



**GREENE COUNTY TOURISM**  
Tourism Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 12, 2020, 9:00 a.m.,  
Greene County Visitor Center – 9157 Seminole Trail, Ruckersville, VA

**Call to Order:** A meeting of the Greene County Tourism Council was called to order at Greene County Visitor Center & Zoom Conference Call, Ruckersville, Virginia on August 12, 2020. The meeting convened at 9:05 a.m., with Council Chair, Mrs. Deanna Gephart calling meeting to order.

**Attendance:** Those present were Alan Yost, John Silke, Michele Wallace, Chuck Swinney, Tina Deane, Roy Dye, Deanna Gephart and Bill Henry was a late arrival on conference call. Also Diana Gamma, ED&T Staff.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Mr. Roy Dye to approve minutes and Mr. John Silke second for the June 10, 2020 meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Council reviewed monthly financial reports. Mr. Chuck Swinney made motion to approve. **Motion carried.** Mr. Alan Yost explained financials created based on new county department (Economic Development & Tourism Department). Tourism Council maintains roll as an advisory to B.O.S. who approves budget and follows lead of Tourism Council. Mrs. Deanna Gephart asked how money left in account at end of year will be handled. Mr. Alan Yost responded: TOT money has to be used for tourism by state code. Any money left in account at year end will be carried over to new account maintained by the county. February 2021 the council will revisit funds in carry over account to discuss potential large projects/initiatives.

**Unfinished Business:**

- 1) New Visitor Center Status – Visitor Center is open and operating under state Covid-19 guidelines. Remodeling items are continuing and near completion. Painting of exterior is almost complete, contract for tree removal has been approved. Mr. Alan Yost is working on RFP (Request for Proposal) on Barn, Carriage House and Greene Space. A couple members expressed concerns of having commercial businesses rent buildings/space on property.

Others expressed it is an opportunity to help small businesses and it is a good idea. Council discussed options for use of property. Grand Opening has been postponed until crowds are safe and approved by state. (A) Mr. Alan Yost will work on finalizing RFP. (A) Contact Luck Stone for gravel donation on driveway to Greene Space. (A) Purchase commercial grade picnic tables for Greene Space and area behind visitor center.

- 2) Tourism Department Status – discussed during financial report.
- 3) TOT Revenue Update – Mr. Alan Yost shared with council the significant decrease in TOT collected in July over last year. Possible reasons for decrease discussed: Collection of TOT's in 2019 were higher due to better enforcement of Lodging and Holiday Inn Express & Suites Charlottesville-Ruckersville has seen a large decrease in revenue due to Covid-19 for July. Getaway Homes became fully operational renting all 40 units. This offset some of the reduction in TOT collections.
- 4) 2020-2021 Budget – Anticipated budget column added to project a conservative outlook for TOT revenue in the upcoming months. There will be a onetime annual mortgage payment due in October, Items removed or reduced from original budget: Grant \$20k & Advertising reduced to \$5k. The budget will be reassessed in January / February of 2021.
- 5) Digital Marketing Campaign – Mr. Alan Yost recommends working with the Daily Progress on how to market our tourism venues with a digital marketing campaign to our target audience in the metropolitan areas. Also working with a local individual who has a marketing business. (A) Mrs. Deanna Gephart & Mr. Alan Yost will contact four vineyards (Hark, Kilauren, Moss, Stone Mountain) for meeting to discuss group marketing opportunities.

#### **New Business:**

- 1) Tourism Council Member – With the stepping down of Katherine Hess, Holiday Inn & Suites Express Charlottesville/Ruckersville there is a member vacancy. Suggestions by council: Danielle Oaks, owner of Qute Scraps; Miranda, owner of Miranda's Grill; Mark Walkup with PATC; and David Foley organizer / participant of Tour de Greene.
- 2) Other Discussion -
  - a. Scenic Byways Proposal – Mr. Bill Henry inquired on current status on, waiting on VDOT. (A) Mr. Alan Yost will follow up and provide update at next meeting.
  - b. Directional Signage – Mr. Chuck Swinney inquired on signage in Stanardsville. (A) Mr. Alan Yost will follow up on new directional signage with VDOT.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

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