dave Smulyan, yes; Craig Young, yes; Wenda Blankenship, yes.