

Prestonsburg Tourism Commission

Meeting Minutes of March 9th, 2021

PRESENT: Jim Ousley(Huntington, WV via Google Meet Video) Ronnie Warrix, Cliff Latta, Julian Slone, Franky Valencia

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jen Kopecky, Rocky Rowe

STAFF PRESENT: Samantha Johnson, Brooke LeMonds

GUESTS PRESENT: Steve Russo, Joe Campbell, Jill Hamlin, Les Stapleton, Greta Slone, Myra Elliott, Artie White (Richmond, KY via Google Meet audio)

CALL TO ORDER: 12:09PM by Cliff Latta

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN
Public Comment	<p>Steve Russo with the East Kentucky Science Center stated that they opened back up last week. Their hours and days are Thursday-Saturday 1-4pm. The shows are at 1:30 and 3:00. The show is a combination of “Hubble Vision”, live night sky and laser show. Steve also informed the Commission that this would be his last meeting as the Director of the Science Center. His retirement starts next Monday but he will be staying on as a volunteer.</p> <p>Jill Hamlin with Big Sandy Community & Technical College announced that filming for the APPY’s was last Tuesday. There were over 50 people including presenters and entertainers in and out of the building. She gave accolades to the MAC crew, Tech crew, the College, Les, Samantha, Brooke and Comfort Suites for all of their help. The APPY’s will go live on March 20th with tickets being sold on CMH23.com for \$18. She is hopeful that next year the event will be held in person. Jill also addressed “APPY Hour” with an event being held in Lexington and London. She said these venues are setting their own ticket price and offering “APPYtizers” and an APPY beverage. They are donating all</p>	

	<p>profits from their ticket sales back to the APPY's. Samantha suggested that people host their own watch party and order takeout from a local restaurant.</p> <p>Les Stapleton announced that the City has purchased a cinema projector for the MAC from Paintsville. He said that it should be installed and running by the end of March. It works off of a large server and they will be able to show movies that are 1-4 years old and the classics.</p> <p>Joe Campbell with the MAC announced that the Junior Pros Rock Show will be March 27th. "Dark Side of the River" on April 2nd. Exile on April 9th. He added that restrictions have eased up allowing 60% occupancy which means they can seat between 450-480 people social distanced. Samantha added that restaurants and attractions occupancy has also increased to 60% which started on March 5th.</p> <p>Myra Elliott with Big Sandy Community & Technical College stated that she is thrilled that the APPY's are continuing even if virtual. She said everyone involved has done a great job.</p>	
Minutes Review	Cliff Latta made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 9th, 2021 meeting. Julian Slone seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.	
Monthly Financial Report	Samantha Johnson first presented the January Restaurant/Transient tax collected which is deposited into our Community Trust account. The total amount collected for January 2021 was \$67,675.81 with our portion of the split being \$23,373.58. As for our monthly bills they were much higher this month due to paying for the two audits completed at \$15k and the firework sponsorship at \$4.5k. Our total for bills paid out of our People's Bank account was \$34,598.49.	Motion was made by Julian Slone to approve the monthly financials which was seconded by Ronnie Warrix and passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Samantha stated that the hoteliers have done a lot for the community over the past two weeks due to the extreme flooding and ice storms. Julian and Jenny Wiley even transported guests by boat to the lodge. The hoteliers have been taking care of lodging, entertainment and babysitting. She also thanked Rocky with Home Furniture for assistance with getting items to people in need. Jim Ousley added that he would like to thank Samantha for all she has done and the kindness of our entire community.

Samantha said that KTIA has sent out their RAFT plan which is a checklist for Tourism to move forward. The virtual Heartland Travel Showcase went very well. She added that we are working on a marketing event for the Appalachian "Strings and Things" and the APPY's. We are planning to film a "Visit Me" campaign next week. The idea is to target people with roots here which will tie in to the Kinfolk Reunion. Our co-ops for this year are running March-May. We are only doing print at this time in Indianapolis Monthly, Kentucky Living, Kentucky Monthly and Blue Ridge Outdoors. We are planning a new Spring digital and broadcast campaigns with WLEX. Talks are also happening with Print & Pixel in regards to some updates with our website. She added that conversations need to be opened regarding a new travel guide. The idea for this travel guide will not be distribution but more for travelers when they arrive in Prestonsburg. This travel guide must include a map. Most travel guides run 1-2 years and ours is going on four years.

Samantha also reminded the Commission that KACVB will be in Lexington March 10th-12th and some of those in attendance will be sending donations back for the individuals affected by the flood and ice storms. She added

	that we have sent out delinquency letters to some locals businesses in regards to the restaurant and transient taxes. We will be allowing them to set up payment arrangements.	
New Business	Artie White with White & Associates presented the 2017-2018 fiscal year audit for Prestonsburg Tourism. He referred the Commission to page 21 to look at the audit review. He stated that the significant deficiencies were the same as the 2016-17 fiscal year. There were no major significant deficiencies. Their recommendations were Tourism becoming part of SPGE which has been rectified. Samantha opening the monthly bank statements before Brooke entering them into QuickBooks and attaching the items deposited into our bank accounts to the deposit slip. He also suggested that the budget be updated in QuickBooks for more accurate Budget vs. Actual reporting. All situations have been corrected in the 2020-21 fiscal year.	
Next Meeting	April 13 th , 2021 at 12PM at the Mountain Arts Center	
Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 12:52pm.	Motion was made by Cliff Latta to end the meeting which was seconded by Julian Slone.