



CEDC / Tourism Board Meeting

MINUTES

May 14th, 2020

Teleconference

Present: President Phil Liske, Treasurer Jennifer Hodge, Secretary Cathy Schwab, John Phillips Anthony Casey, Don Mulrine, Debi Sewell, Tara Hill-Coursey, Kat Stork (Shore Solutions), Kathy Mackel (Consultant)

Guests: Betty Jo Tarr (Greensboro Historical Society)

PUBLIC - Chad Dean

President Liske asked for roll call (see above)

President Liske made motion to open meeting at 8:05 a.m. Seconded by Don Mulrine

President Liske asked for motion to approve April 29, 2020 minutes, Don Mulrine made motion to approve, Debi Sewell seconded. Approved

Vice Present Nomination – President Liske nominated Debi Sewell, Jen Hodge Seconded.

Unanimously approved

Financial Report – Jen Hodge / Kat Stork have end of year projection. Kat Stork advised Jen Hodge, Robin Ball (bookkeeper), Kathy Mackel (Consultant) and Christina Lippincott (Contractor) have been very helpful.

Robin Ball worked on Cash Flow Report and updated May through End Of Year with Projections for End of Year. Kat brought up Financial Reports for Members to see on screen. One more municipality donation left (Denton), Kat will have meeting with Don Mulrine.

Discussion on State reimbursements. Marketing w/Christina Lippincott should have been put in Professional Services and not Marketing, was explained to President Liske by Kat Stork. There have been 3 bookkeepers in the last year and Christina Lippincott's salary was added to wrong line item. Kat Stork, Robin Ball (Bookkeeper) and Treasurer Jen Hodge are working on correcting this. Christina has lowered her salary for now, as she advised people are not out because of COVID19.

John Phillips asked Kat Stork about Budget /Income, Kat explained figures. He then stated that Ceres Bainbridge mentioned last year that we would be spending more on State marketing grant and it was 100% reimbursable. Kat Stork advised that might be one of the amounts we were due (\$7,000). Anthony Casey advised that we were told State changed from a Fiscal Year to a Calendar Year on reimbursements. Kat advised that Kathy Mackel told her about change in State's grant year when she met with Kathy yesterday. Kat Stork will contact State Tourism Office and have them explain this. Anthony Casey stated that for our

Budget, monies carried over from last Fiscal Year, should have a line item for a fund balance that would cover any expenses over what we've done this Fiscal Year.

Kathy Mackel advised 4 years ago, the State changed over to a Calendar year, which was not good for those on Fiscal Year budgets. Many DMOs complained, so State went back to the Fiscal Year. What happens is everything is thrown off for about a year or year and a half. She remembers Ceres saying State had changed some of the reimbursements to 100 %, and so Ceres was going to do a new ad campaign with radio stations or something with commercials because it was 100% reimbursable. Kathy will check her books to see exactly what was done as we may get reimbursed. Kat Stork advised Kathy Mackel will work with her in the office one day this week to gather that information. John Phillips advised that is what they will probably find.....why there is additional expense in Marketing. Kat advised she has new Chart of Accounts going into the new Fiscal Year, and there is a consistent Bookkeeper now which should work out.

Kat brought up her FY 21 Proposed Budget ... she advised Budget did go to County Commissioners for approval earlier...lines on new Budget changed but, does not change their appropriations or Payroll line.

Kat Stork has been participating in MD DMO meetings weekly discussing reimbursements. Kathy Mackel explained some of the reimbursable items on Kat Stork's Current Proposed Budget page . Civil War Trails is an insurance policy for signage repair (\$1,200) and is 100% reimbursable as State sees the value of keeping those signs looking good . Economic Impact Study that we are required to participate in (\$1,200) and is 100% reimbursable. Heritage Area is not. The Heritage Area received \$15,000 from all counties years ago but, many could not afford to pay. The DMOs discussed this fact and all made payments out of their Tourism budget of \$3,000 instead. Benefits Non-Profits in county going for state funding. If counties do not participate...they cannot get funding. Suggested we do not spend too much on marketing if the budget funds are low, even if it is reimbursable.

Discussion on Board approving large items - Kat, Treasurer Jen Hodge and Robin. They would set Bench Marks for approval . Services with added equipment for example... approval by Board.

Professional Services/Christina Lippincott has cut back her time when COVID19 hit. Three hundred less a month. Bookkeeping, Miscellaneous Line possible photographer / videographer in the future.

Kat Stork thanked all Board Members for their information on her Discovery Calls. She advised to not hurry with hiring Director ...continue with planning and evaluate what is needed next. Discussion on Budget to Commissioners on this. Continue with Christina Lippincott services and Kathy Mackel to consult.

Kathy Mackel advised Commissioners would still be getting return on their investment.

Discovery Calls - Board feels there is more to marketing than just the print advertising. . Anthony Casey promoted idea for better partnership with Commissioners next year as residents will be facing tough times.

Kat Stork believes there are opportunities for grant money Tourism can use. Tourism working with communities and tourists when we are able to do so. Kathy Mackel spoke of Mid Atlantic Travel Writer's Assn. that she worked with years ago...they bring value to places writing stories about your area and taking photos to be in magazines that Tourism cannot afford to do because of the expense. Reach out to them and give new stories as our County has a lot of historic assets along with State work on Chesapeake Country coming. This would be no cost to us and return on investment would be greater. Kat stated that bass fishing and birdwatching are also things to do here along with having 2 State Parks.

Cathy Schwab mentioned that Ceres had met with travel writers in the past also. Need research on what Travel Writers to call.

Kathy Mackel advised she is working with the All American Road Nomination that has put her with Dept. of Commerce and the head of State Tourism Office and her staff . They realize there will be lack of events / venues being closed, and people's fear of traveling great distances. International travel will slow until next year . Kathy advised many bus tours have cancelled with CCHS along with other tours this fall. There may be locals who will tour and what can we do for self-guided visitors? Suggests we market now about picnic areas, small business open, etc.

Budget without Director question by Tara Hill-Coursey. Kat Stork advised Board should speak with Commissioners on this and keep that line open on Budget knowing partial salary is now used for Shore Strategies until Director is hired. One more Board meeting until End of Fiscal Year. President Phil Liske agrees to wait on hiring Director and finalize Budget and work on Strategic Plan as many things have now changed. Vice President Debi Sewell also agreed with waiting on the Director hiring. President Liske advised Kat Stork is working well with Tourism projects.

Secretary Cathy Schwab advised Board to vote on new Board Member Betty Jo Tarr from Greensboro Historical Society. President Phil Liske asked Members All in favor? Unanimously approved. Secretary Cathy Schwab will draft letter to County Commissioners, send to President Liske for signature and he will send (email) to Commissioners. Kat Stork to speak with Tammy Kelledees (Greensboro) as another Board Member (she was unable to attend this meeting).

Kat Stork send updated Budget to Executive Board for review. Don Mulrine stated Members should vote on it at next meeting. Kat will coordinate meeting with Executive Board.

President Phil Liske asked for motion to adjourn, Don Mulrine made motion, Anthony Casey Seconded.

Adjourned 9:16 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Cathy Schwab, Secretary