



GREENE COUNTY TOURISM
Tourism Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 9:00 a.m.,
Stanardsville Town Hall – 19 Celt Road, Stanardsville, VA

Call to Order: A meeting of the Greene County Tourism Council was called to order at Stanardsville Town Hall, Stanardsville, Virginia on December 11, 2019. The meeting convened at 9:02 a.m., with Mrs. Deanna Gephart presiding.

Attendance: Those present were Alan Yost, John Silke, Deanna Gephart, Roy Dye, Whitt Ledford, Bill Henry, Chuck Swinney and Michele Wallace. Guest included Diana Gamma and Vyvyan Rundgren.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Mr. Chuck Swinney to approve minutes and Mr. Whitt Ledford second for the October, 9 2019 meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The Council reviewed monthly financial reports. Mr. Roy Dye made motion to approve. **Motion carried.**

Unfinished Business:

- 1) New Visitor Center Status – Loan on property closed end of October. Adjoining parcel is being donated to Visitor Center by current owner. A signed deed received Friday 12.6.2019. This will be recorded with clerk of court within the week. In complying with state law, bids for general contractor to perform work must be advertised. One bid was received totaling \$49k which is slightly over original budget. Tourism Council supported the increased cost and to move forwarding awarding the contract which will be done in the next several weeks.
- 2) Scenic Byway Proposal – There has been no results sent from study of ride in June 2019. There have been staff changes within VDOT (specifically BYWAYS program) which is current cause of delay. Expect to receive letter in next 45 days.
- 3) Digital Marketing – During VA1 Tourism Summit Mr. Alan Yost met with other tourism directors in region (Culpeper, Orange, Madison, and Fauquier) to discuss the Foothills

branding as well as other ideas. The “Route 29 – Virginia’s Tourism Corridor” was suggested and received lots of positive energy from group.

- 4) Tourism Council Member – Mr. Alan Yost spoke with Mr. Raj Dhekar with Holiday Inn Express & Suites on potential council member. A new marketing person is coming on board first of the year. Mr. Alan Yost will reach out at that time to discuss interest in joining Tourism Council. Mr. Whitt Ledford volunteered to take on the role of Tourism Council vice chair. (A) Tourism Council suggested meetings be included in Tourism Newsletter allowing anyone in tourism industry to attend if interested. (A) Mr. Bill Henry suggested adding 10-15 minute open discussion at beginning of meeting (every other), allowing targeted tourism groups to attend by invitation to speak, etc. Ex., Antiques, Restaurants, Lodging.
- 5) Welcome Sign – After additional discussion of ideas on design of sign council agreed with Tourism Logo only on top portion (no verbiage) with separate banner at bottom containing ExploreGreene.com (A) Mr. Alan Yost will contact Performance Signs to create draft and forward via email to Tourism Council for review and approval.
- 6) Tourism Signage – Mr. Alan Yost would like to see a Tourism Overlay District in county. This would allow exemption to current county sign ordinance. Conversations are ongoing with Mr. Jim Frydl in Planning and Zoning Dept. Recommendation is to utilize Todd’s program signage on Rt. 29 and Overlay District signage on Rt. 33. (A) Mrs. Deanna Gephart offered to set up a meeting with Kilauren, Hark, Moss, Glass House, and Stone Mountain to discuss potential wine trail opportunity.

New Business:

No new business discussed.

Additional Comments:

- 1) Eat In Greene – “How to promote” question was asked of council by Mr. Alan Yost. (A) Tourism Council was asked to email ideas to Mr. Alan Yost for follow up discussion. Mr. Whitt Ledford proposed meeting with each restaurant owner/manager to find out what they want or need.
- 2) Paul Anderson Concert Sponsorship Expense: The Council previously agreed to co-sponsor the concert with the Art Guild. Accordingly, the Council agreed to partially reimburse Mr. Roy Dye for the lodging expenses he had paid for the Scottish fiddler and his family. Attendance at the free concert on December 1st was about 130, the majority being Greene County residents. Mr. Bill Henry expressed concern that this action may set an undesirable

precedent and suggested having a written policy on the matter. Mr. Chuck Swinney likewise expressed reservations. Motion was made by Mr. Swinney to pay the Council's \$400 co-sponsorship amount to Lydia Cabins, with direction to credit Mr. Dye's account. Mr. Whitt Ledford seconded and motion carried. It was agreed to place this issue on a future meeting agenda and to invite Ms. Judy Berger, Manager of Greene Commons Farmers Market, to share her advice and relevant experience.

- 3) Air BnB "Experience" – Mr. Whitt Ledford shared new offering with Air BnB. Additional way to market area. This is not restricted to "Host", anyone who can offer an experience can submit for review. Air BnB handles all marketing with a nominal fee. (A) Suggestion was made to include in future Tourism Newsletter.
- 4) Blue Ridge Heritage Memorial – A brief updated was given by Mr. Bill Henry on status of project. Currently working with Augusta County for memorial in Waynesboro. Suggestion was made to have map / trail blown up, installed behind plexi-glass at memorial with signage encouraging visitors to take a picture of map eliminating paper copies at each location.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.