

Prestonsburg Tourism Commission

Meeting Minutes of October 13th, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: , Jim Ousley, Jen Kopecky, Julian Slone, Ronnie Warrix, Franky Valencia
MEMBERS ABSENT: Rocky Rowe, Cliff Latta
STAFF PRESENT: Samantha Johnson, Brooke LeMonds
GUESTS PRESENT: Joe Campbell, Gabby Wireman, Steve Russo, Rodney Gardner, Paulie Horn
CALL TO ORDER: 12:10PM by Jim Ousley

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN
Public Comment	<p>Joe Campbell with the Mountain Arts Center informed the Commission that things are getting busier. He stated that they hosted an impromptu concert last Saturday with The Kentucky Headhunters. This upcoming Thursday the "Beatles vs. Stones" Tribute Show will take the stage. "Dark Side of the River" has been rescheduled to November 6th. The Junior Pros Halloween Show will be October 24th which is selling very well. They are working with Dance Etc. The MAC is at capacity for the Exile concert which also has a waiting list. They had sold 350-400 tickets pre COVID.</p> <p>Steve Russo with the Science Center stated that they opened to the public on September 1st. Their max capacity currently is around 12 people. Their general public ticket sales are down by about 50 people. They will be hosting their Halloween & Laser Fright Light Show at the end of the month. Steve also announced that he will be retiring on March 15th, 2021. He added that they should have a great pool of applicants and he will be helping with the hiring process and also staying on as a volunteer on his own terms. Jim Ousley told Steve "You are a blessing and more appreciated than you know".</p>	

	<p>Gabby Wireman with Quality Inn stated that reservations at the hotel is picking up. They were almost at capacity last weekend.</p> <p>Samantha Johnson took a moment to thank Rodney Gardner for all the years he served on the Tourism Commission and also the 28 ½ years he worked at Jenny Wiley State Resort Park.</p> <p>Ronnie Warrix introduced himself as a new Tourism Commissioner. He stated that he works for R&J Development which owns Quality Inn and Thunder Ridge. He also has access to equipment for development materials. Franky Valencia introduced himself as a new Tourism Commissioner. He is the owner of Made to Crave and a co-owner of El Azul Grande.</p>	
<p>Director's Report</p>	<p>Samantha started off by informing the Commission that she attended a great EHN meeting with Mike Mangeot and he addressed what Tourism is facing with COVID. State tourism is recognizing the value of Eastern KY. Recently our big focus in regards to marketing has been the outdoors and we have a new animated commercial. We are only allowing limited television and online exposure. We will save the animated commercial for a big Spring push. We also released another new promo video yesterday, Tandem Touring with Bigfoot. Last week we worked with WLEX to obtain some b-roll footage for next Spring and we also went to Knott County for some footage. Samantha added that she will also be meeting with their Tourism Director, Zach, in the future. Knott County is ATV gold and they have no hotels. They are in between us and Hazard and we need to develop a partnership to be their "bed town". We need to develop an ATV Pass discount with our hotels to get the</p>	

	<p>users of the trails to stay here. We are going to start digitally targeting the ATV trails. ATV/UTV is a growing tourism market and hoteliers need to be thinking about a discount or code for the riders. Rodney Gardner added that the Martin Airport is also offering ATV trails.</p> <p>KTIA is going to be virtual this year over 3 days. At SOAR Summit we are hosting a virtual booth. Brooke also wrote her first blog for our website, "The Plant that ate the South".</p> <p>Joe Campbell added that APPY submissions have gone up significantly since Tourism signed on. There are now 7 of the 13 states represented.</p>	
Old Business	<p>We received a Downtown Initiatives Grant for \$30k. We are going to testing out some sample lights. We have permission from most of the building owners to tie the lights into their buildings. The lights are beautiful but are also a safety precaution. The funds have to be spent/allocated by November 1st.</p>	
Minutes Review	<p>Jen Kopecky made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 8th, 2020 meeting. Julian Slone seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.</p>	
Monthly Financial Report	<p>Samantha started by informing the Commission that the tax revenue collected is deposited into our Community Trust account. The revenue collected is split four ways: 33% goes to Prestonsburg Parks, 33% we retain at Tourism, 26% goes to the MAC and 8% goes to StoneCrest. The full amount of tax revenue collected this month was \$75,110.16. Our portion of the tax revenue was \$25,889.18. People's Bank is the account we use for our monthly bills/expenses. Our bills for this month totaled \$16,585.98 which includes some credit card charges for the Downtown Initiatives Grant.</p>	<p>Julian Slone made a motion to approve the monthly bills which was seconded by Jen Kopecky and passed unanimously.</p>
New Business	<p>Les Stapleton swore in the new members of the Commission, Ronnie Warrix and Franky Valencia. This</p>	

	<p>moment was also taken to swear in the other members of the Commission in attendance. The Commission members in attendance tabled the nominations of new officers and voting until all 3 of the current officers are present.</p> <p>We will be holding the very first Burger Week in Prestonsburg November 2nd-7th called "Pburger Week". All burgers will be \$6 and can't be currently offered on their menu. There will be reward incentives for the participating restaurants. The winner of "Best Burger" will receive a \$500 marketing co-op with Tourism and a \$250 marketing co-op will be awarded to the highest amount of burgers sold. We will also have "passports" for the individual patrons to participate and win prizes. We will start promoting all restaurants participating next week. We are doing this to celebrate our restaurants that have worked so hard through the pandemic. We only lost one restaurant to COVID which was Roma Cucina.</p> <p>Les Stapleton added that he was on The Passage and counted 59 people in one hour. He saw license plates from Florida, West Virginia, Tennessee and Michigan. One of which changed their travel plans to visit our trail. The new signage has been ordered and will be delivered in a couple of weeks.</p>	
Next Meeting	November 10 th , 2020 at 12PM at the Mountain Arts Center	
Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 1:00pm.	Motion was made by Jen Kopecky to end the meeting which was seconded by Ronnie Warrix.