

McCurtain County Tourism Authority Minutes

Held Tuesday, March 24, 2026 - 1 PM

The meeting was held in the Broken Bow Area Chamber of Commerce at Broken Bow Chamber meeting room at 113 West Martin Luther King Drive in Broken Bow.

Board chairman, Wenda Blankenship called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

Board Members were present: Wenda Blankenship, Jerry Don Smith, Michelle Blackmore, Ed Fulmer, and Phil Silva. Executive Director, Charity O'Donnell, was also present. Guests in attendance were Michelle Rice and Chrystal Wesley with the Choctaw Nation and Janet Cress with Hochatown. Board member Josh Latta was absent.

Discussion and possible action about the trash initiative with Commissioner Williams possibly getting an AG Opinion: No action taken. A motion was made by Jerry Don Smith and seconded Ed Fulmer to take no action at this time. The motion was carried 5-0. Wenda Blankenship, yes; Jerry Don Smith, yes; Michelle Blackmore, yes; Ed Fulmer, yes; and Phil Silva, yes.

Discussion, consideration, and possible action to sign letter of intent to hire Drew Kimble to do our FYE 2026 Audit: A motion was made by Ed Fulmer and seconded by Phil Silva to hire Drew Kimble and sign the letter of intent for \$4,600 plus \$100 to file the completed audit with the secretary of state for the fiscal year ending 2026 Audit. The motion was carried 5-0. Wenda Blankenship, yes; Jerry Don Smith, yes; Michelle Blackmore, yes; Ed Fulmer, yes; and Phil Silva, yes.

Discussion, consideration, and possible action to go over the Open Records request received: Charity explained to the board that we received an open records request and by law we must respond. She discussed the process and explained that it is important to keep the board in the loop when these requests are received. The printed email and response are in their packets. Charity wanted to note that everyone on the board has been notified that this request was received and that she responded to it, in case anything further comes of it. The board asked a few questions about the process. The board discussed and no action was taken.

Discussion, consideration and possible action to approve the January meeting minutes: A motion was made by Wenda Blankenship to approve the November meeting minutes as presented; the motion was seconded by Michelle Blackmore.

The motion was carried 5-0. Wenda Blankenship, yes; Jerry Don Smith, yes; Michelle Blackmore, yes; Ed Fulmer, yes; and Phil Silva, yes.

Discussion and possible action to approve the financial report as presented:

Charity O'Donnell presented the financial report. Ed Fulmer made the motion to approve the Financial Report as presented, seconded by Jerry Don Smith. The motion was carried 5-0. Wenda Blankenship, yes; Jerry Don Smith, yes; Michelle Blackmore, yes; Ed Fulmer, yes; and Phil Silva, yes.

Purchase Order amounts for February and March were presented and reviewed:

Ed Fulmer made a motion to approve the purchase orders and seconded by Michelle Blackmore. The motion carried. The motion was carried 5-0. Wenda Blankenship, yes; Jerry Don Smith, yes; Michelle Blackmore, yes; Ed Fulmer, yes; and Phil Silva, yes.

Advertising Update: Chairty gave an update; we won 6 Addy Awards this year: 2 gold, 3 silver, and one bronze. Charity gave a brief explanation about the ads and the awards. Then she stated that we put a link to them on the website. Michelle agreed that getting them on the website would be good so the public could see some of the returns in advertising. Charity also talked about the Route 66 billboards for March through May. Changes were made to the creative. She also mentioned all Spring campaigns are live on various media channels. "The Season of Cabin Country" is the name of the spring campaign. Phil asked what kind of radio they were doing. Charity stated that it is usually iHeart, sometimes network, sometimes Spotify. She stated that she didn't have the specifics at the moment, however she would get an answer and email the board.

Discussion and possible action of Advertising Grants and Special Projects

Grants: Charity explained to the board that an update was needed on currently unfulfilled grants that close out at the end of June. At our next meeting the board will be voting on the grants for next fiscal year. She wants to make sure the board understands where we stand to be able to make informed decisions at the next meeting. There are a few grants that have still not been submitted. Charity stated that for special projects the City of Broken Bow Winter Wonderland has still not been turned in yet and the Idabel Industrial Authorities Murals grant. She stated both have been in communication and plan to have them submitted soon. On the advertising grants, she stated McCurtain County Rodeo and McCurtain County Free Fair have still not turned their grants in. Our paperwork states to turn it in within 90 days of the event. They asked for \$7,600 per event which was approved. She stated recently someone called twice and said they were working on it, but nothing has

been turned in yet. Had we known if they were or were not going to complete the grants, we could have reallocated that money for someone else to use. The advertising grant budget was fully allocated this year. She typed a letter informing them that they have 30 more days to turn their grant in. The letter stated these grants are one of the few ways we can give back locally and we try to help everyone with their paperwork and get them in. Charity stated she can't make them do it. She asked if it was okay with the board that she send this letter to them. Wenda read the letter to the board and asked that changes be made, like adding specific dates instead of 30 days. Phil asked Charity to give him an overview of the grant programs. She explained them both in detail. Michelle asked can we get some promotion for tournaments. Jerry Don explained that the tournament market is such a niche market that word of mouth is the best way for this. Charity explained we are still trying to figure out how to get the tournament members out shopping. Wenda asked if we have banners at all the fields advertising Beavers Bend Cabin County. Charity stated that our goal is not to get them here. Wenda stated that doesn't mean they can come back and stay again and do more next time. She stated that they are fundraising for banners and we haven't been asked. We can't just put them up at the fields.

New or Unscheduled Business: Charity stated the Tourism summit is scheduled for June 2nd. She said that Matt was working on the location. Michelle Rice asked Charity to forward her contact information to Matt.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Ed Fulmer to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by Phil Silva. The meeting ended at 1:44pm. The motion carried. The motion was carried 5-0. Wenda Blankenship, yes; Jerry Don Smith, yes; Michelle Blackmore, yes; Ed Fulmer, yes; and Phil Silva, yes.